



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Tring Church of England Voluntary Controlled Comprehensive School
Mortimer Hill, Tring HP23 5JD

Diocese of St Albans

LA: Hertfordshire
SIAS Inspection: 15th May 2009
Previous S23 Inspection: March 2006
URN: 117553
Headteacher: Julia Wynd
SIAS Inspector Name: Alan Brown
SIAS Inspector No: 256

School Context

Tring Voluntary Controlled Comprehensive School is an 11-18 co-educational school with 1494 students of whom 297 are in the sixth form. It is a specialist Humanities College with 14% of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school holds a number of prestigious awards including Fairtrade, International Schools' award and Youth Connexions.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tring School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The Governing Body, Headteacher and Leadership team share a clear vision allied to a strong practical sense of dynamism and purpose regarding what the school, as a Church school, can achieve. The Christian character of the school is expressed through an emphasis on both academic excellence and each student's personal development. There are excellent relationships within the school and collective worship is planned thoughtfully and presented with great care.

Established strengths

- The outstanding leadership of the school;
- The outstanding links between the church, community and the school;
- The vision for the future of what the school as a church school can achieve;
- The quality of relationships within the school.

Focus for development

- To include more students in the preparation and presentation of worship;
- To incorporate a statement of the Christian values of the school into the school aims.

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

The school has a Headteacher and senior staff with an interest in, and deep commitment to, the continued improvement of the Christian character of the school. The Governing Body, with the leadership team, has an educational vision for the school in which its Christian foundation plays an integral part. The Head of Religious Education has worked industriously and with great imagination to ensure that religious education is valued throughout the school; students do well in examinations and there is a lively and growing Christian Union. The school prayer is a focus for students and words from the prayer can be seen over doorways around the school; a creative and imaginative use of the prayer. One student observed that the regular use of the prayer helped her to recognise the school was a *church* school. The school exudes a dynamic sense of energy, purpose and enthusiasm. It is a caring, supportive community and students commented on the personal and academic support offered by the staff at all levels. Christian principles and values run throughout the school and underpin academic and pastoral concerns. Students were wholly supportive of the pastoral care they received and the manner in which they were given responsibility to grow and mature. The Christian character of the school should find some expression in the school aims if it is to properly reflect what is already fully in place.

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

The leadership team, the Team Rector and other senior colleagues have made significant progress since the last inspection with particular regard to collective worship. The school plans for all students to receive a daily act of collective worship which has vitality, relevance and variety. The school celebrates the main events of the Christian year and visits the parish church regularly. The support for RE and collective worship by the senior staff enables students to reflect on the living relationship between them and to engage with religion and worship in a challenging and lively manner. Worship now plays an effective part in the life of the school. Most staff are willing to lead worship which is carefully structured, resourced and organised. The relationship with the local parish church is excellent and students appreciate the clergy and members of the other churches who come to lead worship. The initiatives whereby these links have been built have had a direct effect on the spiritual and moral development of students, some of whom expressed a willingness to plan and present their own material to lead worship. A number of students also commented on the value of the worship and the manner in which it helped them reflect on important personal and global issues. One student felt that the use of the school prayer at the end of worship created a calming and reflective atmosphere before the day fully began.

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

The clear and effective vision of what a Christian educational institution should be is shared by the Governing Body and the headteacher. The headteacher is very persuasive and successful at putting this vision into practice. Her focus on where the school is now and what it can become provides a dynamic model of vigour and rigour for staff and students. This, together with the drive for excellence in all aspects of school life, finds wholehearted support and enthusiasm from the staff and amongst students. Students interviewed recognised this clarity of purpose and energy within the school while appreciating what a friendly, supportive, and positive place it was. They enjoy being at school. The school leadership has high expectations of all staff and students. One excellent feature of the school is the extent of its outreach into the local communities: a model for future work with all communities, religious and secular. There can be no doubt that the development of each student's academic, religious and spiritual potential is the focus of the leadership and management of Tring school, with the ultimate aim of producing mature, socially responsible citizens. The contribution of the school to community cohesion is marked through giving students a strong sense of identity with Tring and its environment while also helping them to recognise how they can contribute to the needs of the wider world. The initiatives undertaken are imaginative, creative and personally challenging and have a firm Christian foundation while remaining open, receptive and inclusive to different persuasions, opinions and beliefs. Staff and pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the local community and in doing so promote a Christian vision of a more equitable and tolerant society.