

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Twyford Church of England High school

Twyford Crescent, London W3 9PP	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	London
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	October 2011
Name of multi-academy trust	Twyford Church of England Academies Trust
Date/s of inspection	27-28 April 2017
Date of last inspection	May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 37546
Executive Head of the Trust Associate Head	Alice Hudson Karen Barrie
Inspector's name and number	Elaine Skinner

School context

Twyford High School is a larger than average, urban comprehensive, with almost 1500 students on roll, including 500 in the sixth form. Most students are of White British heritage but the proportion coming from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. The proportion of students qualifying for pupil premium is below the national average. A significant number of students have educational health and care plans, the majority of which are for autistic spectrum disorders. Since the last inspection the established leadership of the school has led the development of the Twyford Church of England Academies Trust. A second school was established in 2013 and a third one is being planned.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Twyford High School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The consistency with which the school's Christian ethos is interpreted and applied across all aspects of school life has a transformative effect on the community it serves.
- Exceptionally high expectations are underpinned by sensitive support and effective teaching. Students are therefore well equipped to live life to the full in line with the gospel teaching which drives the school.
- The innovative, biblically informed, pastoral programme and rich worship life of the school engages and inspires.
- Leaders' deep theological understanding creates an environment which is both loving and relentless in its pursuit of growth for all.
- The broad curriculum and wide range of extra-curricular activities live out the school's ethos and lead students to engage with it.

Areas to improve

- Increase opportunities for students to engage first hand with faiths other than Christianity so that they deepen their understanding and appreciation of how they are lived out, particularly in the communities around them.
- Consider how displays in the reception area can be enhanced to show visitors how students live out the school's ethos.

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

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full.' This statement from the Gospel of John is summed up in Twyford as the 10:10 ethic. It drives all aspects of school life. Everyone believes it and lives it. Students describe being 'nourished' into it and parents give examples of how they too use it at home. The simplicity of the 10:10 statement belies the profound theology which underpins it. The school's mission is to develop everyone's God-given gifts through relationships and opportunities for growth. Students respond well to the school's encouragement to aim high and are helped to do so through high quality support and a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. Staff carefully track students' well-being and attainment. Systems are rigorous and steps to address any additional needs are taken swiftly. Support for those identified as having special needs is excellent. Consequently, results are significantly above national averages. Examples abound of students who make exceptional progress, sometimes from very low starting points, or in the face of significant barriers to learning. The reading skills of almost 20% of students improve dramatically during their first year in the school. Thus, they go on to tackle exams with greater confidence and success. Such progress is transformational in students' lives. Inspired by the 10:10 ethic, reflection is a deeply rooted habit of mind informing continuous evaluation and development. Students regularly undertake structured evaluations of every aspect of their own development. In doing so they rise to the challenge of stretching themselves as the school demands. They are helped to do so by 'inspiring speeches' from teachers. The behaviour policy offers security and the possibility of a fresh start every day in line with the 10:10 ethic. Students benefit from the commonly held belief that everyone needs support and can offer it to others. Behaviour around the school is excellent. Students' relationships with each other, and with adults, are respectful and friendly. Students joining the school in the sixth form identify these positive relationships as a major factor in their decision to apply. Participation in extracurricular activities is exceptionally high and makes for a very cohesive community. Students say the gospel choir, for example is 'not just for Christians but for anyone who likes to sing'. Through their enthusiastic engagement with the varied activities and clubs on offer, students develop their own gifts and build a network of relationships across the school. Some identify positive, life-long impacts they believe school will have on their habits of mind and attitudes to other people. One has been so inspired by her experience with the Christian fellowship group she is planning to become a youth worker. Collective worship and the pastoral programme provide students with a strong spiritual and moral framework for life. Students talk freely about how this benefits them. One recalled the story of Moses from a previous year as a source of strength and inspiration. Even though 'Moses did not hear God at first, you are not alone because God is with you'. Religious education (RE) is highly valued by students because they can 'learn about other religions and things about my own religion that I didn't know.' This open approach supports and enriches the inclusive Christian environment of the school. A prayer space is available for Muslims and well thought out arrangements for communion mean everyone takes part in a way that is comfortable for them. Students enjoy school. 'I like school more than I like weekends.' Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their appreciation of the school. They are confident that staff know and care for their children as individuals. Students feel safe in school. Any concerns are easily raised and dealt with 'immediately'. Students act as 'agents for good in the world', within school and further afield. Their understanding of communities different to their own is developed well by their support for charities, links to local groups and a school in Mozambique.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship animates, informs and celebrates the spirit of the school. The integrated thematic approach unfolds through each week and over time from Years 7 to 13. Planning systematically builds students' theological understanding and enables them to explore how it applies to their own lives. For example, an assembly about Pentecost enabled Year 7 to consider how they, like the disciples, move out of their comfort zone. Students develop a sound understanding of key Christian beliefs from creation through to the cross, resurrection and God as three in one. Prayer and reflection based on the Bible are skilfully integrated into the pastoral curriculum. Dialogue with students from different Christian traditions is handled sensitively to explain and maintain the integrity of the Anglican tradition. Exceptional leadership and detailed resources from the chaplaincy team build confidence in staff of different faiths or none to lead worship rooted in the Bible and contemporary life. Thus, Christianity becomes the lens through which the community reflects on life and its meaning at the start of every day. Students comment on how reflecting in peace and calm helps 'clear the mind', and enables them to find personal meaning in the 10:10 ethic. 'It's good to be independent but I don't have to do all this by myself.' Consequently, worship meets individuals' needs and those of the whole community. Weekly assemblies and

