

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### The Archbishop's School

St Stephen's Hill, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7AP

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Canterbury</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Kent
Date of inspection	27 June 2017
Date of last inspection	April 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Secondary Church of England Foundation - Voluntary Controlled equivalent- 118898
Headteacher	Michael Liddicoat
Inspectors' names and numbers	Pamela Draycott (161)

#### School context

The school is average sized and includes Years 7 to 13. The majority are White British. There is a small but growing percentage of students from other ethnic backgrounds, representing the changing community locally. The percentage for whom extra funding is received due to social disadvantage is around the national average. The percentage with special educational needs or disabilities is above the national average. A smaller percentage of students regularly attend local churches than at the time of the previous denominational inspection. The ones that do attend churches from a wider range of denominations.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the Archbishop's School as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian vision of the school is clearly expressed through its well-established and longstanding motto of, 'Enter to learn: go forth to serve'.
- A good range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) opportunities are provided and the responses of many pupils in the main school and almost all of the students in the sixth form are positive. These lead to good relationships across the school.
- Pupils' and students' wellbeing and personal development are given a high priority and support the academic progress made. It leads to a focused careers programme across the school.
- The sixth form has developed well since the time of the previous denominational inspection.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's Christian distinctiveness, based on its vision and values, is embedded as a key driver in all decision making, goal setting and in its self-evaluation and action planning processes.

- Improve the organisation of and specialist staffing of religious education (RE), based on the locally agreed syllabus, so that its importance and relevance within the school's curriculum as a church school is effectively delivered.
- Improve worship and reflection opportunities by:
  - increasing pupil and student involvement in leading worship opportunities, especially in whole school, year group and house worship;
  - establishing the way in which 'the sanctuary' functions by extending its use and embedding its importance as a space for spiritual and religious reflection.

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

The school's underpinning Christian foundation is well summarised in its motto, 'Enter to learn: Go forth to serve'. This is based on a biblical verse, Revelation chapter 3 verse 8. The motto is well displayed around the school. The core Christian values of love, faith, perseverance, forgiveness and service, each based on a parable of Jesus, have been identified for development by the school. These were introduced around three years ago and have begun to show impact, but principally and mainly, only over the course of this academic year. This means that they are not embedded in school life and work. Its motto and Christian values are known. Sixth form students and some younger pupils can talk about them and relate them to their Christian underpinning. They can also reflect on how they influence their life both in and out of school, particularly in relation to the service of others. However, this is not consistently the case. The school's vision is appropriately expressed through the supportive relationships between members of the school community. In keeping with its sense of care there are strong pastoral systems in place which support students and pupils and raise aspiration and self-confidence. For example, pastoral support is well provided through the house, tutor and mentoring systems and through the support provided by the school nurse and the Canterbury Churches School Workers Trust (CCSWT). Students' and pupils' academic attainment and progress has been variable over the time since the previous denominational inspection. Many pupils enter the school with standards of attainment below or at the national average. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' and students' to support learning. This means that they make expected progress with some achieving higher than expected. However, standards remain slightly below the national average in the main school but there is a stronger picture in the sixth form. Attitudes to learning and behaviour amongst sixth form students are very good. In the main school there are incidents of less good behaviour and low-level disruption. These are dealt with fairly and consistently bearing the school's values in mind. A range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development well and most respond positively to these opportunities. They are developing their abilities to express their thoughts clearly and with a growing confidence. Pupils and students enjoy being at school, knowing that they are well supported. Consequently, attendance is above the national average. Religious education (RE), contributes well to helping students appreciate difference and diversity through both curriculum content and the attitudes and skills developed. 'Learning about what different people believe is important so that you are not ignorant,' as one Key Stage 4 pupil remarked. Through RE pupils are developing a basic understanding of the multicultural nature of Christianity. This is enhanced by links with schools in Africa, links with the African Pastors' Foundation and by various volunteering and charitable activities. Many students have positive attitudes towards RE, particularly in Key Stage 4 option groups. Linked with its Christian vision of 'go out to serve' the school provides a range of opportunities for pupils and students to serve others. The volunteer programme is extensive and well regarded by the large percentage of sixth form students involved: 'It's not only good on your CV, by helping others you change yourself' as a student reflected.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Worship takes place daily and in a variety of groupings. It is led by a range of people, including the headteacher, senior leaders, heads of year, tutors and Christian leaders from a range of local Christian denominations. Pupils and students do sometimes lead worship in tutor groups but have less of a role in leading other types of worship. This daily programme is appropriately extended by periodic Eucharistic services led by the part-time chaplain and a service in the Cathedral annually. There is a collective worship blog which is accessed by members of the school community, including parents. This appropriately supports the importance of the worship programme and extends reflection and prayer opportunities across the school community. The head of RE also leads on planning the worship programme. She outlines the themes and produces some very effective materials for tutors to use when leading worship with their students. Her work underpins and supports the implementation of the worship programme very well. The focus for worship appropriately includes exploration of key Christian festivals and beliefs, the school's

