

**Beaminster Church of England Voluntary Controlled Secondary Comprehensive and Technology College**

Beaminster

Dorset

DT8 3EP

**Diocese of Salisbury**

Dorset LEA

SIAS inspection: October 19 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 2000

URN: 113884

Headteacher: Mr. M. Best

SIAS Inspector NS#264: Harold Stephens

**Context**

This is a Comprehensive School and Technology College in a rural area serving a large catchment encompassing 20 ecclesiastical parishes. The school is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School with, and in addition, a separate local Christian foundation. 25% of students are drawn from beyond the school's designated area. Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds across the economic and social range. The vast majority of students are of white British heritage although a small number are drawn from ethnic minorities.

**Summary Judgement**

The school has insufficient confidence in that which is especially distinctive of the School as a Church School.

Whilst there is some articulation of things Christian within documentation and good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in Religious Education; there is less formal recognition or acknowledgement of a distinctive Christian spirit which affects all areas of school life; pastoral, academic, social and cultural as well as spiritual and moral.

Nonetheless it is true that an *implicitly* Christian ethic is revealed by the School's commitment to the needs of all students, in its general ethos, its pastoral provision and in the effective promotion of key attitudes in students. Inclusion is good.

**Established strengths**

- Commitment to and effective provision for inclusion.
- The Pastoral Care and student welfare systems.
- Religious Education as provider for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

**Focus for development**

- Development of coherent approaches for effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils across the curriculum.
- Clarification of the Church of England status of the school
- Collective Worship – ensuring worship is consistent with Christian foundation of the School.
- To work to comply with statutory requirements for a daily act of Collective Worship for all registered pupils and for the provision of Religious Education for all registered students in the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

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

The school is good at meeting the needs of students, including those of ethnic minorities and those with special needs. This is achieved through its well-developed pastoral systems, a programme of positive behaviour management, the provision of a specialist learning support department and promotion of key values through some Collective Worship, Religious Education and other curriculum areas. The school has a strong sense of community.

**What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

Collective Worship is overall inadequate. Whilst there are some good examples of Collective Worship throughout the year, the overall quality is inconsistent. Some acts of collective worship are not, as such, "worship" and the "Thought for the Day" has yet to take a firm place within the life of the school.

**How effective is the Religious Education in the school?**

This is good. Religious Education is a strength in the school. Students generally respond well and, in KS4 and at A Level, results and levels of participation are good in relation to national standards and in relation to achievement in other subjects at the school. Religious Education is a significant and effective contributor to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

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

This is satisfactory. Despite a clear mission statement, the management and the Foundation Governors have yet to fully arrive at a consistent view of what it means to be a Church School within the school's particular context. Hence there is a lack of clarity about some implications of what this status may demand. As a result the school has not been able to promote with confidence an explicitly Christian ethos including valuing as central the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils across the curriculum. Already some of these issues are being addressed and appropriate developments initiated or planned.

SIAS OCTOBER 2005 Beaminster CE VC Secondary Comprehensive and Technology  
College, Dorset, DT8 3EP