

**Heversham, St Peter's C of E (Aided) Primary School**

Leasgill,

Heversham  
Milnthorpe  
LA7 7FG

**Diocese: Carlisle**

Local authority: Cumbria

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Date of last inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2003

School's unique reference number: 112416

Headteacher: Mrs Hazel Blakeley

Inspector's name and number: Rev W Sloan 521



**Diocese of Carlisle**

**Board of Education**

*"Every Child Matters To God."*

### **School context**

Heversham, St Peter's is a smaller than averaged sized primary school with 99 pupils on roll. It is a rural school; the majority of pupils live in the community with some travelling from further afield. There have been a number of significant staff changes in recent years including the Headteacher and the co-ordinator for Religious Education and Collective Worship. The primary school is situated close to the Church. The majority of children are white British and the number of free school meals is well below average.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Heversham, St Peter's C of E (Aided) Primary School as a Church of England school are good.**

The Christian ethos quietly underpins the life of the school. Christian values of love, respect, forgiveness, reconciliation and compassion are demonstrated in action by all members of the school community. This has a positive impact on the spiritual and personal development of the pupils.

### **Established strengths**

- The outstanding personal development of all pupils that enables them to be happy and confident in school.
- The Christian leadership provided by the headteacher, Religious Education and Collective Worship co-ordinator and governors.
- The caring Christian ethos of the school in which all pupils are valued, made to feel special and are helped to flourish as individuals.
- The school's environment which contributes to pupil's emotional and spiritual development.

### **Focus for development**

- Establish strategies for the evaluation of collective worship by pupils, staff and governors.
- Assessment of pupil's progress in RE to give teachers a clear view of each child's progress and develop marking practice in order to help pupils reflect upon their work and know what steps to take to improve even further.
- Involve the whole school community in the process of monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness.

### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners.**

Each child feels special and is part of the Christian community regardless of his or her background. Relationships are rooted in love and respect. The Headteacher and staff at all levels set excellent examples. Pupils feel happy and safe because their emotional, spiritual

and physical well being is at the centre of the school's life. There is a strong sense of trust and community feeling in the school and pupils enjoy attending. The atmosphere in the school is relaxed and orderly and pupils are courteous and considerate to others and their behaviour is excellent. They are secure and recognise that their teachers have a very good knowledge of their individual achievements and learning needs. Diversity is celebrated and every child is enabled to achieve and make progress through good planning and through a range of extra curricular activities. High expectations for behaviour enable pupils to respond positively. They know their ideas are listened to and are aware their views have an impact on how the school is run. For example through the school council various changes have been made; these include more interesting songs and more drama in worship, suggestions to improve healthy eating, encouraging walking to school and developing a 'buddy system'. The pupils' wider social and cultural development is promoted well through an excellent range of educational visits and events. Spiritual development is good. The school is outward looking, relates well to its own local community, and supports those in need. Parents spoke very warmly about the level of care which is shown to their children. They are very clear about the positive impact of the school as a church school. Links with the parish church, clergy and the diocese enhance the school's Christian character. The 'Get Real' club run by parents and governors is popular and this contributes to pupil's spiritual development. The school has been imaginatively extended utilising the slope on which the school is built to provide a hall and amphitheatre. This major extension and refurbishment has contributed significantly to providing bright, airy spaces for the children and staff.

#### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

Children enjoy worship, listen well and respond and participate enthusiastically. They write and sometimes lead the prayers and also participate in worship through reading and drama. Daily worship has a central place in the life of the school. There is a sense of stillness and presence in the moments preceding the start of worship. Pupils work together in choosing resources, including music, and these are used effectively enhancing their social development. Church and community links are good and the regular involvement of the clergy helps to reinforce the school's Christian foundation. Music and singing by the whole school are outstanding. This enables children of all abilities and those of other or no faith to be included fully in worship. Special events such as Christmas, Easter, and harvest and the annual leaver's service are celebrated successfully in Church. Worship makes a contribution to spiritual and moral development. It builds up and affirms the school as a Christian community in action through, for example, prayer and fund raising. Such fund raising activities included 'Children in Need.' Topics are followed up in religious education and at other times during the day which serves to affirm both the importance of worship and the learning which takes place. So too the care that has gone into planning and liaison with the clergy. The leader for collective worship is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has co-ordinated with others to improve planning and delivery. She knows what else needs to be done to improve the impact on children. This includes more variety in content and styles of delivery and more participation by the children especially in leadership roles. Children are clear about the need to make worship more exciting and inspiring and, when asked, readily suggested ways to do this. The school is aware of the need to improve monitoring and evaluation of collective worship and the children's views should be included in this to improve future practice. The leader for collective worship has attended diocesan training. Other members of staff have not had recent opportunities for professional development in this area.

#### **The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory.**

Religious Education is led by a skilled, experienced and enthusiastic subject leader who is knowledgeable about her subject. It is recognised by the governors, staff and parents as having an important part in the life of the school. Parents spoke positively about the impact RE has on their children's spiritual and cultural development. The scheme of work has recently been updated and is based on the diocesan scheme. It is detailed, balanced and relevant. RE respects the school's Christian foundation as well as giving due weight to other faiths, such as Hinduism and Islam. It is fully supported by a good range of resources. This enables pupils to demonstrate a good understanding of the Christian faith. Pupils enjoy talking about RE what they have learnt and what they would like to do. More opportunities

need to be provided for pupils to reflect, think about and discuss what they have learnt. Observed teaching was satisfactory with good elements. It was well planned with different strategies used to help support pupils' understanding and stimulate interest. In one lesson pupils were able confidently and enthusiastically to discuss the feelings and emotions of some of the people involved in the Christmas story. In another class the pupils were introduced to the idea of Jesus being the best present. Staff are keen to explore more varied teaching and learning styles in religious education and further professional development will improve their confidence and the impact on children's learning. Although assessment procedures are in place these require further development to provide staff with a clearer view of each child's progress. Marking of pupil's work is in place throughout the school; however it does not provide pupils with a clear focus of what they need to do next to improve even further. The governor who oversees RE has worked closely with the coordinator and pupils. She has an excellent grasp of the effectiveness of RE and what needs to be done to improve it further. This involvement is an outstanding feature.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good.**

The headteacher has been in post for three years and along with the staff and governors makes a significant contribution to the success of the school as a church school. They provide effective leadership and work in very close partnership to promote their Christian purpose and vision. This vision is supported fully by a united staff team and the governing body. The school's Christian purpose is clearly expressed in the mission statement in the prospectus and reflected in a range of school policies. The headteacher and staff at all levels set excellent examples. The partnerships that exist between the school and the local community, including the church, are strengths of the school. This enhances pastoral care, family values and community spirit. The Christian vision and values are shared amongst all stakeholders and are lived out across the life of the school. The headteacher and staff are readily accessible and parents appreciate the 'open door' policy and regular consultations. Parents value the school as a Church school and the involvement of the local clergy. One parent commented that the school was "homely and it helped the pupils develop a sense of community." The school is outward looking, relates well to its own local community and supports those in need both in this country and abroad in a way consistent with its values. The school council has played an active part in developing and writing the school's Healthy Eating policy and are developing the School Travel Plan. The co-ordinator for Religious Education and Collective Worship has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has begun to work effectively with staff and governors to improve the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although the school has begun to identify its general strengths, the governors, staff and wider school community have not undertaken systematic monitoring and evaluation of the distinctive Christian character of the school. The pupils have strong views on what is good in RE and collective worship and need to be more fully involved in self-evaluation of the school as a church school.