

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Marlingford Road

Easton

Norfolk

NR9 5AD

Diocese: Norwich

Local authority: Norfolk

Date of inspection: February 4th 2013

Date of last inspection: March 10th 2008

School's unique reference number: 121034

Headteacher: Mrs Christine Livings

Inspector's name and number: Michael Asquith (317)

School context

St Peter's Primary School is a growing school in the village of Easton to the west of Norwich. Along with two other schools it is part of the Trinity Federation of Church Schools, with one governing body and management responsibilities being shared across the federation. The majority of pupils are from white British families though the school accommodates a number of traveller families.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peters, Easton CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

Strong Christian values underpin every aspect of the life of St Peter's School. Collective Worship builds upon these Christian values with significant meaningful contributions from the local church. The school has a strong relationship with St Peter's Church and with the Diocese of Norwich. Governors are always aiming to improve and build upon present achievements.

Established strengths

- The commitment by all members of the school community to the distinctive Christian ethos of the school
- The commitment of the Headteacher, leadership team, staff, governors and children to the ethos of this church school
- The implementation of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies [PATHS] programme
- The impact the governors' Ethos Committee has within the school

Focus for development

- Pursue the change to Voluntary Aided status across the federation
- Encourage fuller attendance at collective worship by all members of the school community

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

Well understood Christian values, related to the Bible, have a positive impact on all activities throughout the school. Pupils strongly appreciate the Church of England dimension to the school, valuing the "big family" feeling whilst parents describe the school as "friendly, happy and welcoming." This is further evidenced by the pupils who vehemently say there is no bullying at the school and that everybody has "their part to play and everybody is valued." The "Thursday thought", texted out to all parents each week, gives rise to lively discussions, often around the meal table at home. The PATHS programme builds self-esteem and confidence impacting very positively on behaviour across the school. Pupils are always polite and courteous, and staff acknowledge this. They contribute to their class' daily "Compliments" session, which makes pupils feel special, "I hadn't realised how positively others saw me"

said one girl. There are opportunities for reflection in collective worship and in the quiet areas in each classroom in the school. Pupils take the opportunity to place shells into water, or to place a fish in a "prayer net" in the entrance area of the school, trusting, as one pupil said, "in God to wash the worries away." Through the creative use of the wooded area, where learning is made active and fun, pupils learn to respect their environment. Displays in every classroom and the main hall emphasise the Christian nature of the school. The school has welcomed many traveller families, taking the opportunity to explore their culture, for example through the recent Traveller Activity Day, which successfully broke down barriers and, as a traveller support teaching assistant said, "turning prejudice into understanding." Extra curricular activities, are chosen for and respond well to the needs of pupils. Care, guidance and support for all members of the school community are outstanding.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

"God is all around us; he is always with us through good or bad" said one pupil acknowledging the impact collective worship has on her. Pupils know that "Jesus can help us" and that prayer is "talking and listening to God." Collective worship gives pupils the opportunity to think and reflect together; pupils respond well to the time of silence for this. Collective worship begins and ends well with appropriate words and prayers led by the pupils. The school provides a good variety of worship experiences including once a week where worship is led by the Incumbent, and by invited groups including the very popular 'Open the Book' assemblies. All staff have the opportunity to lead worship. Every class leads collective worship once a term. Pupils are encouraged to actively participate in collective worship, and they enjoy doing so, one pupil citing "the times of worship that challenged us." A table with a lighted candle and a cloth, the same as the colour in the church's year, provides a focal point. Pupils sing enthusiastically and join in appropriate actions to many of the songs or hymns. Pupils know the traditional Lord's Prayer and are learning the modern language version, regularly praying it during worship. Collective worship is regularly monitored and adapted in response to feedback from pupils and staff. Whilst staff attend worship on Mondays and Fridays they only do so on other days of the week if possible; this lessens the impact of the whole community gathering together for worship.

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

The strong leadership of the Headteacher and the leadership team and the forward thinking governing body enable St Peter's School to continue to strive forward meeting the needs of all members of the school community. The vision of the Headteacher, where all pupils achieve to the best of their ability in all aspects raises aspirations within the school. All staff are fully supportive of the Christian ethos of the school and feel empowered to contribute towards it. Trinity Federation enables greater opportunities for staff development and for sharing responsibilities. Parents value the joint teaching, planning and activities. The school makes good use of training organised by the Diocese of Norwich. There are very good relationships with the local pre-school. On the rare occasion that a concern is raised, it is dealt with speedily and effectively. Governing body and committee meetings regularly begin with prayer. The relatively newly formed Ethos Committee of the governing body effectively monitors the ethos of the school and collective worship. Meeting twice a term it actively seeks the views of parents and pupils with regular verbal and written evidence from them, "valuing children and giving them a voice." Governors attribute the outstanding work of the school to the Christian ethos. The school is seen as being an integral part of the local church and hence there is a strong bond between the two, with days such as an outside Easter Activity Day organised by St Peter's Church for all three schools in the federation. Governors are currently exploring Voluntary Aided status with the Diocesan Board of Education, affirming the strong Christian ethos within the school.