

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Trent Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Church Way,  
off Chalk Lane Cockfosters,  
Barne  
Herts  
EN4 9JH

#### **Diocese of London**

Local authority: London Borough of Barnet  
School's unique reference number: 101328  
Date of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007  
Date of last inspection: June 2002  
Headteacher: Mr Keith Taylor  
SIAS Inspector: Miss Gladys Vendy (NS 299)

#### **Context**

Trent School is a traditionally oversubscribed one form entry school situated in the parish of Christ Church, Cockfosters, on the edge of the green belt. The majority of pupils are of white British or Greek/Greek Cypriot heritage and most are from Christian backgrounds. The school is currently in the middle of a large building project. After nearly three years of limited leadership, because of extenuating circumstances, a new Head Teacher was appointed in 2005.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Trent School as a Church of England school are good**

The ethos of the school is distinctively Christian and with inclusion at the heart of its practice. It is very effective in valuing all members of the school community. The school is very well supported by the parish church of Christ Church, Cockfosters, with whom it enjoys close links.

#### **Established strengths**

- The Christian ethos is rooted in all aspects of school life and secured through strong links with the Church and an active partnership with the parents and the community.
- Worship is central to the life of the school.
- The Christian witness is made explicit through high quality displays in the hall and common parts of the school.

#### **Focus for development**

- Assessment should be developed to include level descriptors to allow accurate comparisons with achievement in other subjects.
- Consideration should be given to formally developing the recording of creative and non-written work for each class's records.
- A regular programme of visits and visitors should be planned to support the children's understanding of Christian and other faith teaching.

**The school through its distinctive Christian character makes good provision at meeting the needs of all learners.**

The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners based on the very clear aims of the school as a Christian community which are nurtured by close links with the parish of Christ Church. All stakeholders have been engaged in creating the school motto that encompasses the Christian ethos of the school "To be the best that I can be; to love and care for others just as God loves and cares for me" and children understand its meaning. Positive relationships are developed and underpinned by the Christian values highlighted on posters made by the children and displayed in the hall. Academic achievement and contributions to school life are valued at the weekly assembly. There is a clear behaviour policy and children are very well behaved. Conflicts are resolved through the Christian principles of forgiveness and reconciliation. The school is a caring and inclusive school that serves the community well. The school makes very good provision for SEN and Gifted and Talented children through the inclusion co-ordinator who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The school has recently been awarded Healthy School Status. The school council, which changes termly, meets regularly and discusses a wide range of topics and their concerns have led to improvements in the environment, extra activity clubs and healthier menus. The house system develops a sense of communality and there are opportunities for pupils to succeed and to take on responsibilities through class duties and monitors. Partnership with the parents is strong and views of parents and pupils are regularly sought through questionnaires. Parents are informed of the action taken as a result of these surveys. Nearly all the parents who responded consider that their children develop in their spiritual life. The school has a strong and supportive Parent Teacher Association. There is clear visual evidence that this is a church school with outstanding displays in the entrance that speak of the Christian year and a wide range of RE displays in the hall and corridor. These have been maintained in spite of the constraints caused by the building work. Children feel that adults are approachable and said "teachers get to know you really well". The school supports a variety of local and national charities during the year.

