

Stapleford Primary School Prospectus

a Church of England VA Primary School



Dear Reader,

I hope you enjoy reading our School Prospectus. We aim to tell you a little about our school, but we cannot hope to convey the real atmosphere. For that to occur you would need to come and visit us in person, which I do hope you and your family will do shortly. When you arrive, please proceed to our school office in the Old School House.

The great advantage of Stapleford School is that we are a small school with a stable, committed staff team and low numbers of children in each class. Each pupil's achievements and needs are recognised by us all, as we enjoy their successes and plan for their future education. The size and ethos of our school leads pupils to believe in themselves and their learning capabilities.

We perceive the school and the church as the centre of a thriving village. The success of Stapleford School is dependent upon the enthusiasm, willingness and care of all the members of this community. We look forward to welcoming you to our school and to extending to you the opportunities we offer.

Yours sincerely

Mr J. Shillito
Headteacher

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Headteacher: Mr James Shillito

Chair of Governors: Mr Peter Critchley

Stapleford School is a Voluntary Aided School in the Diocese of St. Albans for children aged between two and eleven. Stapleford Early Years is managed by the school each morning for children from the age of two. Our main catchment area is the three villages Stapleford, Waterford and Bramfield. However some of our children do travel in from further afield.

History and Local Environment

Stapleford School was built in 1872 to serve the Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Stapleford. Since that time the building has altered considerably but the school still enjoys a close link with St. Mary' the Virgin as well as St. Andrew's in Bramfield and St. Michael and All Angels at Waterford. Services and assemblies take place regularly at St. Mary's, which is situated beside the school.

The school is set in a particularly attractive environment overlooking farmland, a river and the Church paddock. Stapleford has a rich background and provides an ideal first-hand learning situation for geography, environmental studies and history. The village is very close to the county town of Hertford.

Stapleford Primary School

a Church of England VA Primary School



Vision

- It is our vision to learn within a school that promotes a Christian ethos while respecting diversity within our society.
- It is our vision to provide a safe, stimulating and vibrant learning environment where children feel happy, secure and proud of success.
- It is our vision to create a school where children want to be, want to achieve and become life-long learners.
- It is our vision for everyone to be valued and in turn value others giving them confidence in raising their self-esteem and self-worth.
- It is our vision to ensure everyone is able to achieve their full potential through a wide range of opportunities and high quality learning experiences that value individuality.

Stapleford School - Values

The aim of Stapleford School is that the children will fulfil their potential within a caring and Christian environment. We work towards the children achieving our high expectations in both academic achievement and moral development. As a Church of England school we also aim to make the day-to-day life of the community link with Christian values.

Our values derive from this ethos and are as set out below:

- We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, emotional and physical growth and development.
- All members of the school community are respected and valued as individuals; the school places an emphasis on individuals and their needs; we strive to ensure that the potential in all pupils is developed and that the school provides an opportunity for every individual to demonstrate achievements across a wide range of activities.
- We strive to recognise the positive worth of each pupil and consequently achieve an environment where pupils and adults are working to learn; we value each other.
- The adults in the community recognise the need and right which children have to feel valued.
- We promote racial equality and respect diversity unless doing so would contradict other values; we value truth, freedom, justice and human rights.
- Education is considered as a partnership between home, church and school; families are valued as a source of love and support.
- We value the environment around us as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration.
- We promote the core British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs."

This set of values has the following implications for the school:

- We value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, emotional and physical growth and development
- We recognise our own expertise and value the special skills we all have.
- We share our knowledge and welcome opportunities to mentor each other.
- We attend courses.
- The children are closely involved in the school acts of worship, which include opportunities for the children to reflect, revere and celebrate
- The children evaluate their own learning and complete formal self-assessment proformas each term.
- This is especially implicit in our behaviour policy and the relationships between the children and adults
- The children's own opinions are positively sought after.
- The important place of our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development policy in school.

All members of the school community are respected and valued as individuals; the school places an emphasis on individuals and their needs; we strive to ensure that the potential in all pupils is developed and that the school provides an opportunity for every individual to demonstrate achievements across a wide range of activities.

Planning is detailed, to a high standard and includes reference to specific groups of pupils

- *Resources are of good quality, available, planned for and appropriate for children's learning needs*
- *Classroom and school rules are decided as a group*
- *Whole School Friendship Circles/ school council*
- *Teachers evaluate their own teaching styles and strategies. There is a differentiated approach by teachers to different pupils to meet their diverse abilities and experiences.*
- *Emphasis is placed on the children being actively engaged in learning.*
- *Assessment is specific and detailed*
- *We aim to provide opportunities for visual, aural and kineasthetic learners in each lesson.*
- *We are interested in all aspects of the children's lives.*
- *There is an opportunity for children to develop particular talents in extra-curricular activities, including residential visits.*

A variety of achievement is celebrated. This may be success in fund-raising for charity, a demonstration of good behaviour, achievement of physical or academic targets or otherwise.

- *Achievement is celebrated in newsletters, class worship and PSHE sessions.*
- *Children's own interests are encouraged.*
- *Dedicated curriculum time for PSHE*
- *All are entitled to have space for our own development.*
- *There is continuous evaluation of policy and practice*

We strive to recognise the positive worth of each pupil and consequently achieve an environment where pupils and adults are working to learn; we value each other.

- *Children are given the opportunity to set their own targets*
- *The children are encouraged to work together.*
- *There is a set of school rules which is known to all.*
- *There is an expectation of reasonable behaviour at all times by all members of the school community.*
- *It is considered important that the children see the adults as learners, staff talk about courses attended and openly discuss matters they are learning.*
- *Disputes are resolved peacefully.*
- *We encourage children to think for themselves, gain confidence and self-discipline.*
- *We respect children's privacy, unless there is a contravention of the law.*
- *We encourage children to be persistent in their learning.*
- *We enjoy the achievement of others.*
- *We enable children to see school and learning as an enjoyable experience.*
- *We ensure children experience trust and forgiveness.*
- *Whole school friendship circles*
- *Learning Mentor scheme undertaken by adults and Year Six.*
- *Use of circle time and Celebration assemblies*
- *Recognising varied learning styles*

The adults in the community recognise the need and right which children have to feel valued

- *Pupils are given the opportunity to understand themselves and like what they see.*
- *Respect and sensitivity is shown for all members of the community by all members.*
- *Adults role-model polite behaviour and attitudes to other adults and children.*

- *School members accept consequences of their own actions.*
 - *Staff give a clear message to parents at a variety of meetings throughout the year and role model this attitude when relating to the children. There is a strong emphasis on parental involvement.*
- We promote racial equality and respect diversity unless doing so would contradict other values; we value truth, freedom, justice and human rights.
- *Racism and sexism are not acceptable.*
 - *Children see themselves as a member of a larger community and are learning to understand their role in that community.*
 - *This is highlighted in the resources we provide and the curriculum we deliver, especially*
 - *RE and PSHE, and the way we help children to resolve disputes.*
 - *Adults react to racist remarks appropriately.*
 - *We support charities with these values.*
 - *We encourage children to make considered judgments and choices.*

Education is considered as a partnership between home, church and school; families are valued as a source of love and support.

- *Parents and the community are welcomed and encouraged to take an active part in school life. This is implicit throughout the day and is especially apparent at consultation evenings, reading diary scheme, homework support, daily liaison, work in classrooms.*
- *The importance of issues at home is recognized.*
- *The variety of family structure is respected as being able to provide the love and commitment required for a secure and happy childhood.*
- *The important role of the clergy, visiting the school each week as well as being a member of the Governing Body.*

We value the environment around us as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration. We provide a stimulating environment within school which we hope will encourage natural curiosity and the development of enquiry, logical, creative and original minds.

- *We protect the school environment.*
- *We have developed and protected a variety of habitats within the school grounds.*
- *We teach the children environmental issues and to clear up their litter.*
- *We extend and encourage the children's awareness of the changing world in which we live, the variety of people living in it and the individual contribution made by each and every person.*

A clear focus on values contributes directly to:

- Attainment
- Progress
- Behaviour
- Relationships

School Facilities

The school has excellent facilities and a delightful setting. There are four large, sunny, purpose-built classrooms, small group teaching rooms, a music room, computer room, P.E. store and cloakroom. The Early Years Foundation Stage classroom, built in 1981 and extended in 2010, has its own playground and access to the school field, a comfortable carpeted library area, a specially-designed craft area, multi-media computers and its own cloakroom area. The National Curriculum classrooms have carpeted library areas, interactive whiteboards, and through access to our computer suite. There is a well-stocked library furnished with quality shelving provided by the Friends' Association. The school has its own kiln, well-equipped office area, hall and kitchen. Stapleford Early Years classroom was built in 2010 and has its own outside area. Outside the school has three playgrounds, an adventure play area, a games shed, a large school field and a wild-life area. The children have plenty of space for a variety of games and athletics to occur simultaneously.

Many of our facilities have been provided with the support of the thriving Stapleford School Friends' Association. Their plans include social and fund-raising events in addition to working parties to achieve specific targets. Their varied support, in and out of the classroom, is considered an essential element of the success of the school.

Organisation

The class structure in the school follows a pattern of vertical grouping. This means that the children stay with the same teacher for a period of two years before moving on to their next class. The headteacher, parents and learning assistants all provide class support for the four main teachers. The children are also taught by specialist music, instrument and French teachers at different times during the week. The school has detailed policies, schemes of work and assessment procedures to ensure a curriculum planned to suit the range of abilities in each class.

All children with special educational needs are kept within the mainstream class. The staff go to great lengths to ensure that the curriculum offered to children is suitable for their needs. Considerable extra work is undertaken by staff to ensure all children understand the curriculum and have apparatus and prompts available to enable them to learn. Parents of Special Needs children are more closely involved with targets for their children. A detailed policy on Special Needs is available from the school office. Currently there are no children with a physical disability in school. However all children are welcome to the school and in the event of a child with a physical disability gaining a place we would look at making the necessary arrangements. Exceptionally able children are included in our special needs provision. The differentiated nature of our curriculum means that we are able to match the curriculum to the needs of our gifted children, as well as providing extension activities.

The morning session runs from 8.40 am until 12.30 pm and the afternoon session runs from 1.30 pm until 3.00 pm. The children have a break in the morning session. Supervision of the children cannot be guaranteed before 8.40 am.



Curriculum

The work of each class group in each curriculum area is carefully planned by the teacher. These plans incorporate the programmes of study from the National Curriculum and the interests of the children. In each year group the curriculum is balanced and broadly based and challenges the children as individuals. There are clear relationships and cohesion across the curriculum.

Policy documents and schemes of work for curriculum areas are available at the school office and on our website.

Religious Education

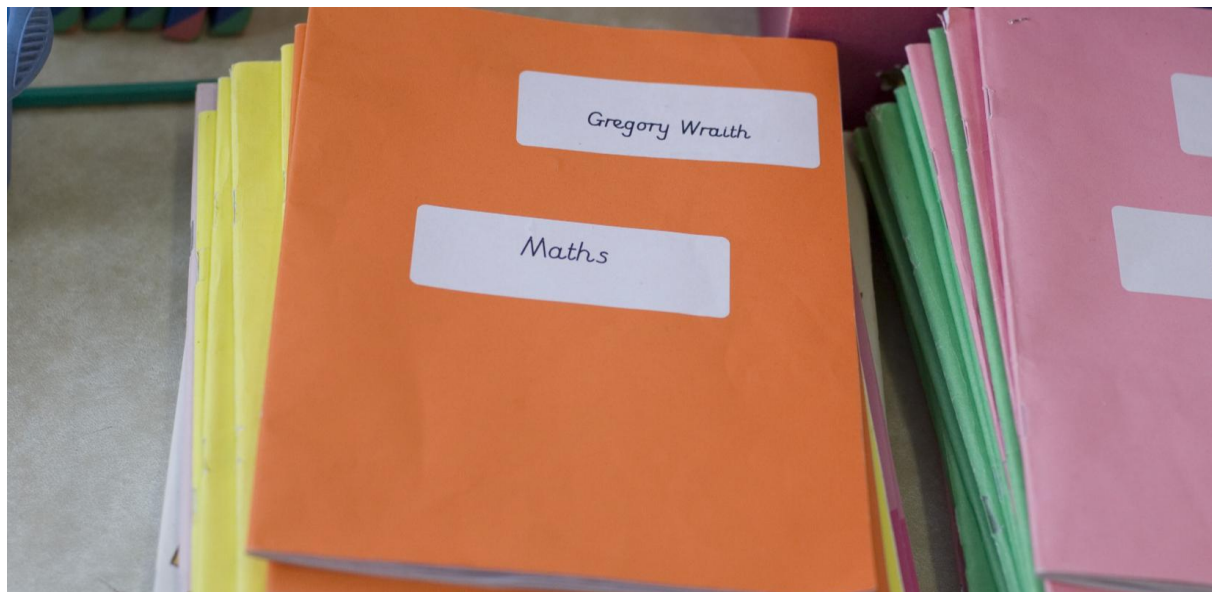
This involves both specific areas of learning and the creation of an overall ethos for the school, which, as it is a Church of England foundation, is based on Christian principles. However, we wish the children to embrace today's multi-faith society and therefore we include study of Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism as part of the programme of learning. Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from this curriculum area.

We teach Religious Education in an open and honest manner to allow the spirit and minds of the children to flourish and develop. We do not seek only to impart knowledge but also to develop understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes. We believe RE is concerned with the spiritual growth of children, with those feelings and beliefs that arise out of experience and that influence the search for meaning and purpose to life. RE therefore offers a distinctive area for learning, making a unique contribution to the education offered at Stapleford.



Mathematics

Each day the main maths activity is preceded by ten minutes of mental maths work. During the main maths teaching activity the school emphasises the use and application of the mathematical knowledge that children gain. This is achieved through the provision of mathematical investigations and problem solving activities which, as far as possible, are set in the context of children's everyday experiences and the on-going project. The development of mathematical language is achieved by the use of questioning and the careful grouping of children to encourage them to discuss and think about their work. Specific mathematical vocabulary is targeted as a part of each maths plan. Computer software and varied mathematical games and equipment are used throughout the school as a resource base to support particular learning situations and the National Curriculum.



Science

The approach to the teaching of science in the school is achieved through topic work, some of which is cross-curricular and some purely science-based. Great care is taken to ensure that the curriculum includes the entire National Curriculum programme of study over each two-year period.

The school sees the skills of observing, hypothesising, testing and evaluation as the core of the scientific process through which the body of knowledge is absorbed. The children are involved in a wide variety of first-hand experience in order that these skills may be developed. The school's ample science resources help greatly to achieve this aim.

English

The approach to language teaching is to make it a meaningful exercise for the children. The children are divided into ability groups and the National Curriculum is followed. Written work is closely linked to reading work. Interesting language features of texts are discussed with the children and opportunities given for the children to use that style themselves.

The school promotes a partnership approach to reading, in which the sharing of books is prominent. Each class allocates time to reading every day. A wide range of non-fiction and fiction books are studied to foster motivation for all children. Detailed records are kept of each child's progress in this curriculum area.

Drama is used actively throughout the school curriculum and is seen as an ideal medium to achieve many of the school aims.

Art, Design and Technology

Teachers plan and organise classroom activity where pupils can engage with and handle a variety of materials and develop skills in drawing, painting, pottery, collage, textiles, printing and modelling. This activity underpins knowledge and reinforces understanding. The children are encouraged to plan, produce and then evaluate their designs. This ethos leads to swift improvements in the children's achievements.



Geography and History

These areas of knowledge are approached in a manner that encourages children to question and observe primary and secondary evidence. School visits are therefore an integral part of these curriculum areas and are frequently organised. Our rich local environment provides many opportunities to clarify and initiate points of learning. A residential visit is arranged each year for the Key Stage 2 children.

Computing

All the children in the school have access to and dedicated lessons in our networked, multi-media computer suite. We have invested heavily in our computer technology to produce a suite where the children can work on fast machines on a one-to-one basis. Computers and iPads are seen as a vital tool for the development of learning and information handling and an integral part of the learning process. This is aided considerably by the interactive whiteboards. The school has a library of software which support all curriculum areas. We aim for the children to understand the important part information technology plays in all our lives, to be able to handle it competently and value this asset.



Multi-Cultural Education

Many classroom themes develop by looking at common needs of the people of our planet, and how different cultures solve those needs. In this way all the children are able to make a positive contribution to the curriculum and to be proud of their own cultural background. We aim to develop the children's understanding of a variety of cultures and hence reduce fear of a different culture, which we see as an element of racism. The school is committed to its policy on equal opportunities and is active in its desire to eliminate racial harassment.

Music

There is a strong musical tradition at Stapleford School. Currently there are opportunities for all children to learn to play the recorder and a strings instrument from Year Four onwards. Regular visits from peripatetic staff considerably enhance our music curriculum. Group guitar and individual piano, woodwind and brass lessons are available for children from a very young age so that considerable expertise is achieved by the time the children move on to secondary school.

There are regular concert opportunities for the children to exhibit their increasing musical achievements. The Stapleford School Choir practise and perform regularly.



Physical Education

The physical education curriculum offers a variety of activities including tennis, rugby, football, cricket, hockey, rounders, swimming, dance, athletics and outdoor pursuits. We aim to foster positive competition, to develop motor co-ordination and enjoyment of physical activities. We offer the children two hours of physical education a week, as well as active lunchtimes when a wide variety of games resources are available for the children's use.

It is our aim that every child will represent Stapleford Primary School in a sporting activity before they move into Key Stage 3.



