

# National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

## Lytham Church of England Primary School

Park View Road  
Lytham  
FY8 4HA

### Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2012

Date of last inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2008

School's unique reference number: 119551

Headteacher: Nicola Worrad

Inspector's name and number: Neville Norcross NS403

### School context

Lytham Church of England school serves an area which is socially and economically advantaged. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below the national average. Around 90% of pupils are from white British backgrounds. The school is associated with two local churches, St. John's and St. Cuthbert's, and has won a number of awards including two for church school distinctiveness.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lytham C of E as a Church of England school are good

Recent events have demonstrated the impact of the school's Christian character on the day to day life of the school. The school has a clear vision and a shared sense of purpose which stems from this vision. At the heart of this vision are the Christian values which direct the day to day thinking of the school community.

### Established strengths

- The high level of care which the school demonstrates to both pupils and adults
- The strong links with the local churches and the wider community
- The shared sense of purpose based upon the school's vision and values

### Focus for development

- Ensure that pupils understand the link between the school's core values and the roots of these values within the Christian faith
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to both plan and lead their own acts of worship
- In religious education ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the two attainment targets in order to ensure that the work is sufficiently challenging.

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

At the heart of this school are the Christian values which are acknowledged by all members of the school community. Pupils speak of the difference which these values make to the daily life of the school and gave an example of the way in which the value "friendship" had helped them in their relationships. Parents speak with conviction about the way in which the school's Christian ethos sustained all members of the community during recent tragic events. One parent commented, "There is something special here." A recent visitor to school commenting on the pupils' reaction to recent events said, "A miracle has happened." Whilst the link between the school's values and the Christian faith is evident to adults, the pupils are less sure of the origin of the values within the Christian gospel. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They have a strong identity with the local community which is enhanced by the many productive links with local organisations and individuals. The communities week provided an excellent focus for this work. The school has worked hard to develop the pupils' understanding of cultures which are different from their own. The links

with a school in Blackburn and the visitors from non-Christian faiths for example, broaden the pupils' thinking about diversity and difference. The school has a children's code which is based on Christian values. The code provides a good focus for the school's behaviour policy and roots the pupils' actions within the Christian tradition. The school environment makes some contributions to the pupils' spiritual development. The entrance area is very attractive with symbols and displays which celebrate the Christian character of the school. There are displays which invite a response from children and these are used effectively to help pupils come to terms with their feelings during difficult times. Each classroom has a reflection/worship area. Whilst these are often attractive areas their potential for developing children's spirituality is not always explored to the full.

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

Pupils enjoy the daily acts of worship and particularly like those occasions when it is led by visitors to school. The pupils are actively engaged during worship and willingly join in with the singing and action stories. They sing with enthusiasm and say that this is an important aspect of worship for them. There are occasions throughout the year when pupils are able to lead significant elements of worship in both school and church; at harvest and on Mothering Sunday for example. There are fewer opportunities for the pupils to actually plan the worship although on those occasions when they do, such as worship for house groups, the results are encouraging. Pupils have a good understanding of Anglican tradition and practice through the effective links with two local churches. This is an area that the school and the churches have worked very hard to develop in recent years and the pupils have positive views of the role of the churches within the local community. Worship is planned thoroughly by the worship co-ordinator who ensures that there is a broad and balanced range of themes across the school year. There is a strong emphasis on prayer in the daily life of the school and this makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils respond sensitively to the informal opportunities for prayer and this has been a significant part of the school's response during the past few weeks. Good use is made of the small worship group to ascertain the impact of worship on the pupils. The pupils' views are taken into account in order to bring about improvements.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Pupils' standards and progress in religious education (RE) are good. The pupils are generally positive about RE and say that they particularly enjoyed the Bible Week which provided them with many challenging activities. They have a good knowledge of the Christian faith and understand that this is an important element in the life of the school. The school's work with non-Christian faiths enables them to have a knowledge and understanding of other faith positions. Much has been done to provide the pupils with first-hand experiences of non-Christian faiths. This has had a positive impact on the pupils' understanding of life in a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Whilst some satisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, overall the standard of teaching in RE is good. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role and is committed to giving RE the status of a core subject. She maintains a portfolio of pupils' work which has been assessed against national standards. This enables her to have a clear view of standards and progress. However, this evidence is not shared consistently with other members of staff and this limits their understanding of what could be achieved. Where the teaching is good there is an effective balance between attainment target 1 ( learning about religion) and attainment target 2 (learning from religion). The teaching is less effective when the emphasis is on knowledge rather than on challenging the pupils' thinking. School leaders, including governors, recognise the central importance of RE which is an integral part of the school's strategic planning and assessment procedures.

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

All school leaders have a clear vision for the school as a church school. A day of reflection was held last year and this gave rise to a new mission statement, motto and logo. This process has helped to galvanise everyone's thinking and provides a shared sense of purpose for all members of the school community. The school governors demonstrate a high level of commitment to the school and ensure that church school issues are part of the strategic

planning. They have good systems in place for the evaluation of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness. The link governor for church school issues has responded to her comparatively new role with much enthusiasm. Her growing understanding places her in a good position to both support and challenge the school on its effectiveness. The subject leaders for worship and RE have attended appropriate training and are committed to the development of their respective areas. The headteacher has completed the church school self-evaluation document and this has been shared with governors. The partnership between the church, the school and the local community is a strength, which is recognised by all members of the school community. All school leaders have won the utmost respect of parents and the wider community for the sensitivity, professionalism and tenacity which they have demonstrated during recent weeks

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