



The Diocese of St Edmundsbury  
and Ipswich



St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Stonehouse Road  
Hadleigh  
Ipswich  
IP7 5BH

Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Suffolk LEA

Dates of Inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2006

Headteacher: Mrs A Herbert

Chair of Governors: The Very Reverend D Stranack

Inspector: Mr E Green

St Mary's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School located in the market town of Hadleigh. The school caters for 204 children aged 4 to 11 who come from a socially mixed area of the town. Most of the pupils are of White British background and a minority are of mixed race or Asian heritage. A below average number of pupils is entitled to free school meals and the number of pupils with special educational needs is also below average.

St Mary's Primary School is a good Church School with a number of significant strengths. There is a significant amount of evidence to show that it is an effective and distinctive Voluntary Aided Church of England School.

#### **Established Strengths**

- Strong leadership and a supportive governing body.
- Excellent links with St Mary's Church
- Collective Worship at the heart of school life.

#### **Focus for Development**

- Continue to develop further ways the church can support the school.
- Continue to develop RE curriculum with special reference to differentiation and assessment.

**The way in which the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners is good.** The school gives very high regard to this; as a result, the school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners. The curriculum is broad and balanced and complemented by a number of extra curricular clubs. Children are confident and secure in the learning environment and they talk positively of Christian values, for example, the 'buddy system' in operation in the school. Behaviour in the school is very good. Achievement assemblies give children an opportunity to share in celebration of achievement made both inside and outside of school. The school actively supports the wider community through, for example, fund raising. The school council meets weekly and is actively involved in the decision-making processes of the school, for example, how school worship should be organised and conducted.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.** Worship is at the heart of the life of the school; it is extremely well planned and organised. The children enjoy collective worship and have a very positive attitude towards their daily time of worship. They readily recount past worship experiences and understand how what they learn can be applied to the rest of their school life. Children are active participants in worship and given the regular opportunity to lead some of the worship. The school makes excellent use of traditional Anglican prayers and greetings and the use of candles in class and whole school worship greatly adds to a sense and feeling of worship. The school community worships together in the parish church at Christmas, Easter, harvest and at the end of the school year. In the welcoming of visitors from different Christian churches to lead collective worship, the school widens the pupils understanding of collective worship.

**The effectiveness of the Religious Education in the school is good.** Religious Education is recognised by all the key stakeholders as being of crucial importance in the school and the subject's status in the school reflects this. It is well led and coordinated and the level of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are very well planned and structured and children are given every opportunity to participate fully in a variety of ways, for example, discussing with each other and in larger groupings. Teachers' subject knowledge is good; this has been aided by the effective use of INSET. Detailed schemes of work are in place and the subject is well resourced and is seen as integral to the curriculum as a whole with many cross-curricular themes evident. Time allowance for the subject is good. Displays of learners' work are of a very high quality and reflect the work being covered in school. Effective monitoring and scrutiny of work shows standards to be good.

**The leadership and management of the school as a church school are good.** The head teacher and governors provide positive and effective Christian leadership of the school. This head teacher, in particular, ensures that a distinctive Christian vision is maintained and developed. For example, she ensures that issues facing the school as a church school are covered by the schools development plan. There is a caring ethos, which is underpinned by Christian values. The Christian proclamation is very clear to any visitor on entering the school through the high standard of display and clarity in what the school is aiming to achieve. Governors are aware of the school's Christian foundation and purpose, which are referred to in the school prospectus. The foundation governors are actively involved in the school both in worship and wider school activities. The local church community supports the school, for example, members of the church come into school on a regular basis to help with different activities. Staff applying for posts at the school are made aware of the school's Christian vision and questioned on this at interview.