

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Giles Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Walsall Street
Willenhall
Wolverhampton
WV13 2ER

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Walsall
Date of inspection: 18th July 2012
Date of last inspection: 8th December 2008
School's unique reference number: 104226
Headteacher: Mark Dakin
Inspector's name and number: Julie Moore 579

School context

St Giles Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School has 355 pupils on roll most of whom live in the area surrounding the school. Most pupils have White British heritage and many of the remaining pupils have a minority ethnic heritage which is mostly Indian. The headteacher has been in post for about one year and there have been significant changes to the school's senior leadership team. The vicar is also fairly new to the parish.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Giles as a Church of England school are outstanding

The excellent community spirit which exists at St Giles is the outcome of the leadership teams' clear focus on extending and strengthening the firmly held Christian values that successfully underpin all aspects of the day-to-day life and work of the school. Pupils and their families are truly respected and valued whatever their background, religion, culture or belief and this holds good for those families having no belief at all.

Established strengths

- Pupils' spiritual development has a high profile and the school team has created a rich learning environment in which every pupil can grow and develop spiritually.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good because it is well supported through collective worship, religious education and all aspects of the creative curriculum.
- The school family and the church family work closely together for the benefit of the wider community they serve so successfully.

Focus for development

- Give pupils additional opportunities to extend their involvement in school based worship so that it closely matches their responsibilities in church based worship.

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

The Christian values of Forgiveness, Agape, Compassion, Equality and Service really are the driving force in moving St Giles school forward along its faith journey. This is clearly demonstrated in the way that pupils and adults relate to each other with respect and friendship. Pupils are well rounded individuals who have a clear understanding of the meaning of their school values and, importantly, relating these values to their own behaviour. As one pupil said, '*We try to follow our values as best we can*' and another pupil, '*It is important not to get angry with someone but to try and talk about things that make you angry. We all help, don't we?*' to the rest of the group who nodded vigorously in agreement. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is high quality. Every class has a special prayer table which helps to create a Christian ethos as well as providing an atmosphere in

which pupils can reflect quietly and spiritually about their daily events and happenings. Contributing to the school council gives pupils a voice that is valued because it is heard and listened to, good preparation for future citizenship. Pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong and this helps them to extend the hand of friendship and forgiveness to those around them, some of whom may be experiencing difficulties in behaving acceptably. A small minority of pupils have deeply held social and emotional barriers towards showing forgiveness towards others. It is early days but the school's systems are having a positive impact in modifying poor behaviour. St Giles is a truly cohesive community where members of the school and church families work harmoniously together for the benefit of everyone. Relationships are excellent and this is due to the strength of the Christian vision of the leadership team. Parents, staff, pupils, parents and clergy are united, and, as one parent said, *'This is a tremendous school because it reinforces what is important for our family and we want our children to have a Christian education'*.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils, parents, staff, governors and clergy are in full agreement that school, class and church based worship have a key role in school life. Pupils and parents readily talk about their worship experiences with enthusiasm and pleasure, for example, *'We like sharing worship with our children and we enjoy seeing them do things in worship'* and from a pupil, *'It's good to talk about what we feel about Jesus and God when we're in worship'*. All of which is well supported by comments in pupils' Voice of the Learner Class Books. These include *'Asking God for forgiveness makes us proud'* and *'We can compare our life stories with Bible stories when we are in worship'* good examples of pupils deriving spiritual growth and inspiration from their worship experiences. Worship is carefully planned and well delivered by pupils as well as all the worship leaders. Pupils successfully evaluate their own worship experiences as they share their thoughts and comments with their class in addition to writing a comment in their Voice of the Learner books. Prayer is very important to the life and work of the school. There is a strong feeling in this school that every pupil has the right to pray and reflect in their own way and this means that the prayer experience is fully inclusive for every member of the school family. Pupils who have a different faith to Christianity and those having no faith at all share equally in prayer time as they quietly and reverently reflect on their own personal events and happenings. However, pupils say they would enjoy having *'more to do'* in school worship. Anglican traditions are firmly rooted throughout the worship experiences at St Giles. Celebrating Eucharist, using a variety of liturgical colours, and prayer, are all used effectively to enhance pupils' understanding of the Anglican faith.

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

The school's Christian values, which are firmly based in its Mission Statement, have a key role in driving the Christian vision forward at a cracking pace. The headteacher is outstanding in the quality of his leadership and the clarity of his vision. He is determined that the church will truly be at the heart of school life and he is successful. Pupils are very positive about the Christian ethos of their school, *'We like to show respect for God'* and *'We learn interesting things about religion'* clearly indicates a shared vision which is fully supported by parents, governors, senior leaders and clergy. Foundation governors are actively involved in checking out what the school is doing well in addition to following up what is being done about any gaps in the school's provision. This enables issues to be dealt with speedily and effectively so that no time is wasted. Teamwork is excellent and this is because of the high quality leadership and the absolute sincerity of the school's senior team when they say, *'We respect all our children and their families because we teach through Christian values and this creates a feeling of mutual respect'*. Issues in the previous report have been dealt with and they are no longer issues. Governors, staff and senior leaders are well aware of the importance of training to enhance their skills and expertise as leaders of a church school in the 21st century and relevant training is readily attended. The high quality of the school's links with the church family, and the strong impact this partnership has on the wider community, have been outlined throughout this report. The outcome of this partnership is indicated by the huge success of St Giles as a church school that is outstanding in its service to the whole community.