



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report



**Tonwell St Mary's Church of England Primary School**  
Ware Road, Tonwell, Ware SG12 0HN

**Diocese of St Albans**

**LEA:** Hertfordshire  
**SIAS Inspection :** 27<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April 2009  
**Previous S23 Inspection:** 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006  
**URN:** 117388  
**Headteacher:** Mr Alan Wright  
**SIAS Inspector :** Mrs Judith Ruff

### **Context**

Tonwell St Mary's is a smaller than average rural primary school serving the village of Tonwell and the surrounding areas. There are currently 48 pupils on role, age from 3 to 11 years. Of these, 11 pupils are on the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, including one pupil with a statement. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the Tonwell as a Church of England School are satisfactory overall.**

The strengths of the school lie in the quality of the care and relationships that the staff provide for pupils. The Christian values of respect, love and trust are evident within the day to day practice of the school. There is a strong commitment to the Christian ethos of the school. However, at present there is no strategic plan in place to show how this will be achieved over time.

### **Established strengths**

- The high quality, caring relationships between staff and pupils
- The positive attitudes of staff and pupils towards being part of a Christian community
- The involvement of representatives from the local church in leading collective worship on a regular basis within the school

### **Focus for development**

- To develop the pupils' awareness of Christianity as a multi cultural faith
- To monitor and evaluate opportunities for spiritual and cultural development across the school
- To make good use of diocesan support and training to develop the Christian ethos within the school

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

Pupils interviewed were proud of their school, appreciated the learning opportunities offered to them and felt that they were very much valued and regarded as special by the adults with whom they worked. The school's Christian values and ethos, promoted well through the mission statement and aims, recently converted into 'child speak' for increased pupil ownership, assist the pupils in achieving their best through excellent relationships with staff. Behaviour throughout the school is exceptionally good. The small class numbers enable pupils to receive very good levels of support and guidance. Social and moral development of pupils is very good. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are currently satisfactory. However, an audit of these two areas and a clear understanding of how each of them can be subsequently developed through curricular themes would successfully raise their profile and improve provision.

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

Collective worship arrangements and the quality of provision are satisfactory. The school is currently using the local village hall for some worship. This is not an ideal environment as the school is unable to improve the surroundings to make it more conducive to worship due to restrictions placed upon its usage. Efforts have been made to seat the pupils in a circular fashion with a candle and Bible as a focal point in the centre of the floor. However, pupils are not able to benefit from visual stimuli and basing the worship more within a school classroom, may well improve the ambience for worship. The school follows the Church year and materials produced by the Diocese as well as the relevant SEAL themes. These are evaluated by the Headteacher. At present there have been no opportunities for other staff members, governors or pupils to participate in the monitoring and evaluation of worship. The Headteacher has worked hard to include pupil participation, for example members of Year 6 have, with adult support, led class based assembly themes. Pupils sing well to a taped accompaniment. There are examples of pupils' prayers around the school. The school recognises that these are a valuable resource and intends to present them in the form of a book collection in the near future. Pupils listen attentively and enjoy the collective worship led by local church members as well as other invited Christian groups, such as 'Act 4'.

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

The Headteacher has worked hard in partnership with members of the local church community to develop the Christian ethos of the school. The weekly visits of the vicar and other church members are looked forward to by the pupils. The church is not accessible to the school community on foot, and this has restricted its use to a school Christmas nativity. There is considerable scope for using technology to bring the church and its furnishings in to the school curriculum, so that it becomes a more familiar building to pupils. Pupils have limited experiences of Christianity being a multi- cultural faith and although there are tentative plans in place to link with an African school, these are in a very early stage of consideration. Links with the Diocese are currently underdeveloped, something which the Headteacher is beginning to address. The School Development Plan does highlight both RE and Collective Worship for proposed actions and funds are allocated to cover these. Opportunities to collaborate with local schools to build capacity in terms of curriculum planning and resourcing are also currently being considered.

The school environment is stimulating, engaging and provides an excellent environment for both adults and pupils and this is a credit to all concerned. The recently appointed chair of governors is a Foundation Governor, who is keen to work in partnership with school leaders to promote and plan for the development of the Christian ethos of the school and to strengthen further the church links.

<b>The school meets the statutory requirements for Collective Worship.</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>The school meets the statutory requirements for Religious Education.</b>	<b>Yes</b>