



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



 The **Methodist Church**

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Stapeley Broad Lane Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Broad Lane

Stapeley

Nantwich

Cheshire

CW5 7QL

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: East Cheshire

Dates of inspection: 25th September 2014

Date of last inspection: 18th September 2009

School's unique reference number: 111269

Headteacher: Mr. Ian Shackleton

Inspector's name and number: Jane Brooke 658

School context

Stapeley Broad Lane CofE Primary School is a semi-rural school. It serves an area of some social and economic advantage with a very low percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below the national average. The school has largely White-British pupils with 6.6% from minority ethnic backgrounds. Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and pupil numbers have grown significantly in the last ten years. There has been a recent extension to the hall. On the day of the inspection, the RE subject leader and the Year 6 class were out of school.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stapeley Broad Lane as a CofE school are good

- There is a strong, inclusive Christian ethos, 'where children matter most' and where all are enabled to make good, and in some cases outstanding, progress both academically and spiritually.
- The Christian ethos underpins the stimulating educational environment and the high standards of behaviour and care exhibited by the pupils.
- The high quality of worship leads to a deepening and significant level of spiritual development.

Areas to improve

- Develop more systematic, rigorous monitoring and evaluation of worship and involve the worship council in planning and leading worship so as to instigate child-led improvements in worship.
- Make the Christian distinctiveness more explicit and visible so that the whole school community recognises the Christian identity of the school.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the

needs of all learners

The welcoming atmosphere and the interactive display of a carved wooden cross, praying hands and prayer cards indicate to all visitors that this is a Christian school. The mission statement, 'where children matter most,' underpinned by Christian values, is lived out in the excellent relationships between staff and pupils. The strong Christian values in the school support pupils in their learning, giving them self-confidence and no fear of failure leading to attainment that is significantly above the national average. Pupils with special needs make at least expected progress with the gifted and talented making excellent progress. The high attendance and the very low exclusion rate show that pupils enjoy attending school which is confirmed by the full engagement of pupils in all classes. The Christian identity is not evident on the school website or in the weekly newsletter. The award winning choir sings, 'Make me a channel of your peace' to a very high standard which supports the spiritual development of the choir and of those listening during worship. The reward system across the school and the Investors in Pupil Award, along with the moral values taught in worship and Religious Education, have contributed to the exemplary behaviour in class and outdoors. All pupils play with all ages in the external, spacious, play area creating the sense of a large caring 'family'. Parents comment that their children know the names of everyone in the school. Visitors from the local Methodist church and a visit to Chester cathedral ensure that pupils begin to understand the diversity of Christianity locally. The link South African school offers pupils an opportunity to engage with Christianity from a world-wide perspective. The enquiry based learning in Religious Education allows pupils to explore biblical stories at a challenging level so that pupils develop both spiritually and morally. They learn how to relate the Bible to their own lives, for example during a discussion about gratitude in the story of Jesus healing the paralysed man. The gift of a Bible from the church to Year 6 pupils encourages them to continue learning about the Christian faith and maintains the strong links between church and school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is well planned, using Christian values as themes, so that worship is relevant for pupils. Visitors, clergy and all staff regularly lead worship and consequently pupils experience a variety of ways to pray and reflect upon God. A worshipful atmosphere is created by the music played as pupils enter the hall, the use of a vibrant focal point and the opportunity to be quiet during prayer. One pupil said the best time in worship was 'the quiet times'. Anglican responses to 'The Lord be with you,' are learnt by pupils but God as three in one is not understood. Pupils have the opportunity to develop spiritually through singing action songs enthusiastically and participating in role play about biblical stories. They engage actively with opportunities for reflection and prayer in the labyrinth set up in a quiet room by a Christian visitor known as 'The Art and Soul Man'. Pupils' understanding of prayer is further developed in classes. They choose prayers from the beautifully presented prayer books written by pupils, to say at lunch time and at the end of the day. Christian based reflection corners in every classroom, designed by the pupils, offer further opportunities for them to write their own prayers. The worship council has met once since it was established in February 2013 and having introduced reflection corners, now plans to review worship and include pupils in planning and leading. The monitoring and evaluation of worship is not yet systematically rigorous in order to reflect and make improvements. Services at Christmas and Easter in the local church, along with some class visits, cement the relationship with the church and allow pupils to experience worship in the church building. Pupils are clear about the identity of the local vicar and curate and speak positively about the engaging worship that they lead helped by a drama group from members of the congregation. One pupil said, 'I like the times when they act out a Bible story'.

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

The headteacher has had a very positive effect upon the Christian character of the school by

sustaining the excellent relationships that permeate the school and introducing the worship council to enhance worship. The senior leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's performance with a keen determination to help every pupil achieve in the context of a Christian school. Their presence as Christians is significant in the school. Their caring relationships with each other, with parents and with pupils speak louder than words. The mission statement agreed in September 2013 by the whole school family, which includes a Christian dimension, enabled the community to work together with renewed energy and focus to improve pupils' learning. The explicit Christian vision of the school is not strongly articulated. Pupils simply say that the school is Christian, 'because it says it on the school badge'. Bullying is dealt with very effectively in the school. Pupils say that they are confident to tell any teacher if they are in trouble. Governors act as critical friends and have strong links with subject leaders. They monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness on the pupils. The headteacher reports termly on worship and religious education to the governing body to ensure governors are informed and able to contribute to discussions concerning further developments on behalf of the pupils. The curriculum has not been reviewed fully by the whole school community to identify opportunities for spiritual development for pupils. All staff are encouraged to develop professionally with a few staff having recently been promoted to new posts in other church schools. Parents are actively involved in the school and speak appreciatively of the strong family atmosphere. One parent spoke warmly of the open door policy and the buddying system which had ensured her reception child had a very smooth start to school. The legal requirements of collective worship and RE are met. The links with the local church and school are strong through combined fund raising, mutual sharing of information and prayer. The area for development from the previous report about involving pupils in planning worship has not yet been fully addressed.

SIAMS report September 2014, Stapeley Broad Lane CofE Primary School, CW5 7QL