

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St. Paul's CE (Controlled) Primary School, Walkden

Heathside Grove
Walkden
Worsley
Manchester M28 3NZ

Diocese:**Manchester**

Local authority:

Salford

Dates of inspection:

27 September, 2011

Date of last inspection:

8 October 2008

School's unique reference number:

105973

Headteacher:

Mrs J Rowley (Acting)

Inspector's name and number:

Revd I C Anthony 87

School context

St. Paul's is a small primary school. Most pupils are of white British background with a growing number of children from other backgrounds and cultures. More than half the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school serves an area of council housing which experiences some degree of urban deprivation. The acting Head Teacher has been in post only a few weeks.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Paul's School as a Church of England school are good

St. Paul's is a good church school that reflects well its Christian foundation. The Christian ethos of the school brings positive attitudes and values to both teaching and learning and life generally in the school. It has a happy and relaxed atmosphere. The school has striven very effectively to maintain its links with the parish church, despite the fact that the church has had no incumbent for some considerable time.

Established strengths

- The tangible Christian ethos of the school which promotes values of care, consideration and respect for others and for self.
- The strong leadership and shared vision which has brought about improved standards and ensures the needs of all learners are addressed
- The good behaviour of the children.
- The commitment to maintaining links with the church.

Focus for development

- The Governors to monitor more accurately the impact of the school's Christian character possibly by the use of the 'Toolkit'.
- To consider the physical arrangements in the hall for worship and update the visual and sound technology.

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

The Christian ethos of the school produces a calm learning environment in which the children feel safe and valued. A robust monitoring and tracking system ensures that the needs of all children are addressed, support given and barriers to learning removed. The school development plan indicates that steps are being taken to enhance further the children's personal development and wellbeing. The clear Christian teaching in the school offered within a rich and varied curriculum makes a good and positive impact on the spiritual, moral and social development of the children. Children of all faiths benefit from this. Gospel values are built into the way the school operates. Relationships within the school are very good and the behaviour of the children is good. The school environment supports very well the spiritual and cultural development of the children with displays which encourage good attitudes towards each other, emphasise the value of the individual and illustrate aspects of both the Christian faith and non-Christian world religions. Children benefit from after school clubs and there are plans to increase this provision. The Christian foundation of the school is clearly reflected in school policies and documentation and overall, St. Paul's makes good provision to meet the needs of all learners.

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

Worship occupies an important place in the life of this school and clearly has a good positive effect upon the life of the whole community . It is well planned and covers a variety of topics which include major Christian themes as well as topics from other religions and issues explored in the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)' project. The themes outlined stimulate children's thoughts, and make a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children. Worship contributes effectively to the way the children behave. When asked what they have learned from acts of worship a group of children commented: 'We learn to be healthy', 'We learn respect and tolerance' and 'We learn to help those who are hurt'. The children display a sound knowledge of the events in the life of Jesus and understand how to apply his teaching to their daily lives. The children come into worship in an appropriate manner, listen carefully and answer questions readily. They enjoy their singing and benefit greatly from times for reflection. Staff attend acts of worship and emphasise its importance by making reference to the day's theme later in the day during lessons. Children enjoy participating in worship by volunteering to perform at the front. Their involvement is to be furthered as the school has plans to develop acts of worship led by different classes. Once a week in worship, the children's achievements are celebrated and this serves to bind the school together in recognising the community's Christian values. Parents and governors on occasions attend acts of worship which take place both in school and, for special festivals, in church. However, with the absence of an incumbent and problems with the church building, engaging in worship in church over recent months has been something of a problem. The school and church officers are to be commended on the valiant way they striven to maintain this church link in such circumstances. Their persistence is rewarded by the children's good understanding of the Anglican tradition

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

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

The head teacher, staff and governors are committed to and effective in promoting the distinctive Christian character of the school. The mission statement, aims of the school and the way the school operates reflect this: 'Our school is a community where by example we embrace and celebrate our Christian values...'. All work together well to articulate the school's shared vision and improve standards. The staff and pupils feel valued and know that their views are taken seriously. There are good and effective pastoral systems in place which reflect gospel values and the acceptance of people as individuals. The children of Year 6 take on the role of peer mentor very responsibly, supporting younger children and enabling them to feel safe. Parents report that their children are happy and safe at school and say that they value the school's religious commitment. They are regularly informed about school matters and the school is set to improve this communication with parents through a parents' council and by other means. Parents are supported, when appropriate, by workers from the nearby children's centre who come in to school to support families who would benefit from help with parenting skills. A learning mentor works effectively to remove barriers to learning. The children are regularly consulted about current issues, either by questionnaires, or through the school council and effective action is taken. The children make good social development because the school has valuable links with the local community which include work with Tesco, the Rotary Club and involvement in a local carol singing competition. The pupils have a good awareness of community cohesion through the building up of relationships with key professionals such as community police officers, the fire and rescue service and local councillors. The Christian commitment of the school leads children to support charities such as 'The Booth Centre' and 'Aqua Aid'. The links with the church, albeit somewhat curtailed at the moment, are used effectively both to emphasise the Christian foundation of the school and to enrich worship. Regular trips out and visitors to the school develop and enhance the curriculum. The school has a happy atmosphere and relationships within the school are good.