

**St George's C of E Primary School**

Salthouse Road  
Barrow-in- Furness  
Cumbria  
LA14 2DX.

**Diocese: Carlisle**

Local authority: Cumbria  
Date of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007  
Date of last inspection: October 1999  
School's unique reference number: 112289  
Headteacher: Mrs E Kent  
Inspector's name and number: Margaret Lewis 538



**Diocese of  
Carlisle  
Board of Education**

*"Every Child Matters To God."*

**School context**

St George's is a slightly smaller than average primary school with 199 children on roll including 34 in the nursery. The school is situated close to the docks in this declining industrial town and is in an area of high mobility which affects the fall and rise of pupil numbers over the year. A high number of children are entitled to free school meals which reflects the hardship suffered by many families. The school holds the national Activemark and then Artsmark Silver award. It has recently been refurbished and a new Sports and Arts facility, outdoor grassed areas and an adventure playground established.

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

The Christian ethos is embedded extremely well in this school. It successfully nurtures pupils and their families from a wide variety of backgrounds. Children are at the heart of the school and their well-being is foremost in everything that the school does. Each individual receives the support and understanding they need. They are helped extremely well to flourish and to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. The school is welcoming and extremely valuable contributions are made by all staff, governors, "friends of the school" and clergy who work closely together.

**Established strengths**

- The Christian ethos is upheld outstandingly well in the school and the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent
- Relationships are very good. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and their work. They take a pride in themselves and in their school
- The provision for collective worship and first rate links with the local church and community make a significant contribution to the distinctive Christian ethos
- The leadership and commitment of the headteacher, staff, and clergy are very effective in ensuring that pupils thrive within a shared Christian vision, evident in all aspects of school life.

**Focus for development**

- Find a manageable way to record the frequent evaluations already carried out by children, staff and others of Collective Worship in order to affect future provision.

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

The distinctive Christian character of the school is recognised by staff, children, parents and governors. One parent said that although the family had moved away from the school they continued to attend and walked from across the other side of the town as 'this is the best school for the children'. 'All the children are smiling, the school is so inclusive and there is so much for them to do in clubs and activities'. Parents know that the leadership is very strong and the school has well defined boundaries for behaviour and respects individuals with great attention to detail. Relationships are excellent and pupils and the staff feel valued and

special. Each child's needs and views are taken into consideration and staff work cooperatively and in collaboration with each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is excellent. Pupils are taught the need for tolerance and compassion for others and for those of other religious beliefs. All of the children talked to, loved coming to school and spoke highly of their teachers and with a good understanding of the problems that some children have. 'The headteacher always wants the best for us. The teachers are encouraging and will give you help if you need it. The 'snug' is for sorting out problems or for some people who have them.' Older pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and carry them out so well that the younger ones quickly copy them. This results in all caring so very well about each other. Good work and behaviour together with respect and help for others are greatly valued through praise, awards of Stars of the Week and a special celebratory act of worship each week. A prayer table, music, several crosses and very clear signs at the school entrance, as well as colourful displays of children's work especially in religious education, clearly show that this is a church school. A friendship bench in the playground and quiet places for children to reflect are provided. The clergy, foundation governors are very involved in the work of the school and the school has strong links with the Cathedral in Carlisle. The church and school are extremely supportive of each other and staff and the clergy work effectively together side by side.

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

All pupils are aware of the importance of worship and take part in a variety of ways such as writing and saying prayers, choosing music and contributing to the diocesan newspaper. They take responsibility for organising and operating technology. Every pupil from nursery upwards played a successful part in the Christmas Nativity and carol service held during the inspection. This was an affirming occasion and parents and visitors joined in and were present in large numbers. Singing and play acting was enthusiastic as the children beamed with delight at their own and others' efforts. Their spiritual growth is demonstrated with the prayers that they have written and keep in a special book of prayer or on a prayer tree. From collective worship and religious education lessons pupils know about the need to look after nature and to appreciate the wonderful world in which they live; the need to tell the truth and make the school a welcoming place of friendship and the need to appreciate bravery and the elderly. Collective worship and prayers during the day are a daily feature of school life and the pupils are as much at home when it is held in the church as in the school. Pupils in both the infants and the juniors worship separately in church regularly each month with the vicar who relates extremely well to the children. Parents are welcomed into class worship in school and governors attend on a frequent basis. Older pupils say that they find worship 'interesting' and that assemblies are 'good' and 'where you learn many new things'. They ask searching questions of adults and feel that 'assemblies help them to get on well' stating that 'friendships are important to us'. A planned programme of themes for collective worship is in place and well recorded. This is evaluated informally by staff and pupils but the successes and areas to develop need to be recorded more formally to inform future planning.

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

By the time they leave the school pupils mature into confident, friendly and reflective young people due to the strong commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors who work very effectively together to develop the Christian ethos of the school. The headteacher sets an excellent example to the whole school community and is the driving force behind the implementation of the school's Mission statement which nurtures pupils effectively. As the leader for collective worship she sets high professional standards and works very closely with the inspirational team vicar. No stone is left unturned in this school to ensure that each pupil is guided and supported according to their individual and collective needs. Together the school and church provide very good links with the local community, for instance with children regularly helping in the church luncheon club for the senior citizens. The headteacher is highly regarded by pupils and their parents who know that she is always there for them to support and discuss their problems. Staff are very well supported by the clergy and say that, 'God is an everyday word in this school'. The school is outward looking and is constantly looking for ways to further pupils' religious and cultural understanding both locally and further away, for instance in Carlisle cathedral. Leadership of RE is valued and supported well. Resources and staff training to support the curriculum in religious education are well in place.