

St Anne's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Trinity Road
Sale
Trafford
M33 3ES

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Trafford
Date of inspection: 27 September 2012
Date of last inspection: 18 September 2007
School's unique reference number: 106343
Headteacher: Mrs Jane Brahney
Inspector's name and number: Ian Newton 273

School context

St Anne's is a well established school which has served this urban community for about 150 years. There are 204 children on roll plus 34 in the nursery. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average at 10%, whilst 3% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children attending this popular school live locally and across a wider area of Sale and the Borough of Trafford.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Anne's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are good

St Anne's is a school where Christian values are evident in all aspects of school life. These are especially evident in the good relationships that exist at all levels of school life and children's outstanding behaviour. Care and consideration are shown to all. Everyone's contribution to school life is valued. Good leadership ensures that there is a constant drive for improvement in all aspects of school life.

Established strengths

- Christian values which permeate all aspects of school life.
- Relationships at all levels and pupils' conduct and care for one another are outstanding.
- The use of prayers which are common to worship in school and the church.

Focus for development

- Review the school's vision statement in light of timescale and changes to the membership of the governing body, staffing and pupil mobility.
- Establish a robust system of evaluating collective worship to include all stakeholders.
- Develop an effective system for assessment in religious education.

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

Christian values influence all that the school does and impact very positively on the lives and conduct of the school community. Learners have respect for others in the school community; they care for and help each other. They have a good sense of moral awareness and are developing into well rounded citizens. There are high expectations of everyone. All are expected to give their best, not just academically but also in the care, compassion, tolerance and acceptance of everyone. Parents spoke positively about how the values promoted by the school shaped their children and how spiritual and moral values were as important as the academic. Children are taught the value of being able to forgive. Restorative practice is used for the resolution of issues and mediation, and justifying with children why some choices they make are the wrong ones. Children said that they were not punished harshly, but with understanding. The difficulties that some children have faced or have to deal with have

contributed to an understanding by, and an acceptance from, the wider school community. The value that the school places on each individual is based on the view that everyone is made in the image of God. Children's understanding of social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues is supported well by the Christian character of the school. In addition to their strong moral values, children of different age groups readily help one another and are willing to raise money for local and national charities as well as financially support a school in Madagascar through the charity the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG). Their understanding of others is further enhanced by children learning about the language and culture of Italy. Governors are keen that the school serves both families who are practising Christians and those from other faiths and none. Relationships at all levels and pupils' behaviour are outstanding. An issue from the previous inspection relating to displays and artefacts reinforcing the school's Christian foundation has been met. There is a good display in the entrance of the school which shows links between the church and school and all classrooms have areas for reflection which include a cross and prayers, some of which are written by children.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is planned around a range of themes which link to major festivals, the sacraments and other key teachings from Christianity, and the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) project from the Department of Education together with aspects of other world religions. Children largely enjoy collective worship. They like stories that have a moral to them and when learning about the life and example of Jesus. They enjoy singing, although some thought that some songs were too long, some not very lively! There is a good variation of collective worship across a typical week, with the headteacher, members of staff and clergy all leading it. The introduction of digital technology has enhanced what is able to be presented visually. Children are familiar with worship in the neighbouring parish church where collective worship takes place on a monthly basis as well as on major Christian festivals and school related celebrations. Additionally opportunities exist for classes to be involved in Sunday worship at particular times of the year. They are also familiar with several aspects of Anglican practice including recitation of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, the use of candles and the Cross. Clergy use the same prayers and responses in the collective worship they lead in school as is used in the parish church, which provides a very valuable link for worshipping families. Prayers are used by classes at particular times of the day, the Grace prior to lunch, for example. The act of worship observed was led by the headteacher and focussed on baptism. Its significance was outlined to the children and photographs shown of a recent baptism in the parish church of a child of a member of staff, with both baby and parent being present. Children engaged well, answering questions and joining in with prayers and singing. Signing was widely used which enabled all learners to participate. A really good touch was that the music for entering and leaving the hall was played by two pupils on the piano. Children took responsibility for operating recorded music and ICT equipment. A cross and a candle provided an appropriate focal point. An issue from the previous inspection relating to evaluation of collective worship has only been partly met. Some children have given feedback but it is not focussed well enough to provide a solid enough basis for informing future planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious Education (RE) is well led by an enthusiastic teacher who has recently assumed this role. The school follows the Chester Diocesan Guidelines for Religious Education, thus ensuring that the main focus of study is on Christianity, with shorter units of study being included on Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. This balance, together with other activities linked with charitable work and learning about other cultures, gives children an insight and understanding into the challenges and successes that people face in their lives. RE impacts on all aspects of school life. This principle has been embedded into the draft revised policy for RE which refers to it being used as a tool to enhance learning across the curriculum by children taking attitudes, morals and values learned into other subjects. Teachers are confident teaching RE and standards are in line with other curriculum areas. Children enjoy lessons which are lively and interactive, as experienced in the observed lesson. This was well planned with clear learning objectives. The teacher had effectively planned a range of very practical activities linked to a story from the Islamic faith when the Prophet Mohammed received the word of God from an angel. Group work included drama, art, recitation, reflection

and comparison of some aspects of Islam and Christianity. ICT was used to good effect and good relationships contributed strongly to effective group working. Children contribute well to lessons and are open about what they think, both verbally and through the use of comments on “post-it” notes. Monitoring of RE is undertaken through scrutiny of planning and children’s work. There is a link governor for the subject and reports are given about developments to the governors’ curriculum committee. The draft revised policy is awaiting approval by them. However, assessment procedures in RE are not well developed and do not inform future planning sufficiently well.

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

The school operates on a clear set of Christian values which underpin all aspects of school life. Leaders and governors promote the school’s denominational status well, so that all families are aware of the environment in which children will be learning. Foundation governors said that the school was “upfront about the faith component.” The headteacher very effectively leads a committed staff. Governors know the school well and take their role as a “critical friend” seriously. Whilst the current mission statement and aims have promoted the school’s Christian foundation well, since its formulation some years ago there have been significant changes to the governing body, particularly in the past year, changes of staff and there are families new to the school. To ensure ownership of the school’s values a review of the mission statement and aims should be undertaken. The school has good networks with other schools and organisations. Good links have been made with a church high school in Manchester Diocese as well as local secondary schools. Use is made of facilities at the respective schools and placement of staff at St Anne’s to enhance children’s learning opportunities. The local parish is very supportive of the school’s work and raises the governors’ financial contribution for building work. In addition a weekly after school club based in the church hall is run for the benefit of pupils by clergy and youth leaders. The school and church are mutually supportive through organising and supporting each other’s social and fundraising events. The active parent teacher association helps support the school financially and through organising events and is a conduit for parents to get involved in school activities. Training opportunities for staff and governors have been provided by the Local Authority, although fewer courses have been attended that have been organised by the Diocesan Board of Education. The school identifies and encourages staff who feel ready to assume greater responsibility, with several previous deputy heads having gone on to headship appointments. The recently retired chair of governors has been active in leading training for succession planning. An issue from the previous inspection relating to highlighting the school’s Christian distinctiveness in documentation has been fully met.