

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Trinity Academy Halifax

Address	Shay Lane, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 9TZ		
Date of inspection	12 & 13 March 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as voluntary aided. The lead school within the Trinity Multi-Academy Trust.
Diocese	Leeds	URN	136094
Overall Judgement			Grade Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?			
Additional Judgements			
The impact of collective worship		Grade	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)		Grade	Good

School context

Trinity Academy Halifax is a secondary academy with 1816 pupils on roll, including 280 in the Sixth Form. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is significantly above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with national averages. Very few pupils are admitted on the basis of faith. The principal was appointed in January 2018, the chair of governors in September 2016 and the head of RE in September 2017.

The school's Christian vision

We are an 'outstanding within outstanding' school that provides opportunities and overcomes barriers in order to change lives. We are a Christian community and promote the values of empathy, honesty, respect and responsibility, following the teaching of 'whatever you do, work at it with all your heart' (Col 3:23). Our students will be resilient, outstanding members of the community.

Key findings

- Governors and leaders at all levels are passionate about their Christian vision for meeting the needs of the community they serve. They are aspirational for all pupils and have a compassionate understanding of their needs. Their commitment to overcoming barriers to learning results in most pupils making well above average progress.
- The academy's Christian values are deeply embedded and make a profound impact on the way in which pupils develop into confident and mature individuals. However, the Christian vision and values are not always understood as explicitly Christian. The way in which these are rooted in the Bible is not always shared with the community.
- Strong pastoral care ensures that the progress and wellbeing of all pupils are carefully promoted. The academy provides exceptional support for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, pupils' lives are transformed.
- Collective worship is carefully planned, monitored and evaluated. Student leaders work with the chaplain to contribute to its leadership. The daily silence makes a great impact on the wellbeing of the whole academy.
- The RE curriculum is appropriate and well-planned. Assessment is used effectively. Pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 are making good progress. Those pupils who take GCSE make very good progress. However, current provision does not enable all pupils to continue learning in RE throughout Key Stage 4.

Areas for development

- Ensure that RE reflects the national expectations of the Church of England, so that it is able to contribute effectively to the flourishing of all pupils and the way in which they fulfil their potential.
- Develop understanding of the academy's Christian vision and values, including their biblical roots. This is so that the whole academy family gain a wider understanding of the Christian purpose of its work.
- Extend the leadership of collective worship. This is so that the academy community benefits from the rich variety of contributions to worship from a range of leaders, including staff and pupils.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Decision making by governors and academy leaders is informed by the Christian vision. The academy is committed to overcoming barriers to learning for all pupils, including those who have SEND and disadvantaged pupils. This is transformational. The academy's values are embedded and contribute to pupils becoming resilient members of the community. The biblical inspiration of the academy's vision and values is understood and articulated by some, but not all, leaders. However, this understanding does not yet comprehensively permeate and guide the academy community. Governors and leaders monitor the impact of Christian vision. The talented staff team are well-supported as they rise to the challenges they face. In the light of the Christian vision, leaders establish partnerships that promote the wellbeing of their community and its partners. The diocese has worked with the academy in reviewing its Christian ethos. The academy shares its good practice widely, particularly with regard to support for disadvantaged pupils.

Governors' spending priorities reflect the academy's vision. An example of this is the financial and staff investment that ensures exceptional pastoral care exists for both pupils and adults. This includes the highly effective 'Star Student Scheme'. Leaders are keenly aware of the social, emotional and mental wellbeing needs of all members of the academy family. They ensure that professional and informal support is readily accessible to all. Mixed age tutor groups, involving every member of staff, enhance the strong sense of family that exists in this very large academy. It ensures that relationships are harmonious and aspirations high. Pupils are proud to be part of the academy. Consequently, attendance is very good and pupils' opportunities to flourish are maximised.

Behaviour in lessons and at social times is exemplary. Relationships are strong. When pupils fall short of the academy's expectations, forgiveness and reconciliation are immediately offered. The student wellbeing team generously and successfully supports pupils when they are at their most vulnerable. The innovative 'Ark' behaviour provision exemplifies the academy's commitment to making a difference to everyone. It is proving very successful in supporting pupils who might otherwise be permanently excluded.

