

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Samworth Church Academy</b>			
Address	Sherwood Hall Road, Mansfield, NG18 2DY		
Date of inspection	27/28 November 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA
Diocese	Southwell and Nottingham	URN	135583

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
	<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

## School context

Samworth Academy is a secondary academy with 1100 pupils on roll. It was founded by the Samworth family and the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham. It is now a partner school in the diocesan multi-academy trust. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The principal has been in post since September 2017. She has taught at the school since 2003.

## The school's Christian vision

Our vision is to create a distinctively Christian and values driven environment that provides the best start to the 70 or more great years our students should enjoy when they leave our school. Our students should have the opportunity to live life in all its fullness and to be good citizens wherever they go.

## Key findings

- The school vision allows all pupils to flourish, so that they adopt unreservedly the five key values of the academy.
- Relationships at all levels are a strength of the academy, so that students relate to staff and their peers in a positive way.
- The period six and other extra-curricular activities transform both the horizons and experiences of Samworth students.
- Deep and challenging questions are tackled without hesitation, particularly in religious education (RE). Students are led to a mature understanding of differing views on a wide range of issues.
- The collective worship programme provides an opportunity to reflect, but not all tutor based worship emulates the best practice modelled elsewhere in the academy.

### **Areas for development**

- Establish links with the local churches, so that the Christian values of the academy have a significant impact on the work of local clergy, community groups and adults connected with the school.
- Deepen understanding in RE of the links between the shared values and scriptural references, so that the basis of belief is firmly rooted in the life and teachings of Christ.
- Ensure the best practice in collective worship is shared effectively, so that it is successfully modelled in whole school, part school and tutor group worship.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### **Inspection findings**

The principal and the leadership team are strong practitioners of the key Christian values. They provide positive role models for staff and students. Students understand the Christian values and can cite some connections to Christianity. The values are well publicised around the academy, prominently displayed in learning spaces. Awards and penalties are linked with them, so they ensure high value is placed on forgiveness, vocation, respect, positivity and service. Staff refer to them when guiding students to make positive choices concerning relationships and conduct. Staff are dedicated to the distinctiveness of the school. Targeted professional development ensures they are being trained in leadership roles. One staff member coordinates well-being activities across the academy, offering support to vulnerable students. All students are offered a free breakfast to start each day, so practical help is offered as an act of service. Staff go the extra mile on students' behalf so all students feel a sense of self-worth.

Pupils generally show positivity in their application to learning tasks, which are carefully differentiated to be appropriate to the individual. Outcome data is a concern, with leaders well aware of the need for more students to make positive progress. Students begin with attainment lower on average than national benchmarks and too few at present exceed national averages at GCSE. Nevertheless there are some exciting exceptions, with Samworth students frequently the first in their family to study at level 3 modern apprentice or higher education levels. Each student is valued as of incredible worth in the eyes of God, so that all staff work to bring out the full potential. The commitment of all staff to meeting students' needs ensures the academy remains over-subscribed for year seven entry. Attendance is improving, because those not in education are methodically pursued, with staff making home visits to curb absenteeism. No students indicate that bullying was a problem, and the school is recognised in its Ofsted report as being at the forefront of measures to curb homophobic, racist or sexist discrimination. Exclusions are in line with similar academies, with excellent work carried out by the Heatherdene Centre to contain serious issues and to restore students to mainstream school. Students move from area to area smoothly, with students themselves assisting those with mobility challenges. These acts of service are replicated by the various schools adopting charities, or coming together to raise £2100 for 'Children in Need'. This is particularly impressive given that some families in the community have hardship needs. Students are also aware of global needs through their participation in Sport Relief, Christian Aid and TEAR fund. Moreover, they take on Christian leadership roles at Round Square conferences for youth leaders, where they share their views and discuss solutions to global issues. All students can be elected as school captains or join the young leaders' activities, so that British values of democracy and servant leadership are ingrained in school life.

Lessons are purposeful, with students stimulated by most tasks they are set. They recognise Christian values, such as the golden rule, as important but lack a broad understanding of links to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution to students' personal and social education. The RE programme is enhanced by the Understanding Christianity resource, so that views on modern issues are linked to Bible verses. Students of diverse faiths, or alternative world views, talk enthusiastically about the RE topics studied, so that they absorb

knowledge of many cultures and beliefs. Students display respect for contrasting ideas and show acceptance rather than tolerance of others, as also made in the image of God. Younger pupils have some knowledge of Bible stories, such as the Genesis stories of creation and the flood, but have difficulty in applying this learning to their day to day living. Older pupils are aware of different denominational views of abortion and contraception, discussing current issues in a mature and well-informed way. Samworth Church Academy students discuss with real understanding issues from animal testing to addressing poverty, and from capital punishment to racial integration. All lessons include a reflective time, so students are considering the learning in relation to the academy vision. All students join clubs in period six each day, with a wide choice of sporting, recreational, craft, CCF and curriculum support activities on offer. Thus students are encouraged to flourish, so no God-given talent is wasted for lack of opportunity.

There is a well-planned programme of collective worship which is a central activity of the school. Creative approaches, co-ordinated effectively, ensure many occasions for pupils and adults to grow spiritually, but not all pupils evaluate these positively. The academy's Christian values, such as 'being the best you can be', pervade all worship. The school band enhances worship, for major festivals and is much appreciated by peers. Collective worship uses invitation and responses and pupils are familiar with liturgy. Pupils are invited to see prayer as personal and intercessional. Some pupils affirmed the use of prayer in their daily lives and could outline circumstances in which collective worship and prayer had altered attitudes or actions. There is regular feedback through termly questionnaires to RE and worship, so that leaders and governors evaluate effectively. The chaplain, with his growing team plans strategically from students' responses to worship. He is very active and committed to the school providing a link with the wider Christian community, with some links with the parish. Students can describe the major Christian festivals and their significance to the life and teaching of Jesus, but there is sparse involvement of adults and the community in worship. Whilst parents are happy that the school is based on faith, but inclusive of all, few actively support worship activities.

Governors, particularly parent and foundation governors, are frequent visitors to the school. They are involved in supporting staff, and developing RE and collective worship. In tandem with the RE co-ordinator, the chaplain reports to governors on the impact of Christian values.

Samworth Church Academy is on a journey, promoting learning for all in a loving and Christ-like way. Servant leadership is key to its rating as good, because adults live out daily the values of service to others, with humility and forgiveness. As the vision document sums up: 'Our emphasis and exploration of our Christian values encourages students to be the best they can be'.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

The effectiveness of RE is good, because all staff deliver the subject carefully, ensuring all pupils can achieve well and reflect on their work. RE attainment is above average for the academy and students know what is required to show they understand the tasks set. Assessment and target setting are evolving as the new resources are fully embedded, so that pupils have a clear view both of their progress and how they can attain their next learning goal.

Principal	Lisa McVeigh
Inspector's name and number	David Shannon 617