



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Anne's CofE Lydgate Primary School

Cedar Lane
Grasscroft
Oldham
OL4 4DS

Diocese: Manchester

Local authority: Oldham

Dates of inspection: 19 June 2014

Date of last inspection: June 2009

School's unique reference number: 105689

Headteacher: Jane Fraser

Inspector's name and number: Gillian Rhodes 657

School context

St Anne's CofE Lydgate is an average sized voluntary controlled primary school on the outskirts of Oldham. The proportion of children with English as an additional language is below average. The proportions of children with disabilities, special educational needs and for whom the school receives pupil premium are also below national average. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken up their posts since the last inspection. The school was inspected by Ofsted in May 2013 and was judged to require improvement. Subsequent monitoring reports of the school's progress indicate positive development.

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

- Christian values are clearly expressed and demonstrated by children and staff and underpin the positive relationships between all members of the community and the good behaviour of the children.
- Carefully planned collective worship develops a secure understanding of the Church's year and of Christian festivals and includes teaching about Jesus and the Bible.
- Parents and members of the local church and community contribute fully to school life and value the mutual benefits which arise from their involvement and from the school's participation in local community activities.

Areas to improve

- Broaden the focus of prayer and praise so that children develop a deeper understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Include in monitoring and evaluation of collective worship assessment of its impact on children's spiritual and moral development as well as their response to worship.
- Extend opportunities for children to explore and deepen their understanding of Christianity as a world multi-cultural faith and of other world religions.

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

Distinctively Christian values are clearly expressed through the school's Golden Values which are displayed in classrooms and around the building and which the children know and mainly recognise as Christian values. They understand that behaviour is rooted in the Golden Values and that these also apply out of school. The Golden Values are listed in information for parents but it is not explicitly explained to them how these impact on school policy and practice. All staff model Christian values and relationships between children and adults are positive. The children are warm, friendly, caring and respectful. Year 6 children act as buddies for Reception children and school councillors carry out their duties diligently and with pride. The school council worked successfully with staff and governors to plan and access funding for a peace garden. Year 4 and 5 children recounted with enthusiasm the history of the project but were not as confident in explaining how the garden will be used and why it is important to the life and character of the school. Children respect each other as individuals and recognise the spirit of fairness which pervades school life: 'We're all individuals and we're all different but we're all treated fairly.' Children also recognise the cohesive nature of the make-up of the school community. A school councillor said, 'We're a school for all religions.' Children at St Anne's regularly support local, national and international charity appeals and events such as Jeans for Genes and Comic Relief. They understand that the school's values of compassion, justice, friendship and hope are demonstrated through this support. The link between school values and Bible stories is explored in Religious Education (RE) and makes a positive contribution to children's own moral development. Year 1 children discussed faith as trust by trust falling in pairs and linking this experience to Daniel's trust in God in the den of lions. Standards in RE are in line with standards in other curriculum areas and staff expectations are consistent across all subjects. Links are made to worship themes and this enables children to understand how what they learn in RE can be applied to their lives. After learning about the Ten Commandments, Year 4 children wrote commandments by which they could lead their lives. They successfully related their commandments to conduct in school and at home. Spirituality is clearly defined through a spirituality policy and staff are becoming more confident in providing opportunities for children to explore this. Year 3 children expressed wonder as they looked at cloud patterns in an RE lesson on creation. 'I can see a face. It might be God,' one child exclaimed excitedly. Opportunities to explore spirituality across the whole curriculum are not yet fully developed. The academic development of all pupils is a key aspect of school improvement and particular emphasis is now placed on appropriate challenge for more able children. In 2013 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. Progress in writing and maths was at or above the national average with reading below the average.

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

Collective worship is an important part of daily school life. Themes for worship are carefully planned with a weekly biblical focus and links to the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme. The school's core values of friendship, perseverance and faith are emphasised through the school prayer which is known by all children and used frequently in worship. Children are aware of God the Father through prayers they use regularly but their understanding of God the Holy Spirit is less developed. The person of Jesus Christ is central to worship through stories of his life and teachings. Children enjoy writing prayers and many of the prayers they write are used in collective worship, at lunchtime and at home time. Children's writing of prayers would benefit from the use of structured frameworks and models in order to maintain a clear and relevant focus. Topical events and issues are used to illustrate links between values and faith. An act of worship during the 2014 World Cup highlighted footballers who express their Christian faith and how this impacts on their sporting lives. This encouraged children to reflect on their own beliefs and conduct. Clergy and lay people from St Anne's church play an important part in the school's marking of Christian festivals through a

carefully planned programme of Experience Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Through this shared community worship, children develop a good understanding of key Christian festivals. The vicar of St Anne's is a governor and a regular presence in school. He attends collective worship and provides a strong link with the church. This helps the children to understand the importance of the church in their community. Clergy from other local Christian communities sometimes lead worship which broadens the children's experiences of different Christian traditions. Collective worship is monitored and evaluated by school leaders and governors. Evidence of children's evaluation of worship shows a very positive response to the content of acts of collective worship and their participation in them. The formalisation and regularity of monitoring and evaluation of worship is not fully developed and does not yet include assessment of the impact of worship on children's spiritual, moral and social development.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher of St Anne's articulate a vision shared by all staff and governors for the school as a Christian community. The distinctively Christian values they have established as the foundation of school policy and practice underpin children's good behaviour and moral, social and cultural development. Effective communication with parents ensures that they understand and share the leaders' vision. St Anne's church and the local community contribute fully to school life through shared events and activities such as the Bible service for Reception children and their families, the peace garden and local community projects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have led rigorous evaluation by all stakeholders of the school's academic performance and parents and children express confidence that the school has improved and will continue to do so. A school councillor asserted, 'Learning is the most important thing and the teachers make it challenging now.' Through questionnaires and monitoring of the curriculum, collective worship and RE, senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's distinctive Christian ethos. Self evaluation has been carried out by all members of the school community including children. As a result the school improvement plan sets out areas for the further development of St Anne's as an effective school with a distinctively Christian character. Professional development opportunities for all staff and for potential future leaders are accessed in line with the school's development aims. The two members of staff who have recently taken responsibility for the leadership of RE have been proactive in seeking advice and support. They are undertaking a review of the school's RE syllabus and have accessed training. They are developing plans to provide children with increased first hand experiences of world faiths other than Christianity through visits and welcoming visitors into school. Plans also include more opportunities to build on existing global links such as that with the African Destiny Choir which visits St Anne's. This supports the development of children's understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.

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