

**Padiham St Leonard's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Moor Lane  
Padiham  
Lancashire  
BB12 8HT

**Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire  
Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012  
Date of last inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007  
School's unique reference number: 119425  
Headteacher: Mrs Julie Bradley  
Inspector's name and number: Mr Paul Adnitt 590

**School context**

Padiham St Leonard's Church of England Primary School is an average sized voluntary aided school serving an area with high levels of social deprivation. There are currently 210 pupils on roll with 49% of children on the special needs register and currently 38% of children receiving free school meals. The attainment of pupils on entry to school is well below that which would normally be expected.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Padiham St Leonard's as a Church of England school are outstanding**

St Leonard's C of E Primary School is a vibrant Christian school, full of love and laughter, that holds core Christian values at the heart of all it does. The leadership of the school, the school governors and senior leaders in the local church have developed excellent links between school, church and community. Both worship and Religious Education (RE) are highly valued and have a strong impact on children's personal development.

**Established strengths**

- The excellent behaviour of all pupils
- The excellent quality of relationships within the school family, together with the value placed on each individual
- The quality of relationships with parents and the positive impact the school has in the wider community
- The strong and effective links between school and the church
- The distinctiveness of the school as a Church school. There is a welcoming and inclusive Christian ethos based on Christian values.

**Focus for development**

- Harness the enthusiasm the pupils have for being more involved in planning and leading worship
- Look at ways of involving further the parents in evaluating the school's progress as a church school

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

Christian values have a demonstrably positive impact on pupils' personal and spiritual development and on progress in teaching and learning throughout the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate high levels of interest, enthusiasm and engagement. The quality of relationships between all members of the school community is excellent and this, together with the emphasis on caring for others, makes an exceptional contribution to the pupils' social and moral development. The school's strong Christian character nourishes, encourages and

challenges the spiritual and cultural development of the whole community. Pupils have good levels of self-esteem, respect and understanding. The school is a harmonious Christian community where people get on well with each other, care for one another and respect differences. The schools' values are evident in the way pupils and staff relate with each other. It is a loving and caring community. The pupils are proud of their school and speak confidently about why it is special to them. One pupil remarked, 'When you walk into school you get a warm feeling in your heart, all the staff love you. It means everything to me!' When problems have emerged pupils say staff have dealt with them sympathetically and fairly, using Christian principles and values. There are close ties with the local parish church and the clergy are regular and popular visitors to the school. As a result of this the church plays an important role in the spiritual life of the school. Displays are very prominent and are of excellent quality, giving outstanding support to the Christian character of the school. They emphasize the school's distinctiveness, having a positive impact on pupils' spiritual development.

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

Worship has a high profile in school. It occupies a vital part of the school day, and acts of worship are extremely well planned and evaluated. Evaluation should now take more account of the impact of worship on pupils. Worship is of the highest quality and reflects the school's distinctive Christian character. Collective worship is led on a daily basis by every single teacher, by clergy and occasionally by visitors. Pupils, staff and parents value worship very highly and talk with enthusiasm about worship, its themes and purposes. Pupils are engaged in and value worship at school. One pupil, a member of the school council stated, 'If you believe in God you know it's real.' Pupils take part with enthusiasm. They answer questions and think and talk about what they have heard. Pupils show respect and enjoy helping and leading parts of worship. A worshipful atmosphere is created by the use of music, silence, display and appropriate setting. The daily act of worship is Christian based and it enhances the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Worship also enables pupils to recognise their responsibilities to others and to reflect on community and personal values. Opportunities are provided for reflection and prayer, which enhances children's spiritual development. Pupils respond in a variety of ways: - through songs, drama, role play and discussion. Christian values are promoted in worship and clearly understood by the pupils. The school visits church to mark major festivals. Pupils understand some aspects of Anglican tradition and practice.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

The school follows the diocesan syllabus. RE lies at the very heart of the school curriculum. In both KS1 and KS2 advantage is taken to extend and promote RE through a wide range of cross-curricular subjects, through collective worship and special event days. Pupils enjoy RE and demonstrate growing understanding of what it means to be a Christian. They are actively encouraged and supported in their reflection on learning in RE and this has a positive effect on pupils' spiritual development. The lessons seen were judged to be good or better. The pupils are keen to discuss their feelings and experiences in RE. When talking about the Bible one pupil commented, 'It's important because Jesus is in it. It tells us how we can live our lives. We find messages in the stories.' Pupils make comparisons and develop skills of empathy and personal reflection. The quality of RE teaching has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils express enthusiasm about RE and reflect on their learning to develop understanding of their own experience and beliefs. They are positive about RE and show good understanding and knowledge of the subject area. RE is linked to other parts of the curriculum as appropriate. The RE syllabus is distinctly Christian. About 20% of the available time is used to teach the beliefs and practices of Islam and Judaism. RE impacts strongly on moral as well as spiritual development. The RE co-ordinator regularly monitors lessons, scrutinizes plans and children's work and talks to learners. Lessons observed showed good subject knowledge, interactive learning, good use of ICT and relevant and interesting activities. RE displays are evident in each classroom and are of a high standard. Learners speak their mind in interviews and are confident. Pupils are confident that their views are heard and acted upon. Pupils are able to reflect on their own beliefs and those of other faith traditions. Standards in RE written work are in line with those in other core subjects; however drama and discussion in RE are much more involved than in the core subjects.

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

The headteacher is an inspirational, strong and dedicated Christian leader who takes every opportunity to develop St Leonard's as a distinctive and effective church school. She is supported by a very effective, knowledgeable and understanding governing body that is strongly supportive of leadership within the school. All staff and governors support the Christian ethos of the school and they are involved in evaluating St Leonard's as an effective church school. This constant rigorous evaluation has had a positive effect on the strong development of the school. All staff have developing management roles within this evaluation process. Leaders strive to ensure a deep understanding of the Christian faith in all the children. The school council has had success and has an important role to play in involving all pupils in the growing life of the school. School council members discuss problems and ideas are valued and respected. The school council has opportunities to speak to governors and the trust board. Staff welcome feedback and ideas from the school council. Parents feel that school listens to their views and that problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively. They know that their opinions will be valued. 'It's an amazing school with amazing staff, it's just fantastic,' commented one parent. Most stakeholders are involved in reviews of the school's Christian values, though evidence suggests that parents lack understanding of what it means to be a church school. The areas for development from the previous report have been addressed to good effect. The vicar and curate reach out to the pupils and to the community and help to consolidate the important links that the school has established. Relationships between school and church and the community are excellent.

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