values, and events in the news, locally, nationally and internationally. It contributes well to supporting the school in living together in community. There are basic elements of Anglican practices in evidence. However, pupils' and students' understanding of Anglican practices such as the significance of the use of different coloured cloths to mark the Christian year is under-developed. The Lord's Prayer is occasionally used as part of worship. Although pupils know the prayer they are not aware of its origin or significance for Christians. Biblical material supports the themes developed through worship and contributes to pupils and students having a good awareness of the importance of Jesus for Christians. However, opportunities to reflect on the significance of the Christian idea of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit are limited through worship, but are explored through the RE curriculum. Recently, modern hymns and Christian songs have been included in the worship programme to complement the traditional ones used. Monitoring and evaluation of worship is in place, by heads of year and the sixth form visiting tutor groups. Overall this is not regular or rigorous enough.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**

The leadership team promotes a vision for the school based expressly on its motto which involves learning and service. This is shared by many of the staff whose professional development and wellbeing is taken seriously by the school. Progress in addressing issues since the previous denominational inspection was initially slow. Three years ago senior leaders and governors reviewed its vision and identified a range of Christian values to act as a basis for further development. The established vision did not change but 'the values were reborn' at this time. However, it is over the course of this academic year that the profile and impact have begun to be seen and felt. This means that these values are underpinning rather than consistently driving forward developments. A new Christian ethos group, consisting of senior leaders, governors, the part-time chaplain and the head of RE and lead for collective worship, are now working well together to shape developments. They also keep under review the impact of the school's Christian ethos and values and have a major part to play in its self-evaluation and action planning for improvement. This has included a senior leader who is the head of Christian distinctiveness and of the sixth form reporting to the governing body regularly. Firm plans are in place for this to continue as the school moves into its next stage of development. Much of value has happened over this academic year. For example, the recently opened sanctuary, a prayer and reflection room, is now operating. Year 7 have been the year group introduced to the sanctuary and its purpose, although those from other year groups can use it at lunchtimes. This has already been of benefit to individuals, at times of bereavement, for example. It is also used for the Christian Union meeting and by the school counsellor. Likewise the values are being focused on across the curriculum but are not embedded. Governors are appropriately involved in school life and take their strategic oversight role seriously. This is evidenced by, for example, the way in which they both support and challenge senior leaders about attainment and progress as an expression of the school's Christian underpinning. Issues for improvement identified in the previous denominational report have been satisfactorily addressed with most engagement from governors and progress evidenced in the course of this academic year. Governors have ensured that collective worship arrangements meet statutory requirements as does RE, in terms of the time made available to it. They have ensured good leadership of both areas. However, the timetabling and staffing for RE is not consistent with the school's Christian foundation. Classes in Key Stage 3 have two periods per fortnight which are taught by different teachers. Several Key Stage 4 short course GCSE classes are also split between different teachers. It is taught by a wide range of teachers with other specialisms. These arrangements lead to the pace of progress being slowed. In Key Stage 4 the majority of pupils follow a GCSE short course which has a direct impact on the status they see the subject as having and on their consequent attitudes to learning. In Key Stage 4 GCSE full course and in the sixth form attitudes to learning, attainment and progress are much stronger. The school has strong links with a range of Christian denominations around Canterbury and beyond, representatives of whom are regular visitors. These visits include to worship, to lead Christian Union, involvement with the sanctuary and to speak to sixth formers about their experience of being a Christian at work. Relationships with the local parish church are principally through the chaplain who is the incumbent and works part-time in the school. The focus of his work is principally on providing pastoral support for

adults and insights through the Christian ethos group. Parents are well informed of their children's attainment and progress and the vast majority are in support of the school's Christian underpinning. They see that it helps in developing a moral code by which to live. They recognise that the school's Christian foundation is evident in the pastoral care and concern shown by staff at all levels for their children. Links with the diocese are in place principally through the school taking up occasional training opportunities. Links with the careers service are positive and with the wider community, particularly through volunteering, a strength.

SIAMS report [June 2017] The Archbishop's CE (VC) School, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7AP