



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

**Preston VC Primary School**  
**Back Lane, Preston, Hitchin SG4 7UJ**

**Diocese of St Albans**



**LA:** Hertfordshire  
**SIAS Inspection:** 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007  
**Previous S23 Inspection:** 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2003  
**URN:** 117403  
**Headteacher:** Mrs Alison Brooks  
**SIAS Inspector Name:** Lindsay Fraser  
**SIAS Inspector No:** NS 107

### School Context

This is a much smaller than average primary school. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals and virtually all speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Attainment on entry to the Reception class covers the full range, but overall is at the expected levels for children of this age.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Preston VC Primary School as a Church of England school are good**

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Preston VC Primary School are good because the Christian ethos underpins the relationships, attitudes and behaviour throughout the school, between pupils, between adults and between pupils and adults.

### Established strengths

- The Christian ethos in which all pupils are nurtured and valued.
- The importance given to Collective Worship and the positive attitudes of the pupils towards Collective Worship
- The progress made by learners in their application of moral values to their actions and their responsibilities.

### Focus for development

- Ensure that the Christian vision is evident in public documentation and communications.
- Undertake diocesan training on self-evaluation to ensure that the school values and celebrates its achievements as a distinctively Church School.
- Monitor the impact of Collective Worship on the spiritual development of pupils.

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

All pupils are highly valued and are made to feel special by the very caring and committed staff team. Pupils state that the staff know them very well and that they are valued regardless of their abilities and talents. They also appreciate the opportunities for recognition at the achievers' assembly on Fridays and subsequent achievers' tea party. Christian values permeate the whole life of the school and have a very positive impact upon personal development. They are evident in all relationships within the school. Staff provide excellent role models and pupils show a high level of respect for one another. Pupils appreciate the support which they are given by adults, especially the headteacher, in solving disputes through justice and reconciliation. Older pupils confidently take responsibility for younger children and provide very good support during lunchtimes. Pupils value the wide range of extra curricular activities and experiences which are provided for them in the school. All pupils have the opportunity to represent their class on the school council and this responsibility is taken seriously. The School Council provides a very good forum for children to express their views and participate in decision making. This has led to the provision of new outdoor equipment. Prominence is given throughout the school to good quality display which values the development of spirituality such as the 'Wonders of Creation' and the interactive display of caterpillars. Pupils are very involved in raising money for charity and their awareness of the level of need in other parts of the world can be seen in the Year 5 and 6 project to decorate shoe bags to send to a school in Africa with whom links are being developed.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

Worship is important in the life of the school. Acts of Worship are well planned and based on themes which have a consistent focus on Christianity. However, there are occasions when they encounter key features and celebrations of other faiths and these occasions are appreciated by all members of the school community. Members of staff contribute to this planning through suggestions for music and topics. Pupils' ideas and suggestions are also taken into account. There is a high level of pupil participation during Collective Worship with pupils contributing from a variety of curriculum areas. Pupils speak of their enjoyment of Collective Worship and how it impacts upon the way in which they behave and approach difficult situations. Children prepare themselves for Collective Worship as a special time before entering the school hall and then sit respectfully and quietly. The impact of Collective Worship upon pupils' spiritual development is less clear and therefore requires careful monitoring to assess impact.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school  
as a church school is good.**

The management of the school, both from senior management and the Governing Body, promotes an all-pervading ethos which is Christian. The Christian vision, however, is not prominent in public documentation and communications. There is a strong commitment on the part of the headteacher and governors to ensure that all members of the school community are well cared for and supported. Pupils speak of their respect for the teaching of Religious Education because their teachers believe in what they are teaching whilst respecting the views of all pupils. The school has links with the local church and the local vicar is a frequent visitor to the school as well as being a member of the governing body. The school uses the church for the major Christian festivals and as a resource for Religious Education. Pupils are invited to participate in village events such as Carol Singing Around the Christmas Tree. Parents speak confidently of good relationships with the school and the fact that their views are valued. Although the governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development they have yet to fully engage in a rigorous self evaluation of the school's distinctive character.