



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Anne's CE Academy  
Hollin Lane,  
Middleton  
M24 6XN

**Diocese:** Manchester

Local authority: n/a

Dates of inspection: October 14<sup>th</sup> and October 17<sup>th</sup> 2013

Date of last inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010

School's unique reference number: 135313

Principal: Caroline Preece

Inspector's name and number: Jane Brooke 658

### School context

St Anne's CE Academy became an academy in September 2007 and moved into its new building in 2010. There are 700 students. The proportion eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average and the average prior attainment in the majority of year groups is significantly below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and the number of special needs students is well above the national average. Student stability is below the national because the Academy is currently under PAN and a number of Students join mid-year.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Anne's CE Academy are good

- A highly effective Strategic Faith Team which takes a lead in embedding Christian values across the academy and creates opportunities for students to discover the Christian faith.
- An outstanding pastoral system for all students which enables the most vulnerable to succeed.
- Good teaching, learning, planning and student tracking in RE which has enabled GCSE results to improve.
- Well planned worship which engages students positively in the Christian faith through enthusiastic singing.

### Areas to improve

- Develop a process for systematic evaluation of the impact of the Christian ethos on students and staff in order to deepen the Christian character of the Academy.
- Introduce Anglican responses in order to broaden the students' experience of worship.

### The Academy, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

Christian faith and action are central to the life of the Academy. Prayer supports all aspects of St Anne's CE Academy and brings to life the mission statement 'to underpin all we do with Christian faith, values and principles'. The senior leadership modelling of Christian values of love and respect along with the quotations on the walls by the entrance, lead students to

exhibit good behaviour, friendliness to the stranger, good relationships with staff and a concern for each other. One member of staff said that the Christian ethos makes her want to 'go above and beyond' her daily duties and that she always 'wants to do more to help' others. Unvalidated GCSE results in 2013 indicate 47% of the students achieved 5 A\*-C (including English and Maths) which is above the national minimum standards and an improvement on the previous year. Christian concern is evident in the significant improvement in attendance over the last three years to 93.7% as a result of a student support and awards system, although it remains below the national average. The light, airy, attractive Faith Space offers a peaceful, safe place for students where the Faith and Community Coordinator is available for counselling or mentoring. There are some Christian symbols and stimulating, artistically painted quotations around the building but there are a few departmental areas where there is no evidence of the Christian identity. The outstanding pastoral system, with a deep Christian concern for each individual student, supports the most vulnerable students through planned interventions, enabling many to remain in education. Student responsibility and self-esteem are improved with the establishment of positions of an elected head boy and girl, prefects, form captains, faith form captains and peer counsellors in place. Learning walks during faith form times enable some of the Christian Character of the Academy to be reviewed and change to be effected. All curriculum leaders have identified in their planning where there are opportunities for spiritual development in order to improve learning. A wide range of enrichment activities for students to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development includes an increasingly popular visit to Taize, an international brotherhood in France, which gives an understanding of the diversity of Christianity. One student reflectively commented after a visit that he 'realised there was now more to life'. Compassion and generosity are encouraged in the raising of funds for the homeless and for a school in Africa. RE is now considered of value and relevance to the students. RE offers opportunities for spiritual development through reflecting upon the nature of God, Christian conversion and Christian concepts such as reconciliation. The Archbishop of York Award widens students understanding of Christianity as a world- wide faith.

### **The impact of collective worship on the academy community is good**

Faith Assemblies and faith form times, based upon the bible, are part of the hub of the spiritual life of the Academy. They are valued by students as 'uplifting' and a space for quiet reflection which 'help us in our daily lives'. Worship is systematically planned, monitored and evaluated by the Strategic Faith Group in order to make improvements. Engaging and relevant Powerpoint presentations are used in Christian faith form times to stimulate questions about the Christian faith. Student evaluations indicate they enjoy the fortnightly singing in Year 7 and 8 which impacts positively upon the enthusiastic singing and actions in assembly. The assemblies led by staff and students are based upon the life of Jesus and relevant Christian values such as truth, love and forgiveness. Year 7 students were very well behaved and entered the 'heart space', the area for worship, in silence. They listened well to a story about a girl who told lies which was then connected to those who lied about Jesus and then related to the ninth commandment. They all sang enthusiastically 'My God is a great big God' with the actions. The Faith and Community Coordinator concluded with a simple prayer which encouraged a dialogue with God. During the year, students' spiritual development is enhanced through experiencing worship outside the Academy led by the vicar in the local church at Christmas and Easter. Student involvement in worship has increased with faith captains and peers now planning and leading half termly acts of worship. The Academy 'Faith Book of Prayers' is used frequently in form worship with well-known traditional prayers placed alongside those written by Year 9 students. These are presented artistically and professionally giving value to the students' prayers. Students develop confidence to pray as they lead assemblies and learn the Lord's prayer so that one Year 11 student spoke of peers asking him to pray for them. Christian spirituality and faith are nurtured through student voluntary attendance at Alpha courses and the follow up course, 'Soul Habits' led by the Course Director of RE and the Faith and Community Coordinator. The recently introduced

