



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Duddon St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Duddon
Tarporeley
Cheshire
CW6 0EL

Diocese:	Chester
Local authority:	Cheshire West and Chester
Dates of inspection:	6 th February 2014
Date of last inspection:	10 th October 2008
School's unique reference number:	111281
Headteacher:	Mr Paul Hudson
Inspector's name and number:	Mrs Ruth Wall (548)

School context

St Peter's is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are admitted from a wide range of social backgrounds and a large geographical area. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds, with a small number from other heritages. The number of children with special educational needs is smaller than the national average as is the number of those eligible for free school meals. All governors and the majority of staff have been appointed since the previous inspection.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Duddon St Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- Duddon St Peter's has an established and distinctive Christian character which has a significant impact on the personal, spiritual and academic development of all pupils
- The very good relationships between all members of the school community are based on explicit Christian values
- The highly effective partnership between the school and St Peter's Church is mutually beneficial

Areas to improve

- Leaders and governors to work together to introduce a more robust and structured approach to the self-evaluation of church school development which engages the whole school community
- Promote greater pupil involvement in the planning and leading of collective worship to develop their confidence and skills in leadership

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

The school is successful in achieving its aim to recognise and encourage Christian values. The mission statement 'Be the best you can be' was chosen by a child, after careful consideration and discussion with the school community, taking careful account of the Christian foundation of the school. A child explained, 'Jesus wants us to be the best we can be.' All adults in the school are excellent role models. They have high expectations of behaviour, which is good, and encourage the children to reflect on following in the steps of Jesus and his disciples. Attendance at the school is very good. Challenging behaviour has been dealt with sensitively. Children talk naturally about Christian values and agreed with one who said, 'Jesus **was** all the values.' They seek to develop their gifts with particular reference to a Biblical passage '...let each use the gift he has received in service to others.' The school community regularly enjoys celebrating children's efforts, learning and achievements. These strengths within the school's Christian character have been the foundation for its academic success. Achievement and rates of progress are good. Parents recognise and support the distinctive Christian nature of the school, the importance of which is made very clear by the headteacher when they first visit the school. Speaking about the impact of Christian values on their children's lives, one parent reported that on hearing God's name used as a swear word her child had responded, 'God's name is for worship.' The strong link with the local church enables pupils to have positive views of the role of the Christian church within the community. Through their religious education (RE) studies and discussions in collective worship there is a growing understanding of the church in a global sense. The school is both distinctive in its Christian character and inclusive in its approach to diversity. As a result it is a highly cohesive community in which all feel valued regardless of ability or faith. RE makes a good contribution to the Christian character of the school and is enjoyed by the children. Children eagerly shared their knowledge of other faith traditions and the ways in which faith influences their daily lives. They are encouraged to ask challenging spiritual questions and openly share their, as one child wrote, 'dilemmas'. 'We are given time to talk things through.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Children and adults recognise that worship is central to the life of the school. It is well planned to cover Christian themes, with a strong emphasis on Christian values and important Christian festivals and includes a time for quiet reflection and personal prayer which the children respond to respectfully. They demonstrated their understanding of God as Trinity through an analogy explained to them by the headteacher and the words of some worship songs. All teachers take an active part in leading worship which reinforces its importance to the whole community. The headteacher explained that a conscious effort is always made to provide children with an awareness of the challenge of the spiritual life within everyday experience. In the worship observed, he skilfully engaged all the children through story-telling, whilst putting across an important Christian message. Reflecting on the question that Jesus asked: 'Who is your neighbour?', children understood the importance of positive relationships, not only in school and at home, but also in their on-going 'teamwork' in helping others through regular charitable giving. Children enjoyed taking an active part in the worship and, whilst being enthusiastic in their responses, listened quietly when they needed to. Children are familiar with the Lord's Prayer and the lyric of the song, which they sang beautifully, explained its words and meaning. Worship regularly takes place in St Peter's Church which is viewed by the whole school community as a warm and welcoming open space for activities, fun and worship. Parents attend special services in the church. The vicar is a welcome and familiar presence in the school. His weekly contributions to worship are very much appreciated by staff who say they are always 'age appropriate' and by children who say they are 'fun' and 'hilarious'. The issue raised at the previous inspection has been successfully addressed and children are now included in the evaluation of worship. Reflecting on aspects of worship, one child commented articulately: 'You can respect what is said and apply it to yourself.' Another

child, reflecting on prayer, wrote thoughtfully, 'It can reassure us and maybe we could hear a small answer in our heads.' Children enjoy contributing within worship and leaders have identified the need to give them frequent opportunities to take more responsibility in planning and leading worship.

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

The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school based on Christian principles and values. Staff and governors fully support this and are able to articulate how their school is distinctive as a church school with values firmly based on the teachings of Christ. The chair of governors commented, 'The Christian faith is not just for collective worship and special occasions but for life.' Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and speak knowledgeably about church school issues including the development of future leaders. They understand the need to develop a more robust and structured approach to their self-evaluation of the school as a church school which engages the whole school community. Parents show active support for school activities and share their experience of the school with enthusiasm and affection. They feel welcome to 'drop in' for a chat at any time and affirm that any issue is 'always dealt with.' Leaders and governors have been successful in ensuring that the academic needs of all pupils, including those with special needs and the more able, are met. In doing so they have recognised the importance of the school's Christian character in creating an ethos which supports effective learning and their commitment to promoting equal opportunities. The school has strong and supportive links with the local church and community. A card from a resident of the local home for the elderly spoke fondly of her appreciation for the children's visit with singing they had all greatly enjoyed. Adults of other faiths are invited to talk about their culture and religious traditions which, children confirmed, has helped to broaden their knowledge, understanding and respect for the beliefs of others in the wider community. Members of staff work with the vicar to promote St Peter's Church, its values and services and children and families respond positively to the encouragement to participate in church activities wherever possible. Great importance is attached to the leadership of RE. The new subject leader is demonstrating excellent leadership and commitment in identifying and driving through school improvement initiatives. She is undertaking training from the diocese to further develop her skills. Children value their role in decision making through the school council and eco-committee and say they feel comfortable in expressing their views and confident that their suggestions are valued. As one parent said, 'In this school our children feel happy, secure and safe.'

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