



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Stanley Common Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Belper Road  
Stanley Common  
Ilkeston  
Derbyshire DE7 6FS

**Previous SIAS grade:** Outstanding

**Current inspection grade:** Good

**Diocese: Derby**

Local authority: Derbyshire  
Date of inspection: 14 January 2016  
Date of last inspection: January 2011  
School's unique reference number: 112855  
Headteacher: Sue Gillott  
Inspector's name and number: Kerry Palmer (60)

#### School context

Stanley Common is a much smaller than average primary school serving a growing village community. The original Victorian building has been thoughtfully extended and developed to serve current educational expectations. However, it does lack a hall. Pupil numbers fluctuate from year to year; each of the three classes has mixed age groups. Children are almost all of White British heritage. The number with significant special needs or in receipt of additional pupil premium funded support is below average. All Saints Church is close by. The current vicar has been in post for a short time following an extended interregnum.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stanley Common Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- A meaningful Christian vision permeates all aspects of school life so that explicit Christian values are evident to all.
- Christian love drives the whole school community, consequently, children of all abilities, feel valued, safe and are enthusiastic for learning.
- Staff display a Christian vocation for education which is recognised and appreciated by children, families and the parish.
- Excellent, Christ centred, collective worship recognised by all as integral to school life.

#### Areas to improve

- Explore strategies to increase opportunities for children to reflect and pray and so enhance their spiritual development.
- Develop a structured, rolling programme, involving all stakeholders, to evaluate each aspect of the school's Christian distinctiveness and contribute to the annual development plan.
- Review website, policies and documentation to make the foundation and impact of the school's Christian values and the importance of religious education clear to all.

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

Christian love is evident in all aspects of school life at Stanley Common. Children are treasured as unique and special. Consequently, they flourish, growing in confidence and enthusiasm for life. Data illustrates that levels of progress are improving. It is clear from conversations with all ages that children of all abilities enjoy school, work hard and feel safe. 'We don't have bullying because we've learnt to think of others', one child said, 'I'd choose a friend who is kind and helpful, like Jesus', said another. Staff, children and governors articulate values based on Gospel teaching which are at the core of all activity. Sadly, this is insufficiently explicit in documentation and on the school website. Christian compassion, forgiveness and mutual respect contribute to excellent behaviour and are displayed amongst children and adults alike; cooperation and mutual support is the norm, 'everyone cares for each other'. The dove of peace and the rainbow of God's promise on the school badge are recognised and understood by children. Relationships are excellent amongst all in this close-knit school family and village community. Staff work together as a mutually supportive team. Because children are so enthusiastic, the attendance of almost all is above average. Some progress has been made in extending children's knowledge and appreciation of other faiths and cultures, since the last inspection, such as participation in the Erewash Festival of Light, but more needs to be done. Led by the school council, children willingly accept responsibility to support a range of charities and good causes, the Padley Centre at harvest and Macmillan Cancer Care being examples. They appreciate their objectives in providing for the needs of those less fortunate and that this is what Jesus would do. The profile of religious education (RE) is rising, led by a well-informed subject leader. The introduction of a new programme of study, a focus on questioning and thinking through 'Big Questions', use of Godly play techniques and creative cross-curricular links enhance its positive impact which extends into the wider life of the school. In meaningful ways, RE emphasises Christian distinctiveness and contributes positively to children's spiritual development. All this ensures that the school's Christian values positively influence children's social, moral, moral, cultural and spiritual development in many significant ways recognised and appreciated by parents.

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

Well prepared acts of worship, rooted in Bible teaching and imaginatively delivered in an appropriate liturgical setting, ensure relevant Christian messages that positively influence children's lives. Recently introduced themes, led, in age appropriate ways, by all staff in turn, build on the established focus on Christian values. Children talk about trust, justice and perseverance in school and their lives. A reflective candle is lit to remind children that 'Jesus is the light of the world', helping them to understand symbolism, but appreciation of the Trinity is limited. Classroom space is thoughtfully rearranged for school worship together. Music, projected Bible verses, pictures and focus artefacts arranged by children successfully create a worshipful gathering atmosphere. Prayer and reflection are an integral part of school worship and the school day, but opportunities to develop children's individual prayer life are missed. There is some evaluation of impact from verbal feedback, governor observations and staff discussion but focussed development plans for this or other aspects of the school's Christian distinctiveness are not incorporated into whole school planning. Whilst children participate actively in teacher organised worship, particularly in festival services held in church they continue to have insufficient opportunity to take full ownership. Contributions from the parish include regular dramatized, Bible story based worship, led by a team of dedicated parishioners who are well liked members of the village community. This is integrated by the headteacher into school themes and eagerly anticipated by the children. Parents and friends look forward to joining school for worship in All Saints Church on special occasions and comment on the impact on children. 'The children's faces at Christingle were magical', said one, 'I loved their memories at Remembrance', remarked another.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church**

### **school is good**

The headteacher makes clear that, as a Christian school, Gospel teaching drives its vision and development. Staff and governors are united behind her in working for continuous improvement and the best for every child. Safety and the wellbeing of all are established priorities. A detailed and relevant monitoring programme for school improvement informs focussed development plans which, along with partnership with a local outstanding school and Local Authority input, drive the school forward. All staff make good use of training provided by the diocese which, along with the headteacher's emphasis on collaborative working, promotes growth in competence and insight. Professional development opportunities successfully promote positive improvements including the generous resourcing of RE and worship. Governors are well informed about school developments and play an increasingly effective role in strategic planning. Foundation governors observe and discuss aspects of Christian distinctiveness and feed back to the full governing body. However, there is an insufficiently structured cycle of governor review to inform strategic planning. There are strong, active links with All Saints Church which the new vicar is eager to develop further. Parents praise the staff who 'know the children inside out'. They are very supportive of the school and feel well informed. Parent helpers are often in school and the 'Parents and Friends' regularly organise fundraising and social events. The recent Christmas Fair was held in All Saints Church. Questionnaires and conversations indicate appreciation of the professional dedication of staff and the values for life given to each child. However, they seem less cognizant of their Christian source. Both RE and collective worship more than meet statutory requirements and the potential for further positive development of the school's Christian distinctiveness is excellent.

SIAMS report Stanley Common CofE ( VC) Primary School, Derbys. DE7 6FS January 2016