stimulating, compulsory sixth form faith programme with the visiting motivational speakers such as Professor David Wilkinson challenges students to think and consider the importance of faith. Student evaluations indicate that the faith activity in the academy helps their own reflections and understanding of prayer. There are currently no Anglican responses in the worship and only limited references to the Trinity with no voluntary service of Holy Communion.

### **The effectiveness of the Religious Education is good**

Due to good leadership and teaching, GCSE RE results have improved considerably over the last three years and are forecast to improve further. Grades A\*-C were achieved by 43% of the full course entry and 79% of the cohort achieved an A\*-G grade. The full GCSE course is followed by 80% of current Year 11 students. The value placed upon RE in the academy is indicated by the recent increase in time allocation at Key Stage 4 from three periods to five periods a fortnight so that it is now on a par with other GCSE subjects. The RE curriculum is differentiated with some lower attaining students studying for a more accessible Entry Level Certificate. All lessons give opportunities to learn about and learn from religions. The teaching of Christianity is a priority in the curriculum so that all students have a thorough understanding of the faith. The quality of teaching and learning in RE is good. Progress is made in understanding the subject and skills of interpretation and evaluation are developed well. There are very good relationships between the students and staff. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, focussed discussions and good use of stimulating resources. Students have less opportunity to explore learning through paired discussion or group work. Formative assessment with helpful constructive teacher comments in books, set students specific targets but not all written work is marked regularly. Diversity of prayer is recognised through the RE curriculum with students analysing how Islamic prayer differs from Christian prayer. Year 7 students were challenged to consider positive characteristics of themselves and their peers and then compare their own limited knowledge with that of God in Psalm 139. In Year 10 and 11 students express religious ideas through careful questioning on conversion and the nature of God. A more positive student attitude towards RE is growing through strong and effective leadership by the Course Director of RE who monitors the teaching of RE and has the constant support of the senior leadership team. Events such as 'God and the Big Bang' encourage students' spiritual development through analysis and reflection of viewpoints. Further spiritual development is encouraged by the opportunity to ask open questions on labels on a 'We were wondering ..' wall.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**

Under the strong leadership of the Christian Principal, the senior leadership and faith team provide good leadership for the Academy. The articulated Christian vision and the determination to raise standards by the Principal and governors have impacted positively upon achievement with seventeen out of twenty six Sixth Formers leaving the Academy in summer 2013 to attend university. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met. The Principal has imaginatively established a Strategic Faith Team which plans assemblies, singing and faith events and ensures the Christian character of the Academy is constantly under review. Good self-evaluation by governors and senior leaders has led to academic improvement as well as enhancing the Christian ethos. The community governor is rightly pleased that due to rising standards, improved behaviour and the Christian ethos, there is a growing parental pride in the work of the Academy. RE is well resourced and the Course Director of RE attends professional development courses in relation to the strategic plan and her own performance management targets. All staff have the opportunity to strengthen their faith through weekly fellowship prayer, Alpha and faith training sessions. Those attending have improved personal relationships and those in the Academy. The presence of the Faith and Community Coordinator with his gentle nature, his involvement in worship and his availability for student support makes a considerable difference to the spiritual development of students.

The church maintains strong links with the Academy through the governing body, student services in church and regular contact with the Principal. The previous chair of governors who retired during the inspection, was highly active in improving and driving forwards the distinctively Christian character of the Academy. Although there are many opportunities for staff and students to review the Christian ethos, there is as yet no systematic evaluation of the impact of the Christian ethos on the students and staff by the governors. The Principal and members of the senior leadership attend national and diocesan conferences for headteachers and as a result, introduce new initiatives. Succession planning is of importance to the Academy with senior leaders encouraged to take on new roles and attend 'Preparation for Headship' courses.

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