

## St Michael's School report 2017

The success of St Michael's School is due to the dedicated hard work of the Headteacher, Mrs Lisa Dale, the Chair of Governors, Mrs Maggie Jarman, and the excellent team of staff and governors, as well as to the support of the parents and of St Michael's Church members through voluntary help and fundraising. Please do take time to look at the new school website for exciting pictures and news of the school. It includes the new vision and mission statement, showing the Christian ethos shining through the whole of the life of the school. Also the new admissions policy (for 2019-20), reflecting the importance placed on families who are part of the worshipping community of the church.

The school is working in partnership with the church, with the local community, and with other local schools, to provide the best possible education for its children. Looking back over the last year I will pick out some highlights from a wonderful collection of daily experiences which occur within the school community, touching each and every member.

**Church Links** . There are strong links between the school and the church, as shown by the reading volunteers, end of term services in church and the many assemblies led by the clergy members.

The annual Christingle was held in the church in early 2017 with participation from the children, and it was pleasing to see the church welcome many school families. The school also held its end of term services for pupils and their families in the church.

The Harvest celebration whole school assembly supported the Bishop's Harvest appeal and the local foodbank. This was followed by a harvest lunch where year 6 had invited 25 senior citizens for a roast dinner with befriending and entertainment.

R.E day 2017 was on the theme of Salvation, with activities in all classes. The day started and ended with a whole school assembly, explaining the Christian concept of Salvation. Each class had different age-appropriate activities which used the Easter story to help the children learn about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was a challenging and thought-provoking day, with drama, discussions, the creation of a beautiful Easter garden, decorated eggs, storybooks, forgiveness box and art posters.

The summer term theme was " Good to be me" looking at the uniqueness of each individual, helping each child to be thankful for their individual God-given talents and the use of these skills in God's purpose for their lives.

In the Autumn term, the children explored the meaning of "Koinonia" and the linked themes of friendship and co-operation.

The school has built on its "Gold" RE Quality Award in 2016 by setting up a new RE hub, so that local schools can share good practice in RE teaching. St Michael's is now seen as a beacon of good practice and has been recommended by the Diocese to other church schools, as an example to follow.

2018 will see the school celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and lots of exciting events are planned as part of the anniversary celebrations.

The school continues to thrive academically, with the latest results comparing very favourably to the national and Hertfordshire averages, but the emphasis is still firmly on offering pupils a wide range of experiences and on fostering a life-long love of learning. The school's Early Years team (Nursery and Reception) has achieved the prestigious Early Years "Gold" Quality Mark and the school is now using some of the best aspects of its early years provision to help develop an innovative curriculum throughout the school, for example by putting a greater emphasis on outdoor learning.

**Fundraising** for various charities is an important aspect of the school, helping to demonstrate God's command to love other people, shown through practical support. Fundraising for Nabikabala continues in the school, with the money going towards the roof of the school hall. Events included money raised in Enterprise week, a pupils' and adults' Quiz, a sponsored walk, sponsored painted finger nails, decorated biscuits in the shape of building tools, sponsored trampolining and a junior football match.

During Christian Aid week a whole-school assembly highlighted Christian Aid's focus on the current refugee crisis, and money was collected for a Big Brikkie event. The summer term production by the juniors raised money for Essex Air Ambulance.

Money was also raised for the NSPCC following assemblies explaining the important work which they do with children at risk, and explaining to the children how to protect themselves and how to request help if concerned.

Following on from this assembly there was an event arranged to support parents, staff and the children, with workshops giving practical advice and tools to help deal with anxiety and unhelpful feelings and to improve daily life, under the banner of "Mindfulness".

The strong tradition of **music** in the school continues, especially around activities in the preparation for the celebration of the Birth of Christ. The Christmas Band toured around Bishop's Stortford with concerts at Apton Road Day Centre and a couple of retirement home complexes. The older pupils' concert "Christmas around the World" and the younger pupils dance-themed nativity " Lights, Camel, Action " were enjoyed by all the school and well received by all the adults in the audience.

**School trips** are always a highlight for every school child, and there have been a wide variety of trips for all year groups, as shown by the photos on the website. Including St Paul's Cathedral, the Monument to the Great Fire of London, an Anglo Saxon village, a performance of Hamlet, a Tudor Day, St Alban's Cathedral and a Beach day,

The school has strong links with other schools in the area. Locally the cheerleading team won a competition held at Birchwood school, wearing beautiful outfits and bringing back a lovely trophy. The school has been awarded the School Games Gold Award and the Mode Shift Stars Bronze Award, for its work in encouraging children to walk to school.

This is my first report as PCC governor, taking over from Rosemary Thomson. Alison Jordan