

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bishop Ramsey Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School,

Hume Way,
Ruislip,
HA4 8EE.

Diocese: London

LA: Hillingdon

School's Unique reference number: 286374

Date of inspection: 10th – 11th January, 2007

Date of last inspection: 26 February – 1st March 2001

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Wilcock

Inspector's name & NS number: The Rev'd. Richard Peers (125)

School context

Bishop Ramsey School is an 11-18 Secondary school in West London. There are 1210 students on roll including a large sixth form. The school is currently on two sites 0.8 m apart. Relatively few students are eligible for free school meals and about 16% are from ethnic minority groups.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Ramsey as a Church of England school is good and outstanding in parts.

Learners benefit from a rich experience of regular worship and liturgical life. Every aspect of the school's life is rooted in Scripture and the strong ethos of listening and respect is based on Christian values and a commitment to inclusiveness.

Established strengths

- The underpinning of policy by Christian teaching.
- The Christian leadership of the Headteacher, Chaplain, Head of Religious Education and other senior staff.
- Commitment to listen to all members of the school community.
- Attainment in Religious Education (R.E.) in Key Stages 4 and 5.

Focus for development

- To increase the participation of students in worship.
- To share the good practice of outstanding teachers within and beyond the school.
- To ensure that Key Stage 3 students know and understand what level they are working at in R.E.
- To review the number of world religions studied in the Religious Education curriculum and the distribution and content of the teaching of Christianity in Key Stage 3.

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

Students describe the school as a community in which everyone belongs. They speak of there not being cliques or groups that exclude others and of being listened to by members of staff.

Students are proud of their school and eager to stay on to the sixth form. Students believe the school has a strong moral basis because of its church ethos. They are generally happy and feel safe and well cared for.

A group for Ethnic Minority Parents is a good example of the way in which the school has responded to needs and seeks to listen to members of the community. Parents from this group and members of the School Council believe that they have been heard and that what they say makes a difference.

The Gifted and Talented programme gives a real opportunity to extend the learning of the most able which they value. The Ramsey Lectures are an outstanding example of the school's vision of being 'a specialist Science college with distinctive Christian ethos.'

Fund raising and links with a school in Malawi are a well established part of the school's life and students value this opportunity to serve others.

Students are less well aware of what it is to be an Anglican school and the links to the wider church community in the school and world.

Students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities at lunchtimes and after school. Art around the school reflects the Christian tradition and the more diverse faith traditions in the community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

The Senior staff prioritise worship and recognise it as a key part in developing the life of the school.

Students spoke extremely positively of the school Chaplain. They described his talks in Collective Worship as being intelligent and challenging.

The whole school cannot gather together and although good provision is made for prayers in Form rooms many tutors do not follow this. The chaplain has provided recent training for staff and when used prayer is clearly differentiated from other activities during tutor time.

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 sing as part of their worship. Students appreciate a variety of visitors and styles of presentation. Although there are Form led acts of worship for Year groups there is generally little student leadership or active participation in other acts of Worship.

Regular Eucharists ensure that students are familiar with the Anglican liturgical tradition and large numbers of students receive communion at these. More experimental and varied styles of worship are also provided occasionally. Students spoke very positively about the variety of music provided by Soul Survivor at a recent Eucharist

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good with outstanding elements.

Students are enthusiastic about the subject and attainment in R.E. is exceptional. All students are entered for the G.C.S.E. and in 2006 99% of students gained a grade in the subject. A-C attainment is in line with other core subjects. Take up at A' level is high and attainment very good. Students speak extremely positively about the subject and describe being taught 'really well'. They talk about being able 'to feel the energy' of staff for their subject.

The subject leader has an exceptionally high level of subject knowledge and together with his staff is passionate about the subject. The departmental policies and handbook show a thorough and thoughtful approach to the subject. Where teaching was outstanding it utilised high level questioning techniques and allowed students to express their thoughts and opinions. This excellent practice needs to be shared with the whole department and there is potential for working with departments in other schools. In one lesson students were given well-structured 'thinking time' before contributing to a discussion. Some learning objectives are not clearly focussed and there was insufficient evidence of a balance between 'learning about' religion and 'learning from' religion. A large number of world faiths are studied in Years 7, 8 and 9 and students seemed confused about this. Students in Key Stage 3 are hesitant when asked what level they are working at or how to progress to the next level.

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

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding. The Headteacher, Chaplain, Head of Religious Education and other senior staff have high aspirations for the school and this is built on their Christian awareness of the needs of the whole person. The school is a listening community and leadership is exercised in a consultative way. Students speak positively of their teachers and value the opportunity to have their views listened to and acted on. Governors are committed to the school's ethos and distinctiveness. As a result staff feel valued and supported by senior colleagues.

There are very good links with local churches and students visit them regularly for lessons and worship. Students recognise that this links them to a wider worshipping community and to the history of the local area. At a recent confirmation a significant number of students were confirmed and the Headteacher, Chaplain and other members of the school community attended and took part in this Sunday liturgy. There are also links with a variety of Christian churches and groups in the area and very good lunch-time and other extra-curricular Christian provision.

Staff, students and parents recognise that the school has a special quality because of its Christian ethos and the priority given to this by the Headteacher and his colleagues.

January, 2007 SIAS Report: Bishop Ramsey Church of England Voluntary Aided Secondary School, Hume Way, Ruislip, HA4 8EE.