



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School
Shepstye Road,
Horbury,
Wakefield,
WF4 5BE

Diocese: Wakefield

Local Authority: Wakefield

Date of inspection: 1st July 2008

Date of last inspection: November 2004

School's unique reference number: 108244

Headteacher: Mr J. Berry

S.I.A.S. Inspector: NS129 Mr. J.W. Bradley

School Context

St. Peter's Junior School currently has 179 pupils on roll and principally serves the suburb of Horbury to the south west of Wakefield. The great majority of the pupils are white British and none speak English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post for twelve years and an interregnum has just ended with the appointment of a new parish priest.

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

'St. Peter's has a sense of place and tradition where Christian values are promoted' is the view of staff and governors and is carried out in practice. Pupils are nurtured within a prevailing atmosphere of Christian love and support and where the values of forgiveness, reconciliation and care for others are paramount. Long standing links with the church place the school firmly in its community where it is much respected.

Established strengths

- The atmosphere of a Christian community working together for mutual good.
- The organisation and impact of collective worship.
- The valuable links made with other schools, locally and internationally, to increase pupil understanding of other faiths and cultures.

Focus for development

- Governors to more formally and regularly evaluate church school distinctiveness.
- To develop a system for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of collective worship beyond that already in use for pupils.

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

'Everyone is friendly and there is always someone there to help' This view, expressed by a member of the very effective and busy school council, sums up this school's pervading ethos. It is an ethos firmly based upon Christian values where everyone is included, encouraged and supported. The support from its church provides 'something extra' and is characterised by regular pupil visits for worship and educational purpose and parishioners willingly helping in school. Pupils therefore know that theirs is a church school and that an extra level of support is provided for them. The 'Peterites', a church club run for pupils by parishioners is well attended. Charitable giving, highlighting for pupils the needs of others, is a feature of this school and a wide range of causes is supported. This includes fund raising for a new school in Africa and the results of this work, when seen by St. Peter's pupils has really increased their empathy and understanding of others in different circumstances. This can equally be said of the outstanding links made with a neighbouring school where the majority of the pupils are of other ethnic origins and faiths. Joint activity days are valuable for their affect upon mutual understanding and development of friendship. Religious education teaching makes clear links with life today for pupils and outstanding work on those of other faiths extends to video conferencing with a Jewish centre and visits to places of worship. Lessons on the Shabbat made clear to pupils the nature of family time being special to all. Relationships, and consequently behaviour in school, are excellent and staff knowledge of individual pupils has an outstanding affect upon the Christian care provided for all of them. Staff feel equally supported and say 'none of us ever wants to leave'.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Worship has an important place in the daily life of this school. It is thoughtfully planned, using a thematic approach which is currently devised only by the co-ordinator. Social and Emotional aspects of Learning are increasingly being used as part of the themes with a Christian emphasis being incorporated. There is a genuine sense of a Christian community being together when this school meets, with a clear distinction being made between worship and assembly. Pupils know that the lighted candle is a focus for their thoughts and reflection is an integral part of the activity. Worship is also fun and a real sense of anticipation and enjoyment is evident. All staff regularly attend, increasing pupils' knowledge that worship in their school is a whole community activity. The church's year is closely followed and Anglican aspects have been well served by regular contributions from the previous incumbent, to be continued by his replacement. Liturgical colours are not used as part of the meaningful focus. Attractive table cloths are currently used and their change to liturgical colour is seen as a possible area for development. Pupils are being taught more prayers, this happening as a consequence of a pupil consultation about worship. Their views have also been taken into account regarding the value placed upon the focus candle and staff also now know that pupils prefer to listen to improvised prayer. Pupils also regularly write their own prayers and these are much valued when services are held in church attended by parents. Evaluation of content and impact is not, as yet, undertaken by staff or governors. It is a stated aim that worship is 'to enable pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and the many questions which relate to life'. It is clear that this aim is achieved.

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

'It can be felt that our ethos is underpinned by the Christian faith' is said by the chair of governors. This view is held by many involved with St. Peter's School. It has a long and proud history as a church school and is well regarded by parents, church members and wider community. This 'feeling' regarding the impact of the ethos is not currently evaluated in a formalised way by staff or governors and this has been identified as an area for development in the school's future management. The school

is well led and managed and it is clear that the individual needs of every pupil are at the forefront of any thinking. Added to this is the key fact that 'Christian values are promoted'. This provides pupils with a sense of being part of a loving community where they are cared for but are also expected to care for others. Foundation governors are very supportive and provide secure links with St. Peter's Church, whose membership is encouraged to offer prayerful and practical support, such as the 'Peterites'. Other governors are also supportive of the church school ethos and appreciate its benefits by saying 'our Christian ethos feeds into everything'. The new incumbent has been made to feel very welcome and appreciated the strong links made between school and church on the parish profile, in which the headteacher was very much involved. He perceives a sense of 'a Christian ethos to life' being very much part of the school. St Peter's is a happy and successful school where many are devoted to its future and its Christian ethos determines so much of what is achieved for its pupils

SIAS report July 2008 St. Peter's CE (VC) Junior School, Wakefield, WF4 5BE