termly communion services are enriched by high quality music. The singing strategy bears fruit in worship, not only through the excellent gospel choir but in the open-hearted singing of hymns by everyone. Assemblies and communion are also enriched by the thoughtful use of symbolism. In one example when communion ended students offered grapes to each other, representing the gift of themselves that they share with each other. Visual imagery is successfully used to inspire and effectively focus attention. Students find worship meaningful and memorable. The 'Lent Labyrinth', for example, provided students with a powerful set of images and thoughts which they have since called on in their own lives. Student leadership is very well established and arrangements for involving students in preparing and leading worship are impressive. Leaders have clear systems for evaluating which includes feedback and dialogue with chaplaincy representatives from each form. Staff and students describe worship as a powerful vehicle for personal and spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Students speak with passion and confidence about how RE enables them to understand different faiths. It supports and challenges them to decide what they believe. In addition, it leads them to be respectful and open to others whose beliefs are different. The subject leader and his team have carefully constructed the curriculum to suit the intake of the school. For example, it broadens their horizons in Year 7 and, from the outset, is designed to boost students' chances of examination success in later years. At Key Stage 4 all students are entered for GCSE at the end of Year 10. Provision for RE for students in Year 11 and Key Stage 5 is successfully delivered through a Biblically inspired pastoral programme. This also provides additional RE for students in the lower years. All students explore a range of issues from a personal and a theological perspective within RE lessons and beyond. Sixth form students enjoy the 'head to head' debates involved in the programme of RE conferences. They make links between the school's ethos and what they learn in RE. Thus, they relate diversity within and between different faiths to 'stretch' and the empathy needed to look through different eyes. They speak highly of the opportunities, available in the lower years particularly, to learn more about other faiths. Currently there is not a systematic programme in place to boost students' first-hand experience of faiths other than Christianity. Students identify a range of strategies which teachers use in class to help them make very good progress. Regular tracking means students' progress is carefully monitored. Steps are taken to effectively support any students whose work needs to, or could improve. The school wide system of setting different levels of challenge is consistently used to good effect in RE lessons. The well organised curriculum, together with very effective teaching leads to excellent examination results. Achievement is high with a sustained trend of outcomes which are better than most other schools nationally at GCSE and A level.

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

All members of the Twyford community understand and engage faithfully with the Christian 10:10 ethic. This is because inspirational leaders make it explicit, presenting values which those from other faiths, or different Christian traditions relate to. Leaders model this ethic with humanity, humility and unswerving commitment. Their strategies, actions and support for others bring it to life. The moral purpose of the school, like DNA, runs through everything. It is equally evident in the approach to whole school planning as it is within the daily experience of each student. Just as students engage and stretch themselves so leaders and governors have looked outwards to take on new challenges. Since the last inspection leaders have successfully established a second school in the Trust and through doing so, set about further improving Twyford. Consequently, the development point from the last inspection has been met and even exceeded. Governors are fully aware of the school's distinctiveness and supportive of its ethos. Leaders ensure there is no room for complacency. Self-evaluation is continuously employed on both an individual and institutional level. There are frequent checks on how well the vision is working in practice. These include regular surveys of parents, staff and students. Governors and leaders understand the school's strengths and help to increase the impact of its Christian distinctiveness. Strategic planning is highly effective and focused above all on meeting students' needs. For example, to reinforce their sense of their gifts, students are now provided with daily feedback on their conduct. An emphasis on the positive has led to a continuing reduction in negative behaviour. It is striking that although the 10:10 ethic is non-negotiable, students experience it as an invitation to which they respond with enthusiasm and commitment. Student leadership is a particularly strong feature of the school. They take on increasing levels of responsibility and make an important contribution to ongoing evaluation. The school's Christian ethos is made explicit throughout the appointment and induction processes for staff. This preserves the integrity of the school's approach and supports the tremendously consistent implementation of its 10:10 ethic. Staff describe the school as 'purposeful'. They refer not only to the pace and focus of everyday life but to the underlying moral imperative leaders transmit. Continuing professional development of staff at all levels improves their practice and many have been prepared for leadership in church school contexts. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship and leaders resource these areas well. They are vitally important aspects of the school and make a profound

impact on students' moral and cultural, as well as personal and spiritual development. The school's involvement with parents and a wide range of networks is mutually beneficial and enriching. This includes local clergy, the diocese, other schools and the Church of England Education Office.

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