

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Ashton-on-Ribble St Andrew's Church of England Aided Primary School

Tulketh Road
Ashton-on-Ribble
Preston
Lancashire
PR2 1EQ

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 15th October 2008

Date of last inspection: September 2004

School's unique reference number: 119602

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Hesketh

Inspector's name and number: Mary A. R. Binks 455

School context

Ashton-on-Ribble St Andrew's Church of England Primary School is a larger than average voluntary aided school with 416 pupils. It is situated in the suburban district of Ashton-on-Ribble, close to the centre of Preston. Pupils come from very varied backgrounds. 75% of pupils on entry have had experience of pre-school education. There is a wide diversity of abilities and attainment on entering school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ashton-on-Ribble St Andrew's as a Church of England school are good.

The school has a strongly established Christian foundation with good relationships with the church and local community. The school has a clear commitment to upholding Christian values which makes a positive impact on its life and work. A secure foundation of a safe and caring environment is established in which the children feel happy and valued.

Established strengths

- The strong Christian foundation which can be seen in the relationships throughout the school and with the church and local community.
- The stimulating and attractive environment, enhanced by interesting displays throughout the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship, recognised as central to the life of the school.

Focus for development

- In Religious Education, establish a policy for assessment in order to ensure that standards are in line with the school's high expectations.
- Broaden the pupils' experience of other faiths and traditions.

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

The school's ethos and values are based strongly on Christian principles. The Head Teacher and Management Team are committed to a Christian model of leadership and aim to promote the distinctly Christian ethos throughout the school. The children are confident and feel secure and happy within the school. They recognise the time for quiet reflection in the course of the school day and their spiritual awareness is enhanced by these experiences. This has positive effects on their behaviour. They are confident in discussing concerns and problems and feel that issues are dealt with fairly and consistently. The relationships throughout the

school are good. There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere which greets all who are involved in the school. Parents appreciate the "Open Door" policy and the positive attitudes shown to them. Relationships with the churches of the Ministry Team and community are good. The clergy are committed to their regular involvement with the school community. Worship is led by them in school each week and also in the churches. This all has a positive impact on the children's recognition of the value of being part of a supportive Christian community. The school provides a stimulating environment with attractive and interactive displays. These give effective support to the RE themes and general learning, enhancing further the Christian character of the school. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nourished by the effects of this established Christian character. However, the children do have limited knowledge and experience of the practices of other faiths and cultures, even from within their own communities.

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

The daily act of worship effectively promotes Christian values which are central to the school's distinctiveness as a church school. The planning and recording of Collective Worship is thorough. The themes are linked to the Church Year. The clergy contribute to the plans and ideas for creative presentation and involvement of the children. The worship is inclusive and the children and staff participate with appropriate reverence and enthusiasm. There is a defined Christian focus which helps to create a stimulating environment for the worship. The children respond well to this and enjoy being involved. The children sing well and are confident in creating their own prayers and their part in the preparation and presentation of worship. The children are at ease in prayer and quiet times of reflection. They have a developed sense of spiritual awareness that enhances the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The children respect each other and are mindful of the need to recognise and encourage each others gifts. Particular impact has been made by the creation of a reflective area in the school hall, created as a result of the tragic sudden deaths of two pupils recently. The children respect this place and have made effective use of the Prayer Tree provided and the ambience of love and support in difficult times. Parents and governors recognise the importance of worship in the life of the school. They welcome opportunities to attend and participate and feel they are warmly welcomed. The clergy lead regular acts of worship for two Key Stages and school Eucharists are held each half term. Members of other denominations and invited guests are also involved in leading worship. This gives the children a broader experience of worship styles and format, as well as encouraging their interest and involvement. School services are held in church to celebrate special festivals. Attendance by parents, governors and members of the local community is consistently good. The school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of other denominations and faiths. There is, however, an awareness of the need to broaden the children's knowledge and experience.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

The responses of the staff and children to RE demonstrates its importance and its distinctiveness within the life of the school. The Co-ordinator is well organised and committed to establishing RE as significant to the Christian culture of the school. He has taken up this role recently and maintains involvement in the Diocesan services and support networks. This has helped to keep the subject regularly updated and encouraged a creative style of teaching. This links into the school's aim for all teaching to be "creative and innovative." Lessons are interesting; providing a range of approaches and a variety of tasks for the children to complete. The effects on the children are very positive. Their confidence and obvious enjoyment of the subject is apparent. There is much enthusiasm about the RE lessons within the school. The current system for the assessment of RE does not provide sufficient evidence of the level of the children's achievements. They have a good understanding of the Christian faith. The quality of the children's oral work is good and reflects their enthusiasm and interest.

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

The quality of the leadership has a very positive impact on the school. The Christian vision is upheld by the Head Teacher, Management Team and the staff. It is well supported by the governors and the clergy of the Team Ministry. It is recognised as a major feature in the

school's life by parents and within the local community. Within the School Brochure the Christian principles of the school are highlighted and it is made clear that they are fundamental to the life and work of the school. This recognition helps to create a supportive atmosphere which has a positive impact on all involved with the school. The school's self evaluation of its role as a church school has a definite focus on maintaining the high profile of Christian distinctiveness. This is reflected in the significant impact made on the personal and academic development of each child. The Deputy Head Teacher serves as the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship and RE. His leadership is enthusiastic and encouraging. He has a clear vision of the significance of these aspects on the life and work of the school. The planning is linked appropriately and there is much co-operation in developing themes and particular topic areas. The significance of Collective Worship and RE within the life of the school is recognised and acknowledged by the staff and the children. The governors play an active role in the life of the school. They are committed to upholding the Christian foundation of the school, welcoming opportunity to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Christian distinctiveness through governor training. This has helped to ensure that this flows through its life and work. Their influence and involvement impacts on the children's wider experience of being part of a supportive Christian community. A significant number of children and their families are church members. Members of the church support the school's activities and attend school services held in church.

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