The academy's curriculum is creative. It is broad and balanced and meets the needs of the majority of pupils. However, previous leadership decisions mean that currently pupils in Year 11 do not access any learning in RE. Academy leaders plan to address this later this year. All subject areas actively encourage pupils' personal spirituality and ability to make moral and ethical decisions. For example, Year 9 pupils studying 'Of Mice and Men' consider the value of humility and the nature of diversity and poverty. The curriculum enables the vast majority of pupils to flourish both personally and academically. In particular, progress measures for disadvantaged pupils are significantly better than the progress measures for similar pupils nationally.

Extra-curricular clubs, visits and opportunities encourage pupils to broaden their horizons and develop their cultural and spiritual awareness. Visits, for example, to the First World War battlefields, the opera and the theatre, make a lasting impression upon the pupils. Initiatives such as the Phase 1 Graduation at the end of Year 8 encourage pupils to take responsibility for their additional learning opportunities and to be aspirational for their future.

Pupils show compassion for each other and for the wider community. They support a range of charities locally, nationally and internationally. As a result they have a keen appreciation of the needs of others, also how and why the world is unfair. However, they are less able to give explicitly Christian reasons for living by the school's values or standing up against injustice. Across the academy pupils value opportunities to demonstrate leadership and take responsibility. Older pupils are proud to act as role models for younger members of the community.

Collective worship is valued by the academy community. Of particular significance is the academy's daily time of silence, when the whole community stops what it is doing, wherever they are, for quiet reflection and prayer. This moving and powerful opportunity for spiritual reflection helps pupils to understand the purpose of prayer. It is recognised as a valuable part of the academy's day and pupils say that they feel calmer after form time. Staff also value collective worship. They explain how it helps them to understand their purpose in the academy. One said she believed it helped her to be a better teacher. The chaplain has supported developments in pupils' leadership of worship since the last SIAMS inspection. The twelve student leaders now play a significant role in evaluating worship and developing materials for the 'Big Question' and 'Reflections' which pupils discuss in tutor groups. However, most pupils do not have opportunities to take responsibility

for planning and leadership of collective worship. Members of the community, including war veterans, were delighted to be part of the moving dedication of a Remembrance Garden. The contribution of the ordained chaplain results in thought-provoking worship, both for worship in 'college' groups and special services in the Halifax Minster. However, these acts of worship happen only occasionally and pupils do not regularly experience the rich variety of Anglican worship traditions. Staff do not usually lead worship beyond their tutor group. Consequently, pupils do not hear the range of perspectives on Christian values and faith.

RE is well regarded by most pupils. They appreciate that lessons are interesting and challenging. This is because the RE curriculum is carefully and collaboratively planned to meet their needs and engage their interests. Expertise in curriculum planning is shared with other Church schools. Study of Islam and Judaism contributes to pupils' understanding of diversity. However, there are currently few opportunities for pupils to engage in dialogue with people of different faiths and cultures through a programme of visits and visitors. Assessment in RE is robust. It ensures pupils know how to make progress. However, RE does not reflect all the expectations of the Church of England with regard to curriculum time. A Year 11 student, currently not studying RE, commented that he 'missed' the discussions and thinking that are encouraged in RE. Pupils in Key Stage 5, while not having discrete RE lessons, do have the opportunity to consider some religious and ethical issues during tutor time.



The effectiveness of RE is good.

RE is well-taught by members of the humanities team. Effective monitoring and evaluation is carried out by lead teachers for teaching and learning, supported by the RE specialists. Strong lesson planning and supportive professional development ensure consistency of approach and rigour in RE lessons. This supports those teachers for whom RE is not their subject specialism and helps to secure a standard of teaching that is good overall. Progress at Key Stage 3 is good and in line with that of other subjects. Teachers ensure that pupils, particularly at Key Stage 3, develop the religious literacy essential for academic achievement at Key Stage 4. As a result, progress at Key Stage 4 has improved significantly. In particular, those pupils who are entered for full course GCSE make very good progress. Pupils entered for short course GCSE make progress in line with expectations. Pupils who study RE at A Level make positive progress.

Principal	Nick Robinson
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Team Inspector's name and number	Carol Berry 324 (Inspected in school on 12 March 2019)