

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### St Jude's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Paget Road,  
Wolverhampton,  
WV6 0DT

#### Diocese: Lichfield

LA: Wolverhampton

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Date of last inspection: 2007

School's unique reference number:- 104367

Head teacher: Mrs. Cheryl Gould

Inspector's name and number: Roger Whittaker 446

#### School context

St. Jude's is a popular, large Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School situated on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. The school has 430 children age from 3 – 11 years. St. Jude's school caters for pupils from many faiths and cultures. There is a higher than normal rate of pupil mobility both into and out of the school. The Early Years unit caters for 60 part-time nursery-aged children and 60 full-time reception-aged children.

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

The head teacher has a clear Christian vision for this church school and is a very effective leader and manager. The school provides good learning opportunities for pupils to develop both academic skills and personal qualities. These contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development, within a Christian environment. The school has high expectations of all its staff, the pupils, their parents and the governors. The pupils are friendly, happy and confident. Links with the church leaders are very effective.

#### Established strengths

- The very strong Christian leadership from the head teacher ensures a vibrant, school community.
- The contribution of the Parish Team to the spiritual life of the school.
- The inclusivity of the school where everyone is equal regardless of their race, religion or colour.
- The community relations in supporting vulnerable children and families

#### Focus for development

- Establish a Christian focus in each classroom which acknowledges God and gives regular opportunities to the pupils for contemplative worship and make use of artefacts in strategic areas to enhance the Christian distinctiveness of the School.
- Involve the Foundation Governors in the planning and evaluation of collective worship to ascertain its impact on the pupils
- Make use of external agencies to support the training and development of staff in leading worship.

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

All pupils are well catered for within the school's inclusive approach. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good for all pupils. The Christian character of the school plays an important part in the pupils understanding of their role within their local community. There is a positive learning environment embracing both achievement and celebration so that most pupils take a pride in their school and are happy, confident and communicative. They are kind and considerate of each other across all age ranges. This was evidenced at lunch time by the care older pupils were taking of the younger children. Good use is made in Religious Education of the ethnic and religious diversity of the pupils and their families to enhance the

pupils' cultural and religious awareness. Pupils, especially through the school's council system, have many opportunities to contribute to school life. They played their part in the planning and development of the new school building. Pupils feel valued and are proud of their achievements, which are recognised in celebration assemblies. The school encourages its pupils through local, national and global initiatives to be aware of their responsibilities to each other and the wider community, demonstrating the Christian values of service, caring and gratitude. As a result of this work there is good community cohesion. Parents are very satisfied and say that the school provides a happy, secure and Christian environment where their children are respected and valued and that the children enjoy their time at school. Parents and pupils are aware of the procedures adopted by the school to resolve any issues of concern. The external sculptures and illuminated cross in the hall make a valuable contribution to the Christian distinctiveness of the school. This will be further enhanced when the Faith Window within the school is completed. There were no areas within the classrooms which provided for both class and individual contemplation. This is an area for development.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

The daily act of worship is important in the life of the school and forms the main element of the school's Christian witness. With the diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds it is significant that all pupils are involved in the daily act of Christian Worship. Some pupils gain inspiration and affirmation from their worship experience. Worship observed was of good quality with pupil participation in answering questions. Opportunities for individual prayer and reflection were limited. Worship time is a focal point for all pupils and is supportive of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Worship is celebrated in school with staff, pupils, and the Parish Clergy all having a role to play. Worship is well planned with the coordinator incorporating the views of staff and the LEA. Evaluation lacks structure and there is no formal evaluation of the quality of worship by the foundation governors. Pupils talk positively about their worship experiences and clearly enjoy taking part in them. The involvement of the Parish Outreach worker in a lunchtime Christian Club is appreciated by a significant number of pupils. Older pupils are able to re-tell some elements of the major Christian festivals and are able to use the Lord's Prayer in their prayer time. Their knowledge and understanding of Anglican rituals through school and church worship is limited. Relationships between the school and church leaders are very good. However, the links between the church community and the school could be developed. This is an area that the Parish Priest and Foundation governors are aware of and seek to develop. The introduction of a staff Eucharist Service is unusual and is well supported by the majority of the staff. There are plans to extend this to the older pupils. The school makes good use of the church celebrating most major Christian festivals there. Parents respond positively to the invitations to share in worship in church. The illuminated cross provides a focal point for pupils and staff at worship time. A worship table with candle and bible is planned as an additional focus.

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

There is very strong leadership of the school by the Head Teacher, which contributes significantly to the success of the school as a Church School. She has a clear Christian vision which she communicates well to the whole school community. There is a very strong Parish team of Vicar, Curate, Outreach and Youth worker, all of whom support the spiritual development of the staff and pupils. The Foundation Governors along with the Parish Priest are very supportive of the head and school and they successfully promote the school's Christian character. They are also very involved in all the developments made by the school. The issues raised in the last inspection had been satisfactorily addressed. The monitoring and evaluation by the Foundation Governors of the Christian distinctiveness of the school and its Christian witness through worship requires a more formalised approach, to ensure the outcomes inform future development planning. The clear Christian leadership is evident in the positive relationships between staff and pupils which manifests itself in all feeling valued as members of this cohesive church school. Relationships with parents are strong and effective. The school manages the diversity of its ethnic population and the variety of faiths to the benefit of everyone. The school seeks the views of all stakeholders and is very informative of all its developments. All stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in evaluating pupil progress.