

Wargrave Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bradlegh Road,
Newton-le-Willows
WA12 8QL

Diocese: Liverpool

Local authority: St. Helens

Date of inspection: 26 May 2011

Date of last inspection: 6 November 2008

School's unique reference number: 104787

Headteacher: Mrs. Sue Thomas

Inspector's name and number: Dr. Jean Forward 625

School context

Wargrave Primary School is of average size. The school serves an area of social and economic deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. Almost all are of White British heritage. The school has Healthy School status, Activemark, the International School Award and Quality Mark. The headteacher has been in post since September 2010.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wargrave Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

An ethos based on a clear and explicit recognition of its Christian foundation underpins the work of the school. A friendly, calm and caring environment has been created in which everyone is valued and is given the opportunity to thrive and succeed. The personal and social development of the pupils is outstanding due to an extremely high level of care, guidance and support. Links with the parish and the church community are now developing well and extending pupils' experience of the wider Christian family.

Established strengths

- High quality relationships based on trust and commitment to the Christian ethos support the development of the school
- Exceptional Christian care and guidance offered to all pupils and their families
- Clear Christian vision and leadership on the part of the headteacher and the senior leadership team
- Strong local and international links which demonstrate the school's commitment to community cohesion

Focus for development

- Establish formal monitoring procedures for the evaluation of worship plans
- Provide more specific opportunities to enhance the pupils' experience of the Anglican tradition in worship
- Embed the self-evaluation role of the distinctiveness team

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

The school is meeting the needs of all learners through a strong commitment to explicit Christian values. The school's aims and motto 'Achieve Believe Care' provide a clear link to its Christian foundation. There is a strong emphasis on establishing positive relationships in a Christian context which is founded on respect for the individual and the needs of every pupil. Christian values are at the heart of daily life and are being embedded across the curriculum as reviews and development take place. A member of the school council said,

'Christian values help us to understand how to live our lives.' The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities including the Samaritan's Purse and Tearfund. The school has a clear commitment to community cohesion and is developing pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures through the RE curriculum. Links with schools in Austria and Tanzania add a global perspective to pupils' understanding. Pupils are involved in their local community in various ways including the Dawn Patrol initiative and visits to the community hospital and residential home for the elderly. The parish priest is working hard to re-establish and develop the school's links with the parish church and the wider Newton Team Ministry. The teaching of Religious Education enhances well the pupils' awareness of the ways in which faith and Christian values are at the centre of daily life. Year 1 pupils spoke confidently about the feelings of characters in the story of the lame man as part of their work about believers and followers. School council members speak of the many opportunities they have to contribute to the decisions made about their school. They take responsibility and support their fellow pupils. They speak of teachers who are kind and helpful. A school council member said, 'Teachers help us to sort things out and solve problems.' Parents say that they feel welcome in the school and that staff are approachable and open to their views. The school's learning mentor is developing a range of activities to support pupils and their families within a clear Christian context. A range of extra-curricular activities has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Colourful displays, reflection areas and Christian artefacts emphasise the school's distinctiveness and support the pupils' spiritual awareness and development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The act of collective worship is a special part of the school day and everyone feels included. Worship focuses on Christian teaching and includes the celebration of major festivals. Music is used to create a calm atmosphere and pupils listen attentively. Effective use of singing and drama enables pupils to focus on the themes and values. A brief period of reflection leading to prayer provides the opportunity for everyone to link Christian values to everyday life. Pupils enjoy writing their own prayers and these are used in worship and are displayed on a prayer tree, in classrooms and in the school prayer book. A school council member said, 'We have reflection so that we can remember what we have heard.' Anglican greetings and responses are not used on a daily basis. The parish priest is providing a good level of support and leads whole school worship once a week. A focus on the Lord's Prayer has raised pupils understanding of its relevance to daily life. Planning for a regular celebration of Holy Communion in school is currently under way. The school worships in church for major festivals and celebrations. Stronger links with the other church schools in the Newton Ministry Team are being forged. Christian links are also made to the SEAL programme. Positive role models from staff support pupils' involvement and enjoyment. Informal monitoring of worship takes place and includes contributions from pupils, staff and parents.

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

The headteacher promotes strong Christian leadership and is moving the school forward in its development. The welcoming and positive atmosphere is the driving force of her commitment to Christian values. There is evidence of a vision for the future which includes further development of the school's Christian foundation and stronger links with the parish church and the wider Newton Ministry Team. All members of staff are committed to the school's Christian ethos. Provision is made for staff to attend training in order to support succession planning for future leadership in church schools. Policies and documents make a clear statement about the school's Christian foundation and witness. The RE co-ordinator is leading staff in the development of the subject so that it contributes more effectively to the pupils' spiritual development and Christian understanding. The incorporation of Christian values into teaching and learning across the curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual awareness and growth. The growing partnership between the headteacher and foundation governors promotes the distinctive Christian character of the school and this is beginning to inform the work of the full governing body. Foundation governors have a growing awareness of their specific role in developing the church school status. The distinctiveness team provides the opportunity for stakeholders to take an active part in the monitoring and self-evaluation of the school's distinctive Church of England status. The team has been

established and now has the potential to further embed the school's Christian vision for the future.

SIAS report May 2011 Wargrave Primary School, Newton Le Willows WA12 8 QA