

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

<b>Beaminster School</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Newtown, Beaminster, Dorset, DT8 3EP		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	20 May 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Christian designated school inspected as VC
<b>Diocese / Methodist District</b>	Salisbury	<b>URN</b>	113884

<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>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

Beaminster School is a secondary school with 680 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 higher than national averages. The school has specialist provision for pupils with complex learning needs and close links with a special school which shares the same site.

### The school's Christian vision

Beaminster School's Christian vision is expressed in its motto, 'Under God's guidance and protection' and is lived through its focus on 'Ambition, Service, Kindness'. The vision is rooted in biblical teaching about God's love, specifically in Jesus' teaching to love thy neighbour as thyself. As a result of this, all on the staff team are committed to guiding and growing all the pupils in the school.

### Key findings

- There are strong relationships between staff and pupils, rooted in the school's understanding of its Christian character and its vision. Everyone has a strong sense of 'belonging' and is securely aware that they are known and valued. This enables all to flourish at Beaminster School.
- The school's leadership team is a key strength of the school: it is driven by service to the school community and the team understands the school's context very clearly. Recent changes to the curriculum have been based on a drive to improve pupils' aspirations and to ensure all pupils experience a rich education.
- Recently the team has reflected carefully on the school's Christian character and, as a result, is confident in setting a direction for the school based on a Christian vision, rooted in biblical teaching.
- The strong work ethic of the pupils is visible across different subjects and key stages, and stems from the clear vision set by leaders and the value placed on each individual pupil.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff is strong and has a significant impact on this committed staff team.

### Areas for development

- To develop further the planning and evaluation of collective worship to ensure that more pupils are involved and that collective worship supports pupils' spiritual development.
- To embed the emerging Christian vision based on the values of ambition, service and kindness, ensuring this is woven into the curriculum to support a whole school understanding of the vision.
- To create opportunities, both in the curriculum and in the wider life of the school, to nourish the spiritual development of pupils and staff, enabling all to reflect on their own spiritual journey.

## **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**

Beaminster School is a thriving community in which pupils and staff flourish together. This is driven by a senior leadership team with a clear vision of the school's Christian character. They have a thorough understanding of their pupils and a commitment to providing the very best education. There is a strong 'family' atmosphere, rooted in love.

In recent months the school has worked very closely with its diocesan adviser to understand its status as a school with a designated Christian character. Consequently, the school is now very secