

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bishop Ramsey Church of England Academy

Hume Way, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 8EE

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	London
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of Academy Conversion	September 2011
Name of multi-academy trust	Veritas Educational Trust
Dates of inspection	17-18 January 2018
Date of last inspection	March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Converter Academy - 137407
Headteacher	Andrew Wilcock
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

School context

This large and popular academy serves students from Years 7 to 13. Since the previous denominational inspection it has developed its training role working with other schools and hosting a school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme. It has also been awarded the World Class Schools Quality Mark and become the foundation of a multi-academy trust. The majority of students are White British. There is an above average percentage from other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is broadly average. The percentage from disadvantaged backgrounds is below average. The majority of students come from Christian backgrounds.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Ramsey CE Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's Christian vision is deeply embedded and permeates its life. This is clearly reflected in strong relationships and positive behaviour displayed in and around school.
- The virtues project, with its appropriate focus on character development, effectively supports the school's Christian ethos. It encourages both academic attainment and progress alongside personal development and wellbeing.
- As an expression of its Christian service the school is outward looking and has mutually supportive partnerships locally, nationally and internationally.
- Religious education (RE) and worship have a high profile and make strong contributions to its Christian ethos and to the deep spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of students.

Areas to improve

- As part a refinement process and to inform decisions and further developments, take a more formal approach to monitoring and evaluating the many activities and initiatives the school undertakes because it is a Church of England academy.
- Building on the excellent practice in evidence across the worship programme extend its frequency to provide a daily act of worship for all students.

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

The school's deeply embedded Christian foundation successfully shapes its life as, 'a Christian learning community'. Its service to students is explicitly based on a theological understanding of the value of the individual created by God. Therefore the school works conscientiously to support students' academic and personal development. Most enter at or above the national expectation. Across the school, including in the sixth form, students make good or accelerated progress from their various starting points. This leads to overall high academic outcomes. There is an effective emphasis on students' personal development, including positively focusing on their religious, spiritual and moral understanding. An expression of this is the 'virtues project'. This focuses on wisdom, courage, justice, humility, integrity and compassion, 'bounded together by love', and expressly linked to biblical teaching. They are very well articulated by students and staff who rightly see them as a basis for living. Students give examples of what these mean in practice, of how they help to develop character and shape responses. 'Jesus showed all these virtues and so they are important to think about when you have to make decisions,' as one Year 8 student reflected. Students are confident, respectful and compassionate young people. This is exemplified by the World Class Schools Award which students worked together to gain. The school's Christian virtues played a strong part in the successful application for this award. In keeping with the school's Christian vision there is a broad curriculum offer, high aspirations and focused teaching in evidence. Behaviour in class and around the school site is very good. Likewise pastoral systems are effective, supporting students of differing abilities and backgrounds very well. Based on its Christian ethos there is a strong sense of the needs and aspirations of the individual. Attendance is above the national average, indicating that the majority are happy and feel safe in school. On those rare occasions where behaviour or attendance get in the way of learning, the school works compassionately and justly to resolve any issues. This overwhelmingly leads to positive outcomes. SMSC development opportunities are very well provided for and students respond positively. Issues of religious, spiritual and ethical concern are addressed in various subjects, including in RE and the Learning for Life programme. This is extended through extra-curricular opportunities, the work of the chaplaincy team, through student leadership opportunities and through the school's charitable giving. The school has longstanding and mutually enriching links with a Christian secondary school in Malawi. This provides a positive understanding of Christianity as a world faith. RE and worship contribute deeply and effectively to helping students develop a sense of social and moral responsibility. RE supports students' appreciation of difference and diversity very well. This includes identifying denominational differences and the world-wide, multi-cultural nature of Christianity.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship follows a varied and very well planned programme. It is expressly Christian in nature. It includes an annual theme which is, during this academic year, 'Overcome evil with good'. The school's identified virtues, the Christian calendar, key elements in school life and current events are also built-in. This means that worship is closely linked to life in and outside of school. Whilst being planned the programme is responsive. For example, a Year 8 student requested to lead an act of worship about homelessness. This has resulted in the school's forthcoming Lent appeal being designated for two charities supporting the homeless. Biblical passages and responsive prayer form the bedrock of provision in acts of worship. Across each week students take part in two assemblies in year groups and one act of worship in their tutor group. Statutory requirements in collective worship are not fully met because they do not have an opportunity to worship together each day. Worship has a constructive impact on students and staff and contributes effectively to the school's sense of community. Students respond positively and take active leadership roles. They are respectful and attentive during worship. They take part in discussion and prayer well during tutor time worship. Expressing the high value afforded to worship each tutor group has two elected student representatives to lead it. They are provided with varied materials and have a basic support programme through the chaplaincy team. Worship offers a wide range of opportunities to reflect on key Christian beliefs such as the centrality of Jesus and the Bible. This means, for example, that students develop an age-appropriate appreciation of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit as well as various Christian responses to moral and ethical issues. Worship is appropriately extended by students joining in with the Eucharist in year groups twice annually. These follow the Anglican liturgy, tailored to the needs of the year group. For example, in Year 7 one is a teaching Eucharist where the officiating clergy explain its significance and symbolism. Other special services such as the carol service at Christmas and an annual memorial service enhance worship further. Whilst Anglican expressions of worship predominate, the school is providing a greater number of voluntary and varied types of worship, such as student led worship before school on a Thursday. This is impacting positively on those involved, around 30 overall. Prayer and reflection are integral to worship. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer and have a good understanding of its significance. As a Year 10 student said, 'Prayer is more than asking for things – it helps you develop your relationship with God. It's important in giving you strength.' Students know that they can request prayer from the chaplaincy team. Prayer begins a range of school meetings and a weekly prayer is provided on the staff notice sheet. All these indicate a commitment to and reliance on God for the work being undertaken. The programme is regularly monitored through the chaplaincy team meaning that it is consistently refined and improved.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE has a high profile with an effective team of specialist teachers who work in a collegiate manner, effectively supported by the subject leader. The curriculum is well balanced, addressing Christianity and other world faiths alongside ethical and moral issues. Consequently, students are developing a broad knowledge and understanding through their studies. In Year 7, a cross-curricular project on the Lion King, which includes RE and creative arts subjects, enhances provision further. The Ramsey lectures in the sixth form are followed up with discussion in the Learning for Life programme. They provide very good opportunities for all sixth form students to address issues of religious, spiritual and moral concern appropriately. Attainment is high at GCSE where all students follow the course. Religious Studies is a popular choice at A level and attainment is good. Across the school students engage very well in learning. They enjoy and find interesting the variety of content and approaches used. This includes, for example, effective questioning leading to deep thinking opportunities, different approaches to writing and recording learning, and individual and small group work that engage students closely. This results in students making at least good and often accelerated progress. Students recognise its relevance to their lives and in the wider world. As a Year 11 reflected, 'Learning about what others believe is important. It helps you develop understanding of your own faith too.' The department makes some limited use of visitors from different denominations and religions in lessons alongside visits out of school to places of worship. Planning is detailed and rigorous and opportunities are taken to ensure that marking and assessments are consistent. The subject leader and colleagues ensure that whole school priorities and policies are well integrated into RE practice.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

The headteacher, ably supported by his senior leadership team and by governors, ensures that the school's embedded Christian vision is based on strong theological principles and intertwined throughout school life. The vision focuses on the value of each individual in God's eyes and on enabling students to flourish as children of God. The concept of Hope in God for self, others and the community draws on the words of St Julian of Norwich, 'All manner of thing shall be well'. This supports its Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness and drives forward developments. The school's self-evaluation and development plan is detailed and accurate. It is expressly and practically based on its Christian mission statement. Leaders know their school well. Appropriate next steps to focus developments are firmly in place. Since the previous denominational inspection, changes to the Multi Academy Trust and the development of the SCITT have been put in place. The school's Christian vision has been central to these developments. The monitoring and evaluation of these areas and other proposed developments in terms of the impact of the school's Christian foundation is less formal. Governors have ensured good specialist staffing ratios for teaching RE and for the chaplaincy. They give appropriate oversight to the worship programme. Key issues from the previous denominational report have been well addressed. The professional development and wellbeing of staff are taken seriously, with appropriate training provided for working within the church school sector. This has resulted in a number of staff gaining internal promotion. Links with parents are strong. They are kept well informed of their children's academic progress. Any concerns are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Partnerships engaged in by the school are positive and beneficial. For example, links with the parish church, other local Anglican parishes and with other Christian denominations are in place and have deepened since the previous denominational inspection. Links with the diocese are good and the headteacher's involvement with the Church of England Education Team nationally and with the Association of Anglican Academy and Secondary School Heads is beneficial.