

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Archbishop Sentamu Academy

Bilton Grove, Kingston upon Hull HU9 5YB

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	York
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	February 2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Sentamu Academy Learning Trust
Date/s of inspection	12 & 13 October 2017
Date of last inspection	May 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Secondary Academy 135598
Executive Principal	Andrew Chubb
Inspector's name and number	Lyn Field 151

School context

This is an above average-sized secondary school with a sixth form, serving very disadvantaged communities in East Hull. The academy, sponsored by the Diocese of York, is the hub of the Sentamu Academy Learning Trust (SALT) with two church primary schools and Aspire Academy. Alternative provision is provided by Aspire Academy and the Elvin Centre. The proportions of disadvantaged students and of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are both above the national average. In May 2016, Ofsted judged the academy to be inadequate. A recent HMI monitoring visit found effective action being taken towards the removal of special measures.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Archbishop Sentamu Academy as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian vision and values of the academy shape every aspect of its work and have a transformational impact on the wellbeing and aspirations of students and the local community.
- Partnerships within SALT and with the wider community are highly effective in implementing the Christian vision by securing life-changing opportunities for students.
- The executive principal and senior leaders are unwavering in their commitment to bringing about improvement in pupils' achievement through strategies that embrace the Christian ethos and values of the academy. However, the systems to monitor the features of academy life related to its Christian status are not rigorous enough to ensure that development planning is efficient and focuses on how students benefit.
- The excellent department for religious education (RE) ensures the subject has a significant impact on the academy's Christian character.
- The use made of the chapel and the full-time presence of the chaplain ensure there is a constant connection between students' learning, the work of staff and the Christian faith.

Areas to improve

- Develop sharper and more efficient systems for monitoring and development planning in order to set precise areas for improvement.
- Improve the rigour of governors' monitoring of development planning as a church school to ensure there is better alignment and cohesion across all policies and documents.
- Extend the roles and responsibilities of student leaders so that they make a direct contribution to sustaining the Christian ethos of the academy.

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

Christian values are central to the life, work and mission of the academy. The images in motivational posters around the school carry powerful messages for students about the three core values of trust, love and community. Students recognise that the values have a biblical basis even though they are not always confident to explain how this shapes what happens in practice. The values, however, inform policies and are part of everyday discourse; talk of 'fresh start' and how good or poor choices make a difference to those around you is constantly heard. As a result, the academy is a calm and orderly place with very little bullying because students listen to each other and any hint of prejudice is challenged. Lessons run smoothly and 'supported private study' works effectively. Across all groups the number achieving better results in both English and maths has risen and, at the higher levels, students are doing better than in schools with a similar profile. Attendance has improved and been maintained close to national levels, including for students who regularly do not attend. The introduction of York House and very successful relationships with Aspire Academy and the Elvin Centre reflect a pro-active approach to mental health and reintegrating students, underpinned by a shared Christian ethos.

The house system embodies the Christian value of 'community' and is highly valued by staff and students alike for the level of trust that exists and the non-judgemental nature of relationships. Student leadership is at an early stage but is a priority for the coming year with the chaplain taking responsibility to ensure that Christian values provide an unbroken thread across the leadership of the academy. Sixth formers have benefited from gaining level 2 of the Archbishop of York Award and believe they are 'excellently equipped to make a difference in the community'.

The academy has defined what it understands by spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This gives clear direction to all staff in planning lessons and observation forms provide specific guidance to leaders in evaluating students' responses. The regular and consistent application of this approach has had a marked impact on students' ability to reflect on symbolism and meanings beyond the literal. They are increasingly making use of religious language to express their ideas because the RE curriculum is placing much greater emphasis on religious vocabulary and is removing many misconceptions about diversity and difference in society. A typical comment from students was 'If there was no RE we would be trapped in our own culture.' This emphasis is beginning to embed religious literacy across all subjects, one of the academy's key aims.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship reflects the academy's local context and contributes to its core purpose of transforming the lives of young people. The varied organisation, style and themes for worship meet the needs of students with the chaplain's Thought for the Week specifically tailored to sixth formers and staff. The majority do not come from a faith background but welcome and respond positively to the wide range of opportunities to explore faith and spiritual issues and are strongly supported by the chaplaincy team in that journey. In consequence of this, the academy was recently very proud and excited to host its first baptism and confirmation service for staff and students conducted by the Archbishop of York. The chapel offers students a truly Christian yet completely inclusive experience of the Church because students of faith and of no faith are equally welcome. For many students it offers a refuge to cope with issues in their personal lives. Reflection walls and places for prayer introduce all students to ways of expressing their personal spirituality and many make use of these with increasing confidence. The chaplain's prayerful support of leaders and joint prayer meetings with the local community strengthen the prayer life of the whole community. The two lunchtime celebrations of Eucharist each week enable students to experience a simple but meaningful form of Anglican liturgy although they are less able to talk about this relates to their wider experience of worship.

Resources for worship are well-chosen and ensure everyone receives the same message. Biblical links to academy values regularly give student greater insight into their own life experiences. As a result of staff induction and training, tutors are gaining confidence in leading worship with their tutor groups. However, there is still inconsistency in how the time for worship is given priority over administrative matters and extra support work. Academy leaders and the chaplain regularly monitor whether the expected components of worship are in place but the information gathered is not sufficiently well analysed or matched against student views to inform improvement planning.

