



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Steyping Grammar School

Shooting Field
Steyping
West Sussex
BN44 3RX

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chichester

Local authority: West Sussex

Date of inspection: 21 June 2016

Date of last inspection: 25 September 2009

School's unique reference number: 126092

Headteacher: Nick Wergan

Inspector's name and number: Susan Thompson 714

School context

Steyping Grammar School is a larger than average 11-18 secondary school with a state boarding section. The headteacher has been in post for three years. Numbers in Key Stage 3 may increase due to changes in age transfer currently under consultation. Boarding provision was judged to be outstanding by OfSTED in February 2016. The boarding chaplain, who is also the parish priest, is leaving this term. The local Baptist minister is the day school students Chaplain.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Steyping Grammar School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school has a very clear focus on the well-being of all members of the school community based on Christian values.
- Students play a leading role in chaplaincy, acts of collective worship and leading the flourishing Christian Unions across the school.
- Students develop their moral conscience and contribute significantly to self-initiated charity fundraising.
- Succession planning and leadership development programmes are well developed for both staff and students.

Areas to improve

- Develop stakeholders' confidence in explicitly identifying the biblical teachings that underpin the school values and the Character Education programme.
- Develop coherence between 'Thought for the Week' and collective worship to enhance opportunities for prayer and engage more with Anglican liturgy.

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

The school vision statement, 'be the best we can be', is supported by four key drivers which focus on learning and personal development. Key drivers spring directly from Micah 6v8 and provide the foundation to all aspects of school life. These key drivers link closely to the school's Character Education programme and have a significant impact on all members of the school community, including parents, by giving them a shared language which supports their exploration of personal development and well-being. For example, the Character Education aspect 'understanding others' links to the key driver of social justice, resulting in significant student support for Amnesty International. The senior leadership team and staff body are very clear about the links between Character Education and the Christian ethos of the school. Most members of the wider school community are able to root these values in a range of biblical teaching. The school has recently developed a restorative justice model of behaviour management which has a clear link to Jesus' teaching on forgiveness. This model gives the opportunity for reformation and second chances. It is already well established and both staff and pupils have seen the impact on behaviour. Pupils conduct around the school is very good and exclusions are rare. This is a result of the very individual response to pupils' needs through pastoral care, timetabling and support from other agencies. Students, parents and staff remark on the exceptional care for individuals facing adversity. One said, "you never feel anything is too much trouble". Many accounts were shared during the inspection by staff, students and parents that reflected this. Several students expressed their gratitude for the individual support they had received in times of challenge in order to complete their studies successfully.

The moral education of pupils is well developed through opportunities across the curriculum. Powerful examples of students engaging with the morality of photography, scripts about suicide and debating moral dilemmas were observed across the school. Each year pupils raise significant amounts for charity, for instance there is a long established link to support a family in Malawi. Students of different nationalities are encouraged to share their culture with other members of the school community. For example, food hygiene certificates are awarded to celebrate dishes which reflect a student's nationality.

The focus on thinking of others and morality has contributed to the school's approach to spirituality. All departments have analysed their contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which shows diverse opportunities available to the students. A wide range of creative responses around the school demonstrate the students' spirituality through creativity. A module of work in Design Technology in Year 10 is to develop a candle holder. This work is supported by the vicar in a local parish. The outcomes of this work are stunning and are displayed in the church. They demonstrate how a church related stimulus engages all students in purposeful learning.

Steining Grammar enables students to achieve very well, particularly in Key Stage 4. There are no significant gaps in attainment between learners. Attainment in religious education (RE) is in line with the highest achieving subjects in Key Stage 4. The materials to support students in RE are comprehensive. Teaching supports the development of understanding of key Christian theology, such as the Trinity. The study of faiths other than Christianity, together with the 'Beliefs Conference' held in Year 12, enables students to develop a wider perspective on life in modern Britain.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship takes place daily in different groupings across the school. These have a profound impact on the students. For instance, after focusing on the shootings in Orlando one student voluntarily produced a powerful artistic response which has been displayed around the school. Students say that collective worship brings everyone together and helps them perceive the world in different ways. They value the inclusive nature of collective worship and have a growing understanding of the three persons of the Trinity. One student said "it is helpful to see how different people understand God, it engages your mind". Students are actively involved in

planning and leading collective worship. Together with the range of other leaders, including many staff and the chaplain this ensures variety. Students' understanding of different Christian denominations is supported by the variety of churches they themselves attend; this is particularly true of the boarding students. Following feedback from students arrangements were made for them to attend a range of churches at the weekends. The Boarding Chaplain visits the students on a weekly basis offering pastoral care. An area for development from the previous inspection was to introduce a school Eucharist. These plans were delayed due to the previous interregnum, however, there is a service planned in June 2016. The school has Christian Unions on both sites: the student led 'Church without walls' is flourishing and has a high profile in the school. The 'Breathing Space' is a place of prayer for Christians and those of other faiths. This is used each morning by a staff prayer group and throughout the day by staff and students. A trial 'Prayer Space' event took place earlier this year. This was very popular and has contributed to plans for an outside prayer space. Students and staff value the times to be quiet and reflect which exist in collective worship and in the daily tutor based 'Thought for the Week' discussions. These are shared with students through the display screens around the school. Parents are very appreciative of receiving the 'Thoughts for the Week' at home so discussions can be continued outside of school. Opportunities for prayer in 'Thought for the Week' times and explicit links to Christian teaching are not fully developed. Bible teaching and current issues are used to make collective worship relevant. In the collective worship observed, Psalm 24 was linked to the European Referendum. The students were asked to consider the value of generosity in the question 'what we can we give to Europe?' A staff member of the Christian Ethos Group attends School Council meetings to gather feedback on collective worship and church school developments from students. One outcome has been sharing tangible examples of individuals who have demonstrated the qualities of Character Education.

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

Leaders clearly articulate how the core values and Character Education underpin the very successful outcomes for students. The leadership team is committed to providing opportunities for students to develop as well rounded citizens, employees and employers of the future. A parent commented that they "love seeing their children grow-up in the school" as the students leave as "great people". All members of the school community can articulate the values and the qualities aspired to by the school. Adults and the majority of students make links to their foundation on Christian principles. The determination of the senior leadership team and governing body to develop as a church school is evident. Governors are committed to the development of the school. This was evidenced by two written submissions received from governors who were unable to meet the inspector. Structures have been developed to ensure the strategic leadership of the Christian ethos of the school: involving both governor and staff Christian Ethos groups. Governors monitor and evaluate the progress of the specific Christian ethos development plan introduced in 2015. The values are central to the school and faculty development plans. For instance, the humanities plan seeks to develop opportunities for students 'to reflect on their own spiritual beliefs'. Pastoral support for all members of the community is strong. Members of staff recognise they can turn to each other for support in personally challenging times. Extensive opportunities are given for staff and students to develop as leaders through an innovative programme of professional development and use of school to school support. The day school chaplain supports the school development of collective worship. He also writes articles in the termly magazine demonstrating the importance of this aspect of school life. Students have had the opportunity to attend a Youth Alpha course run by a member of staff. Partnerships between the school, the chaplains and the community are strong. Parents fully support the work of the school and feel supported by the school if things are not going smoothly. The school is outward facing; it engages with other schools and organisations to stimulate self-reflection. The issues raised in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The school meets the requirements for collective worship and religious education.