

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Tonwell St Mary's CE VC Primary School**

Ware Road  
Tonwell  
Ware  
SG12 0HN

#### **Diocese: St Albans**

Local authority:	Hertfordshire
Dates of inspection:	13 October 2011
Date of last inspection:	April 2009
School's unique reference number:	117388
Headteacher:	Alan Wright
Inspector's name and number:	Chris Westgarth, 44

#### **School context**

Tonwell St Mary's Church of England Primary School is a small school with pupils from the village and neighbouring areas. Most pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average and those eligible for free school meals is average.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tonwell St Mary's as a Church of England school are good.**

Tonwell St Mary's is a good school with many strong features. There is great commitment from all to ensure pupils have a caring and secure learning environment. This allows them to develop academically and personally within a Christian atmosphere.

#### **Established strengths**

- The relationships and behaviour of pupils which are underpinned by Christian values
- The pivotal role of the head teacher in promoting the Christian ethos of the school

#### **Focus for development**

- To introduce simple liturgical responses to reinforce Anglican practice
- To enhance further the church/school links through collaborative displays
- To embed the Christian distinctiveness through further training

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

Tonwell St Mary's is a good church school, which is valued by everyone. It is inclusive, all are welcomed and everyone is encouraged to reach their full potential. Pupils receive a good education underpinned by the Christian values of care, love, forgiveness and compassion. The whole school environment is clean, tidy and well cared for, thus reinforcing the Christian ethos of care and respect for the surroundings and the world we live in. Lunchtimes are calm and orderly with a good family atmosphere. The outside area is delightful and the foundation stage area is very beneficial for learning and as a quiet space. The plans for the wildlife garden will further enhance the grounds. There is a strong family feel within the school, with older pupils readily supporting younger ones. Behaviour observed was exemplary and learners were polite and showed respect.

Community cohesion is strong locally and internationally with the links with schools in the Caribbean and Africa. Displays are effectively used to make links between everyday life, Christian values, and areas of the curriculum. The signs and symbols of the Christian religion are clearly displayed in key locations throughout the school.

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

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. Pupils speak positively about the involvement of Act 4 and collective worship in general. They enjoy singing and participate fully. Planning, monitoring and evaluation is effective and robust but would benefit from further pupil input concerning evaluation. Pupils know many bible stories and understand right and wrong and saying sorry. Their knowledge of Christianity as a world faith is strong and their understanding of other faiths is good. (A focus for development in the last inspection)

Pupils see prayer as important and as one commented '*It's good to talk to God at any time and about everything*'. Further opportunities for pupil prayer and a space for quiet reflection would further enhance the worshipping experience.

In the act of worship observed, learners and staff entered quietly and sat in a horseshoe shape. The focal point of a small table, flowers, candle and Bible was beneficial and enhanced the worshipping atmosphere. The theme of caring for the world we live in was linked to the story in the Bible where God asks Adam and Eve to rule over the land. There was good pupil participation and they were encouraged to think further about the worship at home by bringing in recycled objects. Pupils are familiar with some aspects of Anglican heritage and practice and the use of simple liturgy in worship would be beneficial.

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

The head has a clear vision for the development of pupils through being part of a caring and nurturing community. Governors are supportive and carry out their statutory roles well. The school has a good capacity to continue to develop. Furthermore the prospectus, policies, website and other documentation promote the school as a church school and are underpinned by a new mission statement which is based on Christian values. Parents are rightly proud of the school and the impact of the Christian ethos. The school has good links with the local community and the church of Holy Trinity. Due to the distance between church and school, each having an area for display, such as *Our church or Our school*, could further enhance the links. The school council is involved in decision-making and they take their role seriously. As a result, pupils are able to voice their desires and concerns. Diocesan led training on the distinctive Christian Character of the school would further strengthen this area.