

**St Giles' and St George's Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School**

St Paul's Road  
Off Orme Road  
Newcastle  
ST5 2NB

**Diocese: Lichfield**

Local authority: Staffordshire  
Dates of inspection: 12 July 2012  
Date of last inspection: 28 January 2009  
School's unique reference number: 124266  
Headteacher: Mrs Lynne Evans  
Inspector's name and number: Dr David Gentle (209)

**School context**

St Giles' and St George's serves 267 pupils drawn from an area of mixed housing. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Relatively few families have a strong faith background. For historical reasons, the school links with two parishes. The school has a number of awards for good practice.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Giles' and St George's Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

There is excellent planning for improvement that holds the school's distinctiveness at the centre of its strategies. As a result of the very good learning environment, pupils' academic achievement aggregates to good, with some making outstanding progress, and personal development is excellent.

**Established strengths**

- The purposeful vision for improvement of the headteacher and foundation governors.
- An excellent learning environment that promotes very good academic progress and outstanding personal development.
- Collective worship that engages and motivates.

**Focus for development**

- Consider, and implement as appropriate, strategies that strengthen the centrality of the Christian faith to the school's work.

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

The successful promotion of strong Christian values contributes to a learning environment within which academic achievement is good and personal development is excellent. Strategies for learning, such as pupil groupings, excellent classroom management and very good teaching, ensure that pupils *'get all the help we need to succeed'*. Very clear structures and systems for behaviour management, with excellent strategies seen in the classroom, ensure that behaviour is excellent, thus allowing all pupils to focus on learning. Pupils note that any very rare instances of concern are dealt with quickly and effectively. This excellent behaviour enables relationships for learning to be outstanding. Almost all pupils have some awareness that the school's values are based on Christian beliefs. Many pupils accept Bible stories that *'tell us God's rules'* as a basis for their values and some, mostly in key stage two, have a deeper perception, for example believing that *'we are never alone with Jesus to guide us'*. Activities such as support for charities and links with other countries contribute to very good preparation for citizenship. Pupils and parents appreciate that a strength of the school is that pupils are able to *'talk freely and knowledgeably about different faiths'*, this being an indicator of pupils' excellent cultural awareness. The excellent work of the Eco-Knights in energy conservation and recycling, together with curriculum work such as the theme of 'caring for God's environment', seen in religious education (RE), reinforce the school's distinctiveness and contribute to pupils' excellent social awareness. Good use is made of the new buildings to create a lively and stimulating environment that motivates children through

recognition of their achievement, particularly in sport, and promotion of excellence. Areas for prayer and reflection, such as the courtyard and woodland area, contribute to the overall calm and purposeful learning ethos, successfully engaging some pupils in prayer beyond formal worship and thus enhancing the very good spiritual development.

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

Collective worship is extremely important in promoting the distinctiveness of the school and helping to create the excellent climate for learning. The school's policy appropriately states that collective worship is 'the living centre of the school', it being seen by pupils to '*set us up for the day*'. In worship, pupils are observed to be extremely respectful and respond immediately to the headteacher's leadership. Participation in singing songs that have been chosen by pupils is excellent, showing high levels of enthusiasm and engagement. Pupils are supported extremely well by staff who join in with songs and guide conversations, thereby creating a whole school sense of community. Enthusiastic and accurate responses to prompts show a very good understanding of the Christian faith. Use of paired talking contributes well to engagement with virtually all pupils talking about ways in which '*God will take care of me*', all those spoken to afterwards appreciating the main theme. Worship themes are often carried through into the curriculum, particularly in RE, thus reinforcing the faith basis of the school and improving pupils' understanding of Christian beliefs and Anglican practice, an issue raised in the previous inspection. As an example, virtually all pupils have an understanding beyond age expectation of the significance of Easter, knowing, for instance, that '*Jesus saved us by his death*'. Services in the church and visits by church personnel enhance pupils' spiritual development and support very good learning about Christian practices. Parents report that their children often come home talking about the worship themes and that this strengthens the faith basis of many families. The school keeps excellent records of pupil comments to support evaluation of worship. The headteacher evaluates the quality and impact of class based collective worship, thus addressing an issue from the previous inspection.

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

The headteacher, foundation governors and senior staff constitute a powerful team for review and development. This empowers foundation governors to promote the vision and values of the school, an issue from the previous inspection. There are clear and appropriate views about the school's distinctiveness that are conveyed extremely well in the ethos policy and can be seen in the documentation for RE and worship. The stated vision, aims and motto of the school, although open to interpretation, are less explicit in their distinctiveness. The school has excellent processes for evaluation using pupil voice and foundation governors have embarked upon a similar exercise that is informing them of the impact of the school's distinctiveness. From this evidence, the school has appropriately established the area of development as identified in this report. Governors are working with some success on strengthening partnership with the two parishes, an issue from the previous inspection. Although there are relatively few churchgoing families, current links promote the distinctiveness of the school well, particularly in the eyes of parents. The school has very well recorded evidence to show that links with overseas countries, such as Bangladesh, and educational visits have very good impact on pupils' cultural development. The school has received good support from the Diocese that has provided professional development for the improvement of worship and RE. The school council successfully takes on pupils' views, primarily about resourcing issues, and supports the many charity events. These processes help to strengthen pupils' ownership and contribute to the development of excellent citizenship skills for members of the council. Parents value the school's distinctiveness. They '*know it's there*' and observe the impact when stating that '*friendship is a big thing*'. Parents have every confidence in the school. They are well-informed and can see teachers at any time. They typically state that '*this is a brilliant school*'.

SIAS report July 2012 St Giles' & St George's CE (VC) Primary School, Newcastle ST5 2NB