



### Codicote Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

<b>LEA:</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>SIAS Inspection:</b>	07 June 2006
<b>Previous S23 Inspection:</b>	14-16 February 2000
<b>URN:</b>	117392
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs E Pollard
<b>SIAS Inspector:</b>	Mr R J Hopcraft

#### School context

Codicote is an average sized primary school, set in a prosperous village of mostly owner-occupied housing. Attainment on entry to the foundation stage is above average. Pupil mobility is low and the proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is below the national average. After a period of stability, there have recently been some changes in staff.

#### Summary Judgement

Codicote is an outstanding Church school that provides an exceptionally caring environment for all who learn and work there. Its ethos is firmly rooted in Christian values. Pupils feel safe and cared for and there is a strong mutual respect between learners and adults. A distinctive Christian dimension is evident in all aspects of school life, creating a strong environment for learning. Staff and governors are strongly committed to its Christian foundation.

#### Established strengths

- The clear vision of the headteacher and governors for the school as a Christian community;
- The excellent relationships at all levels;
- The positive modelling of Christian values by all adults;
- A consistently positive worship experience for both pupils and adults;
- Effective links with the church and local community;
- Good systems for tracking pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

#### Focus for development

- Further develop the monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian character and collective worship, so that systems are more structured and rigorous.

**The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners outstandingly well (Grade 1)**

The school's Christian foundation is celebrated in all aspects of its life. Parents speak highly of the school's efforts to promote its Christian character and have high regard for the sound moral base it provides for their children. Relationships are outstanding at all levels and adults and children have a strong mutual respect for each other, enabling learners to make good progress and achieve well. All groups of learners feel valued and special and are encouraged to think of and to care for others. This is evident in the wide range of charities supported by the school and in the way in which older children are encouraged to take on responsibilities and care for the younger ones. Children feel well cared for and safe and know who to approach if they experience any problems. Opportunities for developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills permeate the whole curriculum, for example the role play area in the reception class was set up as a church and children were encouraged to develop appropriate behaviour while engaging in this activity. The school actively tracks the social development of its pupils and monitors this aspect of development very closely. The school's bright and welcoming environment, both inside and out, is used to reflect children's achievements and to extend the cross-cultural dimensions of the curriculum. The signs and symbols of its Christian foundation are clearly displayed around the school.

**The worshipping experience provided by the school is outstanding (grade 1)**

Worship plays a central part in the life of this school and impacts positively on all areas. Acts of worship are well planned, imaginative and inspiring, using a range of approaches including stories, quizzes and visual stimuli. Themes are rooted strongly in Christian traditions and the Bible, but are also designed to reflect values and morals. All children participate actively in worship and they speak animatedly about past experiences. Song plays a very important role and the singing is outstanding. This extends to sung prayers, which provide some particularly moving moments and opportunities for spiritual reflection. Prayer is playing an increasingly important role within the school beyond the daily act of worship – for example the use of prayer boards in Year 1. Staff attend worship voluntarily and also take an active part in the experience. A range of staff are involved in leading acts of worship. The school has particularly strong relationships with the local church. The vicar and a foundation governor preside over acts of worship once a fortnight. Children attend church services at significant points in the Christian year and their own lives – for example, the Leaver's Service. The church is also well used as a resource at other times, including visits. The head and nominated governors evaluate collective worship as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation cycle and Collective Worship features each year as an area for development in the School Improvement Plan.

**The leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding (Grade 1)**

The headteacher is an outstanding leader and has worked hard to develop and promote the school's Christian character. She fulfils her role as worship co-ordinator very effectively and works closely with governors to provide support and challenge for the school in all its aspects. Together, they have a very clear vision for the school and its future development as a church school. The school has completed an accurate evaluation of its own effectiveness as a church school: this now needs to be developed further to ensure that the evaluation of its Christian character and collective worship remain robust and rigorous. Parents are clear that Codicote is a church school and the vast majority believe it to have a positive impact on their lives and those of their children. They appreciate the opportunity to influence the future development of the school by responding to questionnaires and approve strongly of the school's open door policy. Children are encouraged to develop in responsibility and maturity and the School Council provides a particularly effective vehicle for their ideas and discussion. There are strong links with the Church and local community and the school has worked closely with the Parish Council to define and promote its "Travel Plan". Pupils are proud of their school and its standing within the community.

