



## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Muriel street  
Rochdale  
OL16 5JQ

**Diocese: Manchester**

Local authority: Rochdale

Dates of inspection: 19 September 2014

Date of last inspection: 18 September 2009

School's unique reference number: 105803

Headteacher: Aelred Whelan

Inspector's name and number: Gail Branch 632

#### School context

St Peter's is a two form entry voluntary controlled Church of England primary school in an urban area with high levels of social and economic deprivation. Most of the children come from minority ethnic backgrounds and English as second language (EAL) percentages across the school are well above average and rising. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) is well above average. Since the last inspection there have been significant staff changes, including the appointments of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher from September 2014.

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

- The school's great respect for the diverse community which it serves, successfully embraces every child and family irrespective of their faith, religion or belief.
- The behaviour of the children is of a high standard and the excellent relationships between all members of the school community are attributed to the succession of Christian leaders who continue to set high expectations and lead by example.
- The provision of exemplary care, guidance and support for parents and children feeds into the whole hearted, warm, nurturing atmosphere within the school.
- Good quality collective worship within the school is having a good impact on the spiritual and moral development of the children.

#### Areas to improve

- Extend opportunities for children to be fully involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship
- Revise the school's mission statement and aims so that the underpinning Christian ethos and core values are explicit and proclaimed to the whole school community
- Ensure governors play a regular role in monitoring and evaluating the Christian distinctiveness of St Peter's to inform their strategic planning

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

There is a strong Christian ethos in the school which impacts significantly on children's behaviour and the way they relate to each other, enabling them to flourish as individuals. Children and adults are respectful of each other and the different faiths that make up their school community. They feel free to openly express their different beliefs and are very positive about how religious education (RE) helps them to do this. The rich variety of faiths and cultures is celebrated and everyone embraces the opportunities to learn from and with each other. These open relationships reflect the school's Christian values and ensure that everyone is welcomed as a valued and special member of the school family. Pastoral care, guidance and support, is a key priority for the school. Children who enter St Peter's with very poor social, emotional and communication skills leave as confident, articulate and respectful individuals. There are high expectations of everyone and the efforts put into raising achievement have resulted in good progress being made from very low entry points. Attainment, however, is still below the nationally expected levels and the senior leadership team are implementing strategies and systems to pursue improvement in children's attainment and raise standards. The school is outstanding at preparing its children to become responsible citizens, who consider the whole community through their participation and involvement in the decision making process at all levels of school life. This is evidenced in the involvement in their very active school council, rights respecting ambassadors, eco council and philosophy for children. EAL provision is always improving to make a difference to individual achievement as well as the time, effort and support given to parents to empower them in knowing more to support their children. This provision is welcomed not only as an important contributor that makes a difference to the quality of family life away from the school, but also to their children's learning in school. Children develop their spiritual understanding through quiet reflection and thought and good collective worship and areas for reflection in the classrooms deepen this development.

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

Collective worship, in a variety of formats, is a key point in each school day. Children are respectful and attentive, they sing confidently with obvious enjoyment and are familiar with using Anglican responses. Children enjoy worship time and a Year 3 child said 'it is a special time when you can learn about your friend's religion. It is important in our school as a time for celebrating your religion and thanking God'. The children can relate the messages heard in worship to their own attitudes and behaviour. This is clear in the school's records of evaluation. The children appreciate the varied leadership of worship by all the staff and the visits from the vicar. Children's self-esteem and motivation to succeed in all areas of school life are developed well through a celebration worship each week. A Year 3 child commented that 'I like seeing other people getting awards and it makes me feel proud'. Opportunities for personal reflection and prayer successfully enable every child to experience a quiet, spiritual time during the course of a busy school day. Children make use of reflection time as individuals through the 'calm space', an area of reflection in the entrance hall and some reflection spaces in the classrooms. Collective worship is well planned and includes major Christian festivals and makes links between faiths whenever the opportunity presents itself. The children are able to contribute to worship time through the regular class assemblies. Although they do not have opportunities to take a greater and more prominent role in planning and leading worship, plans are in place to develop this. Some monitoring and evaluation of worship has taken place, including the gathering of feedback from children and staff but this does not happen on a regular basis. However, as a result of the suggestions made, some changes have taken place. One parent commented that although her child is a Muslim, she says the school prayers at home and she believes that 'worship is the one thing that has the main impact on the children'. Learners' progress in Religious Education [RE] is good, and most are able to relate their own religious experiences to those of others, comparing and contrasting the different faiths. However, they have little understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

Staff, governors, parents and children all contribute to make this school an effective church school. The newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher are totally committed to developing the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a church school. They have already undertaken a detailed evaluation of the school's Christian distinctiveness to review its impact in meeting the needs of all children. This is a good start in putting the informal monitoring that currently happens on to a more regular footing. The headteacher is passionately committed to the Christian ethos and growth of the school as a distinctive church school. In the very short time he has been in post he has begun to form a strong working relationship with the vicar and foundation governors. The rest of the leadership team, the governors and whole staff team have a clear understanding of the Christian vision. However, this vision is not clearly expressed in the school's key documents even though it is lived out on a daily basis. It is demonstrated in the loving care shown to all members of the school family and the warmth of relationships in the school. There is a good partnership with the local church and the vicar regularly leads worship in school. The close relationship, particularly through the vicar, further enhances the children's spirituality and ethos of the school. Governors have a secure understanding of church school recruitment and succession planning. This was a key factor in the recent appointments of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. Governors and the headteacher believe that the nurturing Christian ethos ensures that all children are given good teaching, care and support regardless of their low starting points. The excellent guidance and courses for parents to support their children's learning has been particularly effective and parents spoke of the new headteacher with confidence and praise. 'The headteacher listens to parents, he is very approachable, a strong leader who is making some good changes'. Good training and professional development ensure that maximum use is made of individual experience and skills for the staff. The RE coordinator is experienced and has undertaken relevant subject leader training to help enhance the RE curriculum. As a result, assessment procedures are being embedded. The development areas from the last report have been addressed thoroughly and the school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report September 2014, St Peter's C of E Primary, Rochdale, OL16 5JQ