Collective worship in year groups or house groups strongly promotes the academy's Christian values, often prompting students to respond to charity appeals and to issues of social justice locally and globally. Key Christian festivals, particularly Advent and Lent, are marked by imaginative activities such as prayer spaces and reflection days. Through these and their learning in RE, students are able to talk about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the importance of Jesus to Christians with a sound measure of understanding. For the first time, a carol service is planned in 2017 and this is an example of how the overtly Christian profile of worship at a more public level is cautiously but steadily being embedded. Remembrance Day left a lasting impression when performing arts students devised and produced a moving drama presentation. Students' role in leading worship is growing as part of the whole academy initiative for the year. Year 10 students already support tutor groups in the younger years and sometimes take responsibility for leading discussions.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Students benefit greatly from being taught by a team of teachers who all have expertise in their subject. This has a direct impact on the rate at which students make progress because of wise decisions to increase the relevance and challenge of the curriculum. Purposeful learning arises from a culture based on trust and from attention to detail in questioning and seating arrangements. Meticulous planning leads students from the superficial to the deep and offers them gold, silver and bronze level choices for their tasks. This motivates them to give of their best and sees them willingly giving more of their time to homework tasks. The excellent presentation and pride they take in their work frequently results in highly creative and reflective pieces of work that ensure they move forward in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a consequence of these positive attitudes to RE, and of consistently good and outstanding teaching, the department is one of the best performing in the academy. Standards of attainment at GCSE have improved significantly and are drawing close to national averages.

The rigour of quality assurance systems has enabled RE teachers to quickly demonstrate and refine their practice, allowing more time to tackle new initiatives. Their priorities for raising boys' achievement and increasing the uptake of RE at A level show an ambitious and strategic understanding of precisely where action is most needed. The head of department is passionate about RE and ambitious for the department. The high calibre of her colleagues makes it possible to deliver departmental targets and the team makes maximum use of knowledgeable diocesan support and training. They took early action to prepare students for the new format of GCSE examinations making appropriate changes in Key Stage 3 and integrating the Understanding Christianity material. This has placed considerable demands on students but department scrutiny of their books indicates that they have risen to and enjoyed the challenge. They are applying their wider religious vocabulary to subjects beyond RE. The department's work on boys' achievement makes a valuable contribution to the whole school target. One member of the team has researched this area so work is based on informed debate and leads to a forensic approach to bringing about improvement.

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

Christian values inform every aspect of how this academy is living out its vision for improving the life chances of young people. Two sets of values, 'Aspire Serve Achieve' and 'Trust Love Community' exist side by side and act as a lens through which leaders see the purpose of their work, referring to biblical texts to explain their motivation. The parable of the Lost Sheep is the inspiration for admitting students not readily accepted elsewhere and the academy plays a key role in Hull's Fair Access policy. Leaders are relentless in their drive to raise standards and the improvement agenda is strongly influenced by the academy's Christian character. The immense rigour of the systems for quality assuring teaching and learning and the performance management of staff take due account of the Christian values and demonstrate the care that leaders and governors have for the wellbeing of staff. Senior leaders from the academy successfully set up Aspire Academy within the Trust and the academy has 'grown' new leaders in their place who share the same vision. This is the result of effective training, recruitment and induction of staff that enables them to contribute to the academy's ethos without compromising their own faith positions.

Leadership of aspects of the academy as a church school is part of the senior leadership structure and this secures its importance. Self-evaluation, although thorough and detailed, tends to focus too much on provision rather than the difference it makes to students. Priorities for action do not always distinguish between maintenance and improvement and milestones provide few benchmarks for measuring progress. The local governing committee (LGC) has continued to make fundamental decisions fully in line with the academy's Christian mission and has benefited greatly from the secondment of the diocesan school effectiveness adviser as vice-chair. However, until the most recent meeting with SIAMS leaders, it has not played a sufficiently challenging role in development planning as a church school. This has partly been due to the demands of raising standards but has also been affected by governor vacancies and the lack of effective systems that dovetail with the work of leaders.

The interest taken by the Archbishop of York in the academy that bears his name continues to affirm its work and keep it rooted in its original vision to be 'Christian, open to all and for the benefit of all'. Students are inspired by their 'graduation' at Bishopthorpe Palace and first-hand discussions with Archbishop Sentamu on annual visits to Taizé. RE and collective worship are given a high priority by academy leaders that properly reflects the status and vision of the academy. The specialist nature of the RE team is maintained when cover is required for maternity leave or absence. This reflects the aspirational policies of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for RE. The post of a full-time ordained chaplain provides a visible presence of the Church in the school. Governors see these appointments as essential and they provide exemplary practice in the school. Careful financial management makes it possible for key initiatives, such as the scholarship for performing arts, Mouthlock outdoor centre and provision of uniform for all students, to remove barriers to learning. The academy has established some vital partnerships that extend the impact of its Christian vision. In particular, links with Hull Kingston Rovers involves over 250 students and their families. Since being placed in special measures, the academy has retained the complete confidence of the primary schools in SALT. Sharing the generous expertise of Aspire Academy and practical resources to ensure a smooth transition for pupils supports the wellbeing of whole families in the community.