

YEALAND CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Footeran Lane
Yealand Redmayne
Carnforth
LA5 9SU

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 23 June 2009

Date of last inspection: June 2006

School's unique reference number: 119546

Headteacher: Mrs L Gee

Inspector's name and number: Mr G Yates

SIAS number 430

School context

The school is smaller than most primary schools and is situated in a rural area. The number of pupils who receive free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The headteacher is also headteacher of another church school about 12 miles away. The parish church is within walking distance of the school. The incumbent minister had only been in post for 6 weeks at the time of the inspection. The school holds many awards and has Healthy School status.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school are outstanding

Yealand Church of England Primary School is an outstanding Church of England school. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and management in this small but highly effective church school. Pupils' religious and spiritual life grows and develops exceedingly well in a very friendly, highly supportive safe environment.

Established strengths

- Pupils love school, are very friendly, behave exceedingly well and have a willingness to help each other;
- The headteacher's excellent leadership and management ;
- The strong support of parents and foundation governors.

Focus for development

- Ensure the assessment information about pupils' progress in religious education continues to be used effectively

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

Pupils, staff, governors and parents, in their different ways, all speak very highly of the Christian ethos and character of the school. Pupils have a very strong sense of purpose. One child commented, 'we are one big happy family where you can tell anyone anything.' Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and its ethos; they like the atmosphere and the way in which they are treated by the staff. They feel valued and enjoy their work. Pupils are very polite and behave with consideration for others. They feel they are listened to and they respect each other's beliefs and values. Parents emphasize the contribution the school makes to their children's social skills and self confidence and they endorsed the values of the school. Care and concern for others extends beyond the school environment to others, as is seen in the regular support given to charities. Titles such as playground buddies are not

needed because pupils take on such roles anyway. Children have a strong sense of spiritual awareness. Pupils talk with pride about their involvement in school council. The girls are especially proud that their suggestion to provide hairdryers for them after swimming lessons has been accepted. All pupils' achievements are regularly celebrated in the awards they receive. There are many opportunities given to broaden pupils' experience, including sporting events and opportunities to learn to play musical instruments. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures different from their own is celebrated by the school's intermediate International School's award.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is much looked forward to by pupils. Despite the lack of a school hall a classroom is adapted to ensure that the worship experience is different from that of a lesson. A table with a candle provides a good focus for worship. Worship is led by pupils, staff and the vicar and attended by all members of the school community. Acts of worship start in a peaceful manner and actively involve pupils, who respond very well when asked to answer questions or to help lead worship such as by reading prayers or playing recorders to accompany the singing. Collective worship has a distinctly Christian focus and includes prayers and songs. The themes are linked to the Anglican calendar. There are opportunities for pupils to learn about the traditions and customs of the Anglican church and the new incumbent is keen to extend this aspect of provision. The manner in which worship is planned ensures that pupils are aware of all the major church festivals and of the messages behind the stories Jesus told. The good quality of pupils' singing was a major strength in the act of worship experienced during the inspection. Older pupils, on the day of the inspection, enjoyed their experiences of worship at a Church of England high school. Pupils like visiting the parish church for services. The environment of the school is enhanced by some Christian symbols including some excellent art work depicting scenes from the Bible.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Overall standards of attainment are above average. Pupils have a very good knowledge of Christianity and their knowledge of other world religions is satisfactory. They say they find the religious education lessons interesting and are keen to discuss and reflect on the subject. Pupils work willingly and effectively, responding to the challenge with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching and learning was of a high quality with every opportunity taken to discuss with individual pupils his/her thoughts about the topics studied. For example, school records show that when a pupil was asked by the teacher to articulate her thoughts about going into Saint John's church responded, 'I felt safe, I did not feel worried.' Progression in religious education is high on the school's agenda because of the challenges of pupils being taught in classes that contain more than two age groups. The newly appointed religious education coordinator has worked successfully in establishing an assessment tracking system that identifies the levels of pupils' understanding of the units of work. This information is beginning to be used well in ensuring the work pupils are asked to do is consistently matched to their attainment levels. During the inspection some outstanding work by Year 6 pupils allowed them to use their ICT skills very well in writing about Jewish festivals. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, a school governor has worked with pupils to help them link their artistic skills with religious education. As a result acrylic canvasses depicting scenes from the Bible have been produced, which are of an outstanding quality.

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

The school provides a very strong and supportive Christian environment which contributes effectively to the excellent personal development and well being of all pupils. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. Her excellent leadership is articulate, thoughtful and purposeful. The shared leadership of another church school is highly beneficial to both schools in that staff can come together and expertise can be shared. As a result of very strong leadership and management there is a highly positive working environment where success is acknowledged and concerns are positively addressed. A strong feature of the school is that all members of staff are fully committed to getting the very

best for the pupils. High expectations, improvements made to resources and the building and the use of visiting specialist staff ensures that pupils can achieve their very best. This is because in this school every child really does matter. The headteacher consults parents and pupils regularly, enabling them to play their part in school decision-making. Parents commented that the school is a happy well-managed environment where their children can grow. The issues from the previous inspection have been addressed well. The leadership and management of the school should feel very proud of their achievements in ensuring pupils are exceedingly well prepared for the next stage in their education.

SIAS report June 2009, Yealand CE Primary School, Carnforth