

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Saint Edwards Church of England Controlled First School,**

Hollow Lane,  
Cheddleton,  
Leek.  
Staffordshire.  
ST13 7HP

#### **Diocese: Lichfield**

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: December 4<sup>th</sup> 2006

Date of last inspection: March 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> 2000

School's unique reference number: 124241

Headteacher: Mrs TA Jackson - Ward

Inspector's name and number: Mr Huw Williams : 348

#### **School context**

Saint Edwards Church of England Controlled First School is a popular school situated in the Moorland village of Cheddleton, close to the market town of Leek. The majority of the children are from White British heritage. There is a planned programme of upgrading the facilities within the school the most recent being the establishment of the school/community library, which is to be named in memory of the Reverend Martin Leigh. The school is dealing positively with the recent loss of the much loved and cherished vicar.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Saint Edwards as a Church of England school are good.**

Strong Christian principles underpin all aspects of school life. The creation of a safe and secure family community ensures that the children mature both spiritually and academically. The good behaviour and caring attitudes of the staff and children epitomizes the way in which the school's Christian ethos is the foundation to its success.

#### **Established strengths**

- Worship an important part in the life of the school and it has a positive influence on the pupils' spiritual and moral development. .
- There is a good and productive relationship between the school and the church.
- The children's personal development and good behaviour is consistently supported throughout the school by all staff.
- The dedication and commitment of the headteacher to the collaborative teamwork in all areas of school management.
- The support for the school and the confidence expressed in it by Governors, parents and the wider community.

#### **Focus for development**

- Ensure the staff and governors evaluate the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Make available to pupils opportunities for them to have first hand experiences about and from other faiths.
- Extend the variety of worship settings and style so that pupils can be personally involved.

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

The new Headteacher ably supported by staff and governors has established a positive climate of achievement. The school's distinctive Christian values are well reflected in the pupils' sense of well – being and in their concern for others. A result of this is that the children's behaviour is good. The inclusiveness of the school and its commitment to the

development of the whole child within a supportive school community is demonstrated by the good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Good display especially in the entrance area, Christian signs and symbols, murals and friezes supports the school's Christian distinctiveness. The strong family ethos within the school helps to encourage in the children a strong sense of identity and security. Relationships in the school and the wider community are good. Parents commented '*that it was like coming home*' and '*my child who was off ill was crying because she wanted to come to school.*' Pupils and parents are confident in the structures for help and support within the school. Children value the establishment of a school council as they feel that their views are taken seriously. The school has a good record of charitable giving about which the children speak with enthusiasm and compassion. Children are willing and active learners and are eager to contribute to lessons. Children's achievements both academic and non academic are promptly recognised, rewarded and celebrated through a system of achievement cards, gold awards and the seal award. Governors provide very good support. The 'critical friend' aspect of governance will be strengthened with the training of the foundation governors on evaluating the distinctive nature of a church school. Staff are excellent role models for the children.

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

Worship is an important component in the everyday life of the school. Collective worship is well planned and organised and a good variety of themes are delivered by a range of leaders. The evaluation of collective worship through staff comments could be further strengthened by involving other stake holders in the process. Further opportunities for the theme to be explored take place in class worship, so allowing for discussion and reflection to be at a more appropriate level. Quiet areas in classrooms and the beautifully created quiet area in memory of Mandy support the children's spiritual development. Pupils are not at present involved in leading worship and this is an area for development. Staff regularly attend whole school worship and this enhances the family ethos of the school. Pupils are aware of the distinctive nature of worship and enter and exit the hall in a quiet and respectful way. They are attentive and respond well with thoughts and opinion. Children are keen to talk about their Christian faith and made such comments as '*I like to close my eyes and talk to God,*' '*I can see Jesus by the cross,*' and in the good class worship '*God's heart is for loving us.*' Worship in the local church on special occasions provides a time for the whole community to share in celebration. The new intake service held at the church for the first time this year was extremely successful. This was further enhanced with a delightful presentation of Christmas songs to parents and grandparents by the nursery children. Children speak positively about worship and look forward to the daily act of worship. Pupils learn about Anglican traditions and are able to identify with personal prayer in their own lives. Relevant understanding of Anglican traditions is aided by appropriate prayers and symbols used in worship. Pupils understanding 'about and especially from other faiths' is an area for development.

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

The Headteacher ably supported by the staff and Governors share and promote a Christian vision for the school. They strongly support the school's church foundation and value the Christian ethos as an important aspect in promoting the school within the community. The Foundation Governors role in monitoring and evaluating the worship life of the school is yet to be fully developed. The recent sad loss of the much loved vicar Martin Leigh has deeply affected the school and the community. The school and the church are actively seeking ways build upon the good links he had established. The children have good experiences of services at the church. The children are eager to share their views with others. Parents consulted during the inspection were highly supportive of the school. They were pleased with the progress made by their children not only academically but also with the level of care they receive, the school's community involvement and the happiness and readiness of the children to attend school.