



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Diocese of St Albans



### Stapleford Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Church Lane, Stapleford SG14 3NB

**LEA:** Hertfordshire  
**URN:** 117455  
**SIAS Inspection:** 8 November 2006  
**Previous S23 Inspection:** 30 & 31 January 2001  
**Headteacher:** Mrs Rebecca Collins  
**SIAS Inspector:** Mrs Lindsay Fraser

#### School context

Stapleford C of E. (VA) Primary School, with a roll of 80 pupils, serves the villages of Stapleford, Waterford and Bramfield, although a percentage of children come from further afield. Virtually all pupils are of White British background. The headteacher joined the school in September 2006.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the Stapleford C of E Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.**

The strong Christian ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are highly valued and supported. The Headteacher, Governors, Clergy, Staff and the wider community work hard together to ensure that the school's Christian foundation is not only firmly established and upheld, but also demonstrated in a practical manner in all aspects of school life.

#### Established strengths

- The excellent relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults based on Christian values
- Strong and highly effective relationships with the local church and community
- The extent to which Religious Education promotes the distinctive Christian character of the school as well as the understanding of other faiths
- The Christian vision as promoted by the leadership of the school together with the well motivated and highly skilled RE subject leader who has demonstrated rigour in the development of the subject.

#### Focus for development

- Monitoring the quality of Collective Worship
- Extending the use of assessment in Religious Education in line with the RE subject leader's development plan.

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

The Christian ethos and practices in the school are very strong and enable all learners to feel valued and special. Pupils value and speak of the excellent relationships they enjoy with their teachers. Parents also speak of the excellent role models provided by members of staff. Pupils feel secure, happy and confident which enables them to achieve well. They particularly appreciate the weekly celebratory assembly in which certificates and 'Well Done Me' cards are awarded. Parents and pupils comment on the very good behaviour within the school. Friendship circles provide a forum for all pupils within the school to express their views and share in decision making for issues within the school and its immediate environment. Pupils also take on responsibilities throughout the school such as helping the younger children as peer mediators. Older pupils have enjoyed a residential experience in which activities were Christian based. The Christian character of the school is represented extremely well through bright and exciting displays of pupils' work reinforcing the school's ethos. Playground areas have been developed to encourage co-operative play and healthy lifestyles. The support of charities, such as the 'boxes for Romania', encourages the children to be aware of and contribute to the wider world.

**The impact of collective worship on the school is outstanding.**

Worship is central to the life of the school and underpins its Christian character. Daily collective worship is well planned by the headteacher in collaboration with the local vicar. Themes are based on the church calendar, the school's values and celebrations and take into account the SEAL materials (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning). The vicar of St Mary's leads Collective Worship on a weekly basis, his input being referred to by many pupils. Excellent use is made of the parish church for celebrating the major Christian festivals and for other occasions such as a Leavers' service. Such services are very well attended by parents. Worship takes place within an atmosphere of calm and respect, making use of the Lord's prayer and other Christian affirmations. Pupils enter and leave worship in a quiet and respectful manner. All pupils take part enthusiastically in singing and many talk appreciatively of these special times together. Pupils also speak of the positive impact of Worship upon their relationships with each other.

**The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding.**

Religious Education is given a high priority in the school. This is reflected in the quality of RE displays throughout the school. Excellent use is made of the Diocesan syllabus, QCA guidance and the requirements of the school trust deed. Standards of attainment are in line with those of the core subjects. The pupils enjoy RE and recognise its relevance in their own lives. They also appreciate the good balance of learning about other faiths. Ways are being sought to link RE more effectively with other subjects in the curriculum. The subject is extremely well managed by the RE subject leader who effectively monitors planning, teaching and the work produced by pupils. This is having a positive effect on raising standards and ensuring good progress is made. In Key Stage 2 pupils were able to compare a Sikh Gurdwara with their local Church and were also able to compare their own feelings when visiting these two special places. In Key Stage 1 pupils were able to talk confidently about the use and symbolism of light in their local church. Excellent differentiation is provided in lessons through the use of different learning objectives, activities and success criteria. Work of all levels for both attainment targets is collected in a

portfolio with a view to developing a more rigorous approach to assessment in line with the development of assessment in non-core subject areas. Religious Education contributes well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils speak of the impact upon their understanding of other faiths and of the impact upon their own feelings and feelings towards other pupils as a result of Religious Education.

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

The headteacher, together with the governors and staff, has a clear and distinctive Christian vision for the school. The vision is clearly articulated in school documentation, displays around the school and is clearly understood by the school community. The planning of Collective Worship by the headteacher and the leadership of the RE subject leader have had a very positive effect on the quality of provision. The involvement of Foundation governors and members of the local church in practical ways within the school add to the promotion of the Christian vision. Besides his weekly input into Collective Worship, the local vicar also visits the school on a regular basis to talk informally with pupils and staff. The governors have a full programme of monitoring visits to the school, but have yet to monitor Collective Worship in a formal way. Pupils are very involved in many activities within the local community. Parents, governors and staff speak of the merging of boundaries in the relationships between Church, School and the local community which has a positive effect upon the pupils. The school routinely seeks the views of all its stakeholders and responds promptly to issues raised.