

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Thomas Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Great Colmore Street

Birmingham B15 2AT

Diocese: Birmingham

Local authority: Birmingham

Dates of inspection: 7th October 2011

Date of last inspection: June 2008

School's unique reference number: 103419

Headteacher: Daniel Lassetter Incumbent Rev Andrew Lenox-Conyngham

Inspector's name and number: Alan Brown [256]

School context

St Thomas' Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School for pupils aged 3-11 with 198 pupils on roll. The school shares a building with St Luke's Church and has strong links with the local community. The majority of pupils are of Black British, African or Caribbean origin with 10 other ethnic heritages represented in the school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Thomas' as a Church of England school are outstanding

St. Thomas' Primary School is an outstanding Church of England school. The school is firmly based on Christian values and principles which are understood and accepted by all. The collective worship and Religious Education are good both supported by strong links with St. Luke's Church. Parents and governors remarked on the increased Christian character and ethos of the school in the last three years. There are strong, close links with the local community.

Established strengths

- The school's leadership team together with the strong support of the Governing Body and parents have a clear vision for the Christian character of the school;
- The variety and popularity of worship throughout the school;
- The overt Christian values which are integral to school life.

Focus for development

- Identify a more effective method of teaching about the Eucharist at KS2;
- Monitoring of the learning and teaching of Religious Education to be fully in place.

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

The school's character is distinctively Christian. Outstanding provision is made to meet the spiritual, moral and emotional needs of all learners. The pupils speak very highly and confidently of their school, of its friendly atmosphere, their teachers and the friends they make. They understand, particularly through collective worship and the attitude of staff, how the Christian character of the school impacts on their behaviour, their respect for others, their learning and the expectations teachers have of them. This is exemplified in talking with pupils about how they understand what it is to be a Christian in the school. The pastoral support for pupils is very good and displays in classrooms, the hall and common areas reflect religious and moral issues which form part of the school's Creative Curriculum. An interesting selection of paintings around the school form a focal point for the Creative Curriculum which the school believes to be successful in raising pupils' interest and academic standards. Pupils know their voices are heard: they like and respect the effort teachers' make to make learning 'fun'. Pupils generally speak in an articulate manner, listen to each other and respect each other's opinions. They feel valued and secure in a school where

Christian values are both overt and implicit in every aspect. During the inspection pupils were polite, extremely well behaved and were always ready to help indicating a developing sense of maturity and responsibility. New pupils felt particularly welcomed.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The provision for, and practice of, collective worship at St. Thomas' school is good, some of it is outstanding. The importance of worship in the school and the relationship that exists between the church and the school is excellent. All pupils spoken with enjoy worship whether it is led by staff or clergy. When asked what they enjoyed most about the school, worship was the first response from all the pupils interviewed. One pupil said, '*It is where you learn things you don't learn anywhere else*'. They sing very well, and enjoy responding to opportunities to share in worship. The collective worship observed was thought-provoking and provided pupils with every opportunity to contribute. It was of a very high standard. The school offers pupils an insight into formal and informal forms of worship providing an excellent environment for pupils' spiritual and moral development. This standard could be further built on through deeper reflection on and further teaching about the Eucharist with Key Stage 2 pupils in order to help identify distinctive forms of Anglican worship. The regular events of the Church's year are celebrated and pupils are familiar with them.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The standard of work in Religious Education is generally good. Pupils speak more effectively about their work than they write about it, leaving some room for improvement. . In the Key Stage 2 class pupils talked fluently about the topic but did not write so effectively. The SMSC Leader has clearly worked very hard to ensure teachers are well resourced with excellent guidance, the syllabus from the Manchester Diocese, and the schemes of work are properly in place. The syllabus provides pupils with a strong basis upon which to appreciate the Christian religion while being sensitive to the importance of other faiths. The two lessons inspected were of the highest standard with clear objectives, outcomes were understood by pupils and there were a range of enjoyable tasks to support learning. In both lessons pupils were challenged and encouraged to think in an imaginative and creative manner and they responded eagerly and willingly to their teacher. Religious Education has an important place within the school and, as such, should be regularly monitored to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

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

The headteacher, the Governing Body and the leadership team share aspirations in common and all work together effectively. The leadership is lively, thoughtful and supportive with a vision of how the school can continue to move forward. The leadership team and the leader of SMSC have created a secure base on which the school can build. St. Thomas' is a secure, well-managed environment where pupils enjoy coming to school knowing they will be listened to with professional and personal interest. Christian values, together with a clear educational vision, lie at the heart of the school. The response of the parents indicates how they appreciate the way in which the school values their views and opinions and they work hard to support the school appreciating the improvement in relationships. The application of the school to principles of loving God, one's neighbour and oneself makes a significant contribution to the ideals of social justice and concern for others. Many pupils, staff and members of the governing body promote, share and participate in a vision of what it mean to be educated in an Christian educational institution where Gospel values can be lived, learned and openly expressed.



Judgement Recording Form (NSJRF)

This form is to be attached to the main SIAS report and returned to the diocese in which the school is situated and to the National Society.

Name of school: St. Thomas Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
 Address of School: Great Colmore Street, Birmingham B15 2AT

School URN: 103419
 Date of inspection: 7th October 2011
 NS Inspector's Number: 256
 Type of Church school: Voluntary Aided
 Number of pupils: 198
 Phase of education: Primary

Has Diocesan Quality Assurance been obtained for this report? Yes

Rating 1-4

How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?	1
How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	1
What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?	2
How effective is the religious education?	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school, as a church school?	1
The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	Y
The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education *	Y

The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship		Y
The school meets the statutory requirements for Religious Education		Y
		Grade
The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Thomas CE (VA) Primary School as a Church of England school.		1
<hr/>		
1	How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	1
1a	How well do the school's Christian values have an impact on all learners and enable them to flourish as individuals?	1
1b	How well does the Christian character support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners whether they are Christian, of other faiths, or of none?	1
1c	How well does the Christian character of the school prepare learners to become responsible citizens?	1
1d	How well do key Christian values motivate the relationships between all members of the school community?	1
1e	How well is the spiritual development of learners enhanced by the school environment?	1
<hr/>		
2	What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school?	2
2a	How positive are learners' attitudes to collective worship?	1
2b	To what extent do learners and staff derive inspiration, spiritual growth and affirmation from worship?	1
2c	How well does collective worship develop learners' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice?	3
2d	How effectively is the importance of worship demonstrated in the life of the school?	2
<hr/>		
3	How effective is the Religious Education provided by the school?	2
3a	How high are the standards and how well do all learners achieve in RE? <i>(Aided schools only)</i>	2
3b	How effective are learning and teaching in RE? <i>(Aided schools only)</i>	2
3c	Do learners of all faiths and of none demonstrate a positive attitude towards RE?	2
3d	How well does RE contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all learners?	2
3e	To what extent does RE promote the distinctive Christian character of the school?	1
3f	To what extent does RE promote community cohesion through an understanding of and respect for diverse faith communities?	1
3g	How effectively is the importance of RE demonstrated in the life of the school?	1
<hr/>		
4	How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?	1
4a	How well has the school leadership (including governors) engaged with distinctive	1

	Christian values in developing their vision for the school?	
4b	How well is this vision understood by all stakeholders?	1
4c	How well do leaders and governors ensure that this vision is put into practice by all members of the school community?	1
4d	How well are leaders and governors preparing for the future leadership of church schools?	1
4e	How effective is the partnership between the school, the church and the wider community, including the parents?	1