



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

### Stanley St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Lake Lock Road  
Stanley  
Wakefield  
WF3 4HS

**Previous SIAS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Good**

**Diocese: West Yorkshire and the Dales**

Local authority: Wakefield

Dates of inspection: 14 October 2015

Date of last inspection: October 2010

School's unique reference number: 108247

Interim Headteacher: Julie Dale

Inspector's name and number: Nigel Castledine (652)

#### School context

Stanley St Peter's is a larger than average primary school serving a mainly White British community. However, the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is growing. The school's pupils come from widely ranging socio-economic backgrounds, and the number of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with an Educational Health and Care Plan is much lower than average, but there is a significant percentage of pupils supported at school action level. Currently, there is an interim headteacher in charge of the school for the academic year.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Stanley St Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- Positive, caring relationships between all members of the school community exemplify the pervasive and distinctly Christian ethos of Stanley St Peter's
- Effective links with the local church community are strengthened by the commitment of the vicar to the life and work of the school
- The determination of the governors and the senior leadership team to maintain high standards has ensured the school's ongoing development

#### Areas to improve

- Use the school's Values for Life to create a smaller group of core values linked to Biblical teaching, which will help all stakeholders to perceive their meaning and significance
- Extend the school's international links in order to promote the children's understanding and experiences of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith
- Increase pupils' involvement in collective worship by facilitating regular, appropriate opportunities for the children to take on its independent planning and leadership

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

Stanley St Peter's School uses its strong faith ethos to provide a warm and inviting atmosphere of Christian nurture for every child. Because of this, pupils enjoy their school life and achieve well. School achievement meets national expectations and the Ofsted inspection of 2012 graded the school as 'good'. Attendance figures, which had dipped mainly because of pupil holidays in term-time, have recently improved to national expectations. Pupils with additional needs are well supported. Parents speak highly of the ways in which children who previously had difficulties in other school settings, have responded to the nurturing approach of St Peter's. A system of incremental credits rewards good behaviour, courtesy and readiness for learning. These credits not only encourage the children but integrate with the school's Christian values by highlighting children who have epitomised a particular value. There is an emphasis on positive help for the minority of children who find these high standards hard to maintain. The school has been promoting its eighteen Christian Values for Life to encapsulate its distinctive Christian ethos. The school has recently been considering a much smaller group of carefully-selected core Christian values linked to Biblical teaching. It is considered that they will be more accessible and readily linked to day to day life in school. Many children at the school come from families of no particular faith and a minority are from other major world faiths. One Muslim child wrote during religious education (RE) that she was proud to belong to her own faith but she also was excited to learn about Christian belief. Because of the widespread celebration of faith, there is a distinctive atmosphere of spirituality within school. This is strengthened by the many ways in which the children readily engage in reflection and prayer. Each classroom has a reflection area, well-presented and equipped with child-friendly aids to spiritual refreshment. From this flows a facility with reflection and prayer that helps children to use them as ways to include God in their lives. In response to a development point from the last SIAS inspection the school has focused on promoting the Christian ethos. This has been done by increasing and emphasising high-quality faith displays and the use of Christian artefacts throughout the school. These changes have supported an increased awareness of the school's Christian ethos. Pupils are very keen to show Christian service to others by volunteering to help in school. Such positions as School Councillors are keenly sought and diligently carried out, alongside other roles which include lunchtime buddies, play leaders and sports club members. The school's Young Voices entertain local groups such as at the harvest meal for senior members of the community. Ingredients for this special meal were some of the harvest gifts collected by the children, with the remainder going to local food banks for needy families. Other instances of the children's Christian concern and care for others include fundraising for Macmillan Cancer and the international Water for Life charity. Because RE teaching and learning is of a high standard, it strengthens the impact of the school's faith ethos and gives clear links to collective worship. Pupil achievement in RE is in line with other core subjects, supporting children to develop the empathy to look beyond themselves into the beliefs of others. This helps pupils to understand how personal faith impacts on daily life. Educational visits to local religious buildings have included a mosque, a gurdwara, a Methodist church and a synagogue as well as St Peter's church. Questions of faith are given well-informed and considered responses, conveying the children's own feelings and ideas and linking them to the school's Christian ethos. The effective RE subject leader is knowledgeable about current developments in RE. She has taken steps to provide training and has successfully supported staff in the subject. The school has mutually beneficial links with St Peter's Church and the vicar has a strong pastoral role in school in addition to being a governor.

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

Collective worship is distinctly Christian in character. As a response to a development point in the last inspection, worship is now focused through the school's Christian Values for Life. Daily worship has at its core Christian teaching and Bible reading, prayer, worship songs and time for reflection. It can also include appropriate aspects of social and emotional learning (SEAL). Themes for worship are followed up in the classrooms and their reflective areas. Each Monday

the vicar leads worship which introduces the faith theme for the week. Anglican tradition is very much part of school worship with the Christian calendar of festival and special days being followed. To provide focal points for the worship the Christian symbols of the Cross and a lit candle are used. The children use a series of responses during the preparation of the worship table and the lighting of the worship candle. These aid the children's understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Lord's Prayer is regularly used in worship alongside the children's own prayers. The liturgy has significant impact on the children. One child, referring to the burning candle, commented that "The light of Christ makes the darkness go away".

Worship plans are organised by the RE co-ordinator who also collates the regular evaluations of worship carried out by the pupil members of the Worship Group. Their views feed back into future planning and presentation of worship and are considered by the school's Ethos Committee. As an outcome from the last inspection, the children's involvement in worship now includes involvement in drama, reading from the Bible, sharing their own prayers and providing musical accompaniments for the school's enthusiastic singing of worship songs. The Worship Group is now keen to promote children being given appropriate independent opportunities to plan and lead worship without adult intervention. Many parents appreciate the opportunities offered to attend school-led worship at festivals and special occasions. Worship also takes place in St Peter's Church which is now housed in the church community centre. Its small size prevents the whole school from worshipping together. However each class in turn is able to lead worship at a festival and invite their parents to join them. The importance of worship at St Peter's School is seen in a keenly anticipated end of year service in Wakefield Cathedral. This is led by the children who will transfer to high school. The liturgy includes the children's 'graduation' from Stanley St Peter's. For these children and their families, this is considered a great occasion in their lives. It illustrates the positive impact of school's Christian ethos and gospel values on the life and achievements of every child.

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

Governors and senior school leaders have a clear understanding of the requirements for Stanley St Peter's to continue to develop as a successful and distinctively Christian school. They have an accurate understanding of the school's data and are prepared to act decisively in the children's and the school's best interests. This increased involvement by governors is the outcome of a development point from the last inspection. The interim headteacher is giving strong and effective leadership, pulling together the many strands of school life to ensure that the school continues to improve and meet the needs of every child. Governors have closely monitored the development of the school and they have carried out their particular responsibility to oversee the Christian distinctiveness of Stanley St Peter's. Some governors are regular in their visits to sample school life and to offer assistance in the classrooms. In so doing, they gain a clear insight into the daily life of the school. All governors monitor school life and hold leaders to account to deliver the best possible education in a Christian setting. Some governors are members of the Ethos Committee which has particular responsibility for the development of the school's Christian ethos. This committee, which reports back to all governors, also seeks to promote links between the school and the local community, particularly the local Christian churches. The headteacher and senior staff are working closely in partnership with local groups of both Anglican and community schools. Appropriate professional development is offered to all staff, linked to performance management targets. There are strong links with the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. Stronger and improved links between the school and its parents are redeveloping. This is seen as a priority by the interim head. The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.