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

Worship is of central importance in the life of the school and is a key element in the Christian witness which underpins the school's Christian character. This is strengthened by the close link with Christ Church whose staff lead worship once a week. Except for one Key Stage act of worship the whole school attends daily worship together which consolidates the oneness of the community. Individual classes lead the worship once a term and parents are invited to attend. The Vicar knows the children and staff well and is known by them. The staff are actively involved and encouraged to lead worship, which follows a three year cycle of themes, and is clearly recorded in a file maintained by the Year 6 pupils. Children attend Christ Church at the beginning and end of term and at Harvest, Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day and write prayers for these services. A significant number of parents join with the school in worship on these occasions. The school also has close links with Oakhill Theological College and students lead an act of worship four times a term. Worship always includes prayer, reflection, a Bible reading and a hymn. Children know and understand the meaning of the Lord's Prayer which is said regularly. The acts of worship which were observed had a clear spiritual element, were inclusive in their content and gave the children opportunities to contribute and to sing tunefully. Children made frequent reference to the content of the act of worship during their RE lessons. Children say they enjoy worship especially when it is Bible based. The children entered and left the hall silently accompanied by music which is chosen on a rota basis by staff. Prayers are said at lunchtime and at the end of the day. There is a Parents' Prayer group which meets monthly and liaises with the Head Teacher about the needs of the school. Children have sung in Proms Praise at the Royal Albert Hall and visited St Paul's Cathedral. The Junior Church choir meets in the school as an after school club and the adult choir uses the school premises for weekly rehearsals. The worship policy was reviewed in 2005.

### **The effectiveness of Religious Education is good**

The enthusiastic RE co-ordinator has held the post for some years and the status of RE in the school is high. The school has developed its own scheme of work based on LDBS guidelines and the Solihull scheme of work. There is very good long and medium term planning, including the Foundation Stage, which gives staff a secure base from which to work. Other faith teaching has been introduced into the programme of study since the last inspection and children show their appreciation of this. A regular programme of visits and visitors needs to be planned to further enhance and support children's understanding of Christianity and other faiths. Topics and units of work are well resourced. There are increasingly good cross curricular links as for example when darkness and light is studied in science. There is photographic evidence of creative and non-written work and consideration should be given to recording this in a more formal way for each class's records. The quality of learning and teaching observed showed good features such as developing questioning skills, a good pace of work and very good use of the interactive white board and video clips. The response of pupils was always positive and they showed very good prior knowledge and understanding. In the Foundation Stage children were engaged in a variety of activities, including construction and free writing, relating to the story of The Wise and Foolish Man. Younger Infants were encouraged to reflect on David's songs and the harp music played in assembly and were able to write and play their own praise songs. Their responses such as "You are my great protector and armour" showed the contribution made to their spiritual development. One of the Junior classes related the story of Lazarus to the act of worship that morning about how to deal with difficult times. The older Juniors presented their research on individuals they had chosen to represent how God changes lives. Children showed maturity and openness in discussions and questioning, were able to articulate a personal faith and were not afraid to tackle racial issues. These presentations were enhanced by the skilful use of high quality computer graphics. Children say that they enjoy RE teaching and the opportunities it gives to express their emotions and to empathise with others. Although there is clear evidence of assessment based on listening and questioning at the end of units this needs to be more rigorously developed so that accurate comparisons can be made against national standards of achievement in core subjects. An action plan for this has been drawn up and should now be implemented.

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

The quality of leadership by the Head Teacher, Vicar and Governors, who work in close co-operation and trust, contributes significantly to the strength of the school as a church school. The Head Teacher has a strong Christian vision for the school and is committed to raising the effectiveness and quality of teaching and promoting sound Christian values. He is well supported by the Senior Leadership Team who are very good role models for the children showing mutual respect and care for each other. The RE co-ordinator has made a very positive impact upon the teaching of RE through her monitoring of planning and dissemination of information about good practice acquired through attendance at courses. The sense of a Christian community is articulated throughout the school in the quality of very good relationships and team work. Staff morale is good and they work cohesively together towards the shared vision. The recruitment and induction of new staff includes developing an understanding of the school's Christian ethos and practice. Views of parents, pupils, staff and governors are regularly sought. Results of surveys are shared and, where appropriate, acted upon. Parents spoke of the care and high standard of education their children are receiving. The school has a thriving Parent Teacher Association. The school is well supported by the diocese and the local authority. The school is highly sensitive and effective in endeavouring to ensure that provision is made for the spiritual and moral development of its entire community. There is very good capacity for further development.