Sex Education

Questions about sexual development and reproduction are discussed in all classes as they arise, either as part of a lesson or individual discussion. The general attitude to these questions is based on a Christian framework, that sexual pleasure is a part of a loving, caring and committed relationship. Sex education is mainly covered through a progression of topics during Personal, Social and Health Education lessons. Topics include:

- The physical changes and wide range of time over which these occur
- The development and function of the reproductive system of men and women
- Pregnancy and childbirth
- Personal hygiene
- The responsibility of the individual to themselves and to society and to the understanding contributed by religious beliefs.

The School Nurse is involved in both the sex education and health education curriculum. We would hope that parents would always feel free to discuss this curriculum area with staff, especially if considering their legal right to withdraw their child from the sex education curriculum.

Collective Worship

The school aims to bring pupils to the threshold of worship and to create an atmosphere in which those who wish to worship can do so. We place importance on our worship being appropriate for children, necessarily distinguished from ritual. Stories, music, drama, dance, pictures, creative silence, artefacts and natural materials play an important part in worship for the children. The children are involved in prayer, celebration, love, friendship, wonder, sharing, reflection and singing.

The children come from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds, but the majority describe themselves as belonging to the Church of England. We aim to teach the children those principles and values and to become familiar with the life and times of Jesus. Collective Worship is planned jointly by the headteacher and the Parish Priest. Parents are most welcome to read the school's policy on collective worship and also have a legal right to withdraw their children from this activity.



School Rules

As a small school it is particularly easy for us to consistently implement our school rules and beliefs about acceptable behaviour. The children are faced with similar expectations throughout the school. Our policy is that children should always be made aware of the consequences of their behaviour and are thus able to make a reasoned decision regarding the behaviour they choose to use. This normally leads to appropriate behaviour, where this is not so however, the consequences are followed through. As with all aspects of school life, we would naturally involve parents in order to achieve our aims in this area.

Further to this we perceive a link between attitudes, behaviour and moral values and regard the development of these as an integral part of the curriculum for Personal and Social education. Dealing with bullies and talking about bullying is also part of the curriculum for Personal and Social education. A detailed policy on bullying is available from the school website.

School Dress

The school colours are navy blue, white, grey and black. The children wear navy sweatshirts with the school logo and plain items of the school colours. They are available at a reasonable price from the school shop. During the summer the girls wear blue gingham dresses. Younger pupils in particular will enjoy greater independence if their clothing does not have fastenings which they are unable to loosen.

All children will need a change of clothing for P.E., a change of footwear for inside the school building and an apron, or an overall, to protect clothing from paint and glue. P.E. shirts are also available from the school office. *All clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name.* Unless it is playtime or they are participating in a PE or Drama lesson, children should wear black school shoes.



Extra-curricular Activities

A variety of community members and teaching staff provide opportunities for the children to join a Football club, a Recorder group, Brownies, Art, P.E., Games, drama and dance groups, as well as the musical opportunities previously mentioned. The school also has close links with the parish church, which provides opportunities for the children to make a special contribution to its activities.

Charging Policy

There are no charges for most activities within school hours or for those required to meet statutory duties.

For other activities there is, of course, limited funding so the school seeks voluntary contributions from parents for the full costs of the following:

1. Board and lodging for residential trips
2. Extras such as swimming, theatre group visits, day outings and the transport involved.

For pupils whose parents are in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance or another low income benefit (as listed on www.gov.uk) such as Income Support, charges will be remitted when the activity is within school hours and/or is a requirement of the syllabus or National Curriculum.

Child Protection

The school works in partnership with parents to support children in every way possible. Schools have a clear responsibility to ensure that they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. As a result, if concerns are raised within the school or a child or parent reports a situation involving possible abuse, we would not be able to guarantee confidentiality. It would have to be referred on to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services. This is in line with Government and Hertfordshire policy.

Parental Involvement

At Stapleford School we believe the children's success is dependent upon the degree to which the school and the home can work together. Consequently we attempt at all times to involve parents in their child's education. Parents assist in many aspects of the curriculum and play an important role in transporting pupils on local outings.

If parents have any complaint regarding the school they should first discuss the matter with the class teacher or the headteacher. Feedback is an essential element for a developing school such as Stapleford. There is also an official complaints procedure, which can be viewed on the website.

If you would like to visit the school you can be sure you will be made most welcome. We would consider this a good beginning to a relationship which we hope will flourish as your child most certainly will do, if s/he is fortunate in securing a place at our school.