

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

<b>Selwood Academy</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Berkley Road, Frome. Somerset. BA11 2EF		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	02/05/2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Stand-alone academy inspected as voluntary controlled
<b>Diocese / Methodist District</b>	Bath and Wells Diocese/Somerset Mendip Circuit	<b>URN</b>	137741

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<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>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

Selwood Academy is a middle school with 634 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school has a small transient traveller population. A new deputy head took up post in April last year.

### The school's Christian vision

Creating a safe, happy and enriching environment where all aspire to thrive, achieve and celebrate success together. Promoting the dignity and well-being of every child and staff member, ensuring they flourish in the course of their journey with us and, through our values, enabling them to 'Let your light shine before others'. *Matthew 5:16*

### Key findings

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by a dedicated and caring staff, has created a vibrant, deeply Christian learning community which transforms lives within the school, the local community and beyond.
- Extremely strong nurturing relationships, based on core values of hope, wisdom, community and joy, support all members of the school family and enable all to flourish within this Christian community.
- Collective worship is an inspiring experience with opportunities for all to 'let their light shine before others'. It is the keystone of the school curriculum and is enhanced by mutually beneficial partnerships with the local Methodist and Anglican Churches.
- An innovative and highly effective approach to the teaching of Religious Education (RE) allows pupils to ask the 'big questions'. This has a significant impact on pupils' academic and spiritual development. It has been recognised as excellent practice at local, regional and national levels.

### Areas for development

- Extend opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles through the spiritual leadership programme, so that pupils have a greater role in the development of spirituality across the whole school.
- Work with the new Methodist minister to further strengthen the work with the Methodist Church and circuit, so that the strong partnership with the local church continues to enrich the school.

**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**

Working with all members of the school community, the school's ambitious and passionate headteacher has created a defining vision rooted in Matthew's Gospel 5:16, 'Let your light shine before others'. The strength of commitment to the vision shapes the strategic and operational direction of the school. Its impact is immediately evident to visitors in pupils' exemplary behaviour and the quality of relationships. Pupils are respectful and polite. Staff speak of how members of the community 'watch over one another in love'. Staff use restorative justice approaches when dealing with incidents. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour when it is less than good, resulting in a strong culture of forgiveness and reconciliation. Support from the local Anglican and Methodist clergy, enhanced by three chaplains, has a very positive impact on the spiritual life of the whole school community. Governors recognise the importance of self-evaluation and use it to ensure they have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

School leaders are deeply committed to the development and sharing of good practice. Embedding the vision, the school strives to be a beacon of excellence which transforms the lives of pupils within the school, the local area and beyond. Staff enthusiastically agree that they are encouraged to 'let their light shine' through support for their professional development. As a result, they contribute significantly to raising standards within other schools and across the diocese. As a regional partner for the Church of England's Foundation for Educational Leadership, the headteacher contributes developmental resources and mentors future school leaders on placements offered in the school. Through this and similar links, including with Methodist schools, the headteacher has been able to develop particularly strong mutually beneficial relationships with the church at local and national levels.

High expectations, and the belief that everyone should 'develop their inner light', significantly contribute to the progress that pupils make during their time at Selwood. The school's commitment to each individual has led them to invest in a large expert inclusion team. Team members live out Selwood's Christian vision. They 'go the extra mile' to enable the more vulnerable pupils to overcome barriers to learning confidently. Extensive, and often innovative, approaches ensure all children receive the support they need to enable them to flourish and shine. Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils. There has also been notable success in improving the educational experience of traveller pupils which has resulted in improved attendance. Parents value the extensive transition arrangements that help pupils to move from small first schools to this large middle school. This excellent start to their time at Selwood ensures all can 'flourish in the course of their journey'. Pupils engage in courageous advocacy through addressing areas of injustice. They spoke with feeling about the issues facing a young refugee in school, how they supported her and learned from the experience. Aware of the discrimination against traveller classmates outside school, pupils asked worship ambassadors to include discrimination as a worship theme.

RE is a particular strength of the school. The innovative curriculum brings together the best of local and national guidance. Pupils are stimulated by the thinking challenges of 'Philosophy for Children', combined with the reflection of 'Awareness, Mystery and Value', and the depth of learning required for 'Understanding Christianity' and the Methodist RE units. Pupils love RE lessons and speak with appreciation of the safe and respectful space it affords them to explore their own beliefs and those of others. They relish the opportunities for discussion. They demonstrate an open-minded approach to learning, not only saying 'everyone's view is important' but also 'after a lesson my view might change'. This impressively reflects the Wesleyan commitment to reasoning together as a way of forming opinions. The standard of achievement is high, affirmed through a robust assessment system. There is strong and passionate leadership of the subject by the highly trained RE leader. Due to the exceptional quality of RE at Selwood, the curriculum has been disseminated across the diocese. Local schools also benefit from training by the RE leader. When the pupils move on to secondary school a significant proportion continue studying RE to GCSE level, citing their inspirational experiences at Selwood as their motivation.

Collective worship inspires the whole school community. The values of hope, joy, wisdom and community are celebrated through opportunities to 'let your light shine'. Pupils experience both Anglican and Methodist practices through the very strong links with both local churches as well as a wide range of different worship styles by staff and visitors. Staff are well supported in their leadership of worship. Pupils have regular opportunities to be involved in the planning and leading of worship. They respond to these in creative ways and through a variety of roles. A spiritual leadership programme is being introduced through the introduction of worship ambassadors and pupil chaplains, but as yet this is not fully developed. Worship, in all its forms, is integrated seamlessly into the life

of the school. There are opportunities within all areas of the curriculum for pupils to demonstrate how worship is influencing their lives, not just within school but also beyond. In response to the words of Jesus in the Beatitudes, pupils researched charities that they felt most embodied Jesus' teachings. They then designed and made products that could be sold to support the work of these charities. The pupils' deep understanding of why people pray can be seen in the way they value formal and informal opportunities for prayer and reflection.

School leaders have been courageous in creating a curriculum that enables pupils to reflect and explore spiritual dimensions in all subjects. Since the last inspection, the 'Citizenship' and 'Acts of Worship' themes have been interwoven into the Pastoral, Spiritual, Health and Emotional (PSHE) development programme. An aspiration strand enhances this. Pupils celebrate diversity and are empowered to embrace difference through the many thought-provoking opportunities the curriculum provides. They question, discuss and learn to disagree well by considering questions such as, 'Should we fight back?' when exploring injustice. This innovative and creative approach to PSHE has been shared with schools through the diocese and the Frome Learning Partnership. The promotion of mental health and wellbeing has a high priority. The school's growth mindset approach to teaching and learning is helping pupils deal with challenging situations. Staff speak of how the 'wellbeing days' made them feel cared for and valued. The school is recognised within the local community for its work promoting good mental health. It was chosen to pilot Somerset Schools Health and Resilience Education programme.

Headteacher	Jean Hopegood
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Simm 881