

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Archbishop Michael Ramsey Voluntary Aided Technology College

Farmers Road
Camberwell
London
SE5 0UB

Diocese: Southwark

LA: Southwark

Dates of inspection: 26th – 27th June 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number: 100850

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Barker

Inspector's name and number: Ms Jan Thompson 92

School context

Archbishop Michael Ramsey Technology College (AMR.TC) is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school for boys and girls of all abilities aged 11-19 years. Nearly 80% are from Christian families, though a minority are Church of England. The college has its origins in the 17th Century; and there are now plans to rebuild it as a new Church of England Academy. Of the 892 students on roll, just over 90% are from ethnic minorities, mainly Black African and Caribbean. More than two thirds of students are boys. Most are from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and over half speak English as an additional language. Standards on entry are well below the national average, but students make excellent progress, with the college in the top 5% nationally for adding value to students' education. The acting Head Teacher was previously the senior deputy. There will be a new chaplain in September, after an 8-month gap.

Summary Judgement

Archbishop Michael Ramsey is a good Church Technology College. It has reached secure judgements of itself as a Church college, and has identified ways in which it can improve still further.

Overall Grade 2: Good

Established strengths

- The college's Christian ethos underpins its concern to show respect for all.
- Students enjoy Religious Education (RE) and make very good progress.
- There is good Christian Collective Worship, during which students sing well.
- There is committed Christian leadership and good support by local clergy governors.

Focus for development

- The college should take the opportunity of the new Academy to indicate clearly its Church of England status and to use the new environment to promote spiritual development.
- Students should be involved in planning and leading some acts of worship.
- The Governing Body should consider having Eucharists (both voluntary and compulsory) during school time.
- The college's self-evaluation as a Church college should now involve all stakeholders, particularly the whole Governing Body and the students.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

Grade 2: Good

The college's motto 'Respect for all' is constantly reinforced, and sums up its inclusive, caring Christian ethos. This is reflected in good relationships at all levels in a friendly, welcoming community, described by one student as a 'family'. There is a strong emphasis on equal rights, which helps students to live as good citizens in a multi-cultural society. Opposition to any form of discrimination is based on the understanding that all are equal as children of God. There is very good support for the all-round development of students, including their academic achievement. Religious Education and Collective Worship make significant contributions to students' spiritual and moral development. This is promoted by some teachers in

other subjects, but is not done systematically across the curriculum. There are not enough opportunities for students to attend Christian clubs, outings and retreats. Not enough use is made of the college environment generally to promote spiritual development and the college's links with the wider Church.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

Grade 2: Good

Worship is taken seriously in this Church college and prayer permeates its life. Daily Collective Worship is well-planned on weekly themes that include key events in the Church of England calendar, supported by Bible passages. The quality of worship is good, with good preparation and student participation. For example, singing is good, particularly now that the college has its own revised hymn-book of songs chosen by the students. Students have a good understanding of the purpose of worship. They behave reverently and appreciate the opportunities the school gives them for prayer. Considerable trouble is taken to make sure that effective tutor-group worship takes place on the three days a week when students do not assemble in larger groups for worship. However, students prefer the gathered acts of worship and would like to prepare and lead some of these themselves. Voluntary school Eucharists are held at lunch-times nine times a year. Although well attended by lower school students, attendance falls off as students get older, and staff find it difficult to attend. Christmas and Easter festivals are big celebrations by the whole college together in the gym, appropriately transformed for these occasions.

How effective is the religious education?

Grade 2: Good

Students make very good progress in Religious Education (RE) from below average attainment on entry to nearer average at GCSE, with grades at least comparable with the core subjects. This is largely due to the enthusiasm, commitment and expertise of the head of department, who is developing the subject well. For example, most students now take a full course GCSE, and there is a viable AS Level course in the Sixth Form. Students enjoy the subject because they can express their views and discuss religious ideas. They like learning about Christianity and other religions; but it is a pity there are not more opportunities for visits. Teaching strategies vary from teacher to teacher, but at best involve active participation by students and the development of thinking skills. Students work hard and behave well. The use of assessment levels, student targets and marking for improvement is developing. RE for all students in the Sixth Form has been slow to develop since the last inspection and is only now in the plans for the next academic year.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

Grade 2: Good

There is strong and effective Christian leadership from the Head Teacher and other senior teachers, who are well-supported in this by the numerous clergy on the governing body, particularly the vice-chairperson. However, the Governing Body has not been fully involved in the college's self-evaluation as a church college; it has not monitored Collective Worship with the same rigour as aspects of the curriculum; and students' views have not been systematically surveyed. The college's Christian purpose is clear in its mission statement, but is not made explicit in its name, signage, stationery, prospectus cover or website. The support of the chaplaincy has been very effective: the situation is unusual in that the college has a parish church in its grounds, with its Vicar the full-time school chaplain. There are also close links with two neighbouring parishes whose clergy are on the governing body. Staff, who are appointed on church school contracts, willingly take on duties of tutor worship and participate well in the religious festivals. There are good links with the deanery; good use is also made of diocesan support.