

# National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

## **Cronton Church of England Primary School**

Smithy Lane  
Cronton  
Widnes  
WA8 5DF

### **Diocese: Liverpool**

Local authority: Knowsley  
Date of inspection: 22 March 2013  
Date of last inspection: 13 December 2007  
School's unique reference number: 104449  
Headteacher: Mrs. Sylvia Thomson  
Inspector's name and number: Dr. Jean Forward 625

### **School context**

The school is an average size primary school in the village of Cronton on the outskirts of Widnes. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals and with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. There are very few children from minority ethnic groups. The school recently gained the Diocese of Liverpool Church and School Partnership Award. The school building serves as a mission church for Cronton.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Cronton Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

An ethos based on a clear and explicit recognition of its Christian foundation underpins the positive values and attitudes embedded across the school. All members of the school community feel valued and supported. Children's personal and spiritual development is outstanding as a result of an extremely high level of care and guidance. Links with the mission church of Cronton and the wider community are strong.

### **Established strengths**

- A clear and strong vision rooted in Christian values
- High quality relationships throughout the school community which contribute to the exceptional care and guidance for all children and their families
- Excellent planning and evaluation of collective worship and religious education (RE) resulting in a significant impact on children's spiritual growth

### **Focus for development**

- Prepare for the next stage of the Church and School Partnership Award
- Ensure marking of RE is consistent across the school

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

A strong commitment to Christian values and the development of the whole child underpin the work of the school. Children are able to talk about the importance of key Christian values and they referred to the most recent theme of courage. Christian values permeate all aspects of the school day. One child commented that 'they help us to follow Jesus'. All members of the community know that they are valued and the ethos of trust and respect is evident throughout the school. Children are extremely polite and friendly and their behaviour is excellent. They are confident and articulate. Children say that staff support and encourage them and parents value the school's loving atmosphere. One parent described the school as 'an extremely focused Christian community which fosters children's faith'. Parents say that they feel welcome in the school and members of staff are extremely approachable and supportive. Parents are impressed by children's care for one another. Children are encouraged to show love and compassion for those in need. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship and supports a range of charities, including Breast Cancer Awareness, Kanti Children's Hospital in Nepal and a local food bank. The school's commitment to broadening children's cultural understanding can be seen in excellent teaching about other faiths through RE and the wider curriculum. Colourful displays,

Christian signs and symbols and reflection areas make valuable contributions to the school's distinctiveness and support the children's outstanding spiritual awareness and development.

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

The act of collective worship is central to the life of the school. Planning is thorough and incorporates themes based on Christian values, the Bible, major Christian festivals and SEAL. Children demonstrate a high level of involvement and enjoyment through worship. Children participate to outstanding effect through drama, music, reading and prayers. The school listened attentively and participated enthusiastically during a Y3 presentation about Palm Sunday. Silence and moments for reflection play an important part in the school's approach to prayer. Responses and prayers also contribute to the development of children's prayer life. Children write their own prayers which are displayed on boards in classrooms and the school entrance. Achievement worship provides children with the opportunity to value and celebrate success and acts of kindness. The school is the centre for parish worship and children represent the school on special occasions during Sunday services. This ensures that they have a good understanding of the link between school and church. A member of the clergy team leads worship in school once a week and provides a high level of pastoral support. He runs a worship group for children in Y5 and Y6. An age-appropriate Eucharist is celebrated in school each half term for the children in KS2. There is an excellent system in place to plan, monitor and evaluate worship which involves all members of the school community. The highly effective worship group brings staff, governors and children together to plan themes. As a result, worship has become a corporate responsibility and is therefore clearly relevant to the spiritual needs of the school.

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

The school has a strong commitment to developing all aspects of teaching and learning in RE using the diocesan syllabus. The school provides excellent opportunities to learn about various faiths through RE and cross-curricular themes and visits. This contributes well to children's cultural development. Progress is excellent and this is achieved through the use of a range of teaching methods and resources which engage children's interest. Children enjoy a variety of written activities and discussion, role play and art. Reflection and prayer are also incorporated into the planning. Good prior knowledge and thinking skills were demonstrated in a Year 5 lesson on the unit 'Easter Victory'. Children listened attentively and worked collaboratively. Children in Year 2 demonstrated a high level of prior learning when exploring Easter symbols. A child said 'I love RE because I learn new things and unpick the ideas and meaning'. Children's regular sharing of ideas and opinions deepens their spiritual and moral development. Explicit reference to Christian values reinforces the school's ethos. The close link with the mission church enhances learning about the Christian life and the faith of others. The well-informed subject leader monitors the subject through lesson observations and work scrutiny. This ensures that highly effective teaching and learning take place. A sound programme of assessment activities and recording is used to track children's progress and determine next steps in learning. There is, however, some inconsistency in the depth of comments on children's work.

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

The headteacher and members of the senior leadership team promote highly effective Christian leadership. There are clear priorities for the development of the school's Christian ethos. Policies and planning give a clear indication of the school's vision. Governors have a good understanding of their role and they support the school in a variety of ways. There are excellent structures in place for self-evaluation of the church school status which lead to a striving for continuous improvement. Provision is made for staff to attend training in order to support succession planning for future leadership in church schools. Parents recognise the distinctive Christian qualities of the school and speak highly of the respect with which they and their children are treated. Parents also speak positively of the ways in which the school and church work together to provide a strong Christian education. The headteacher works closely with the local clergy team and the governors to develop and promote the school's Christian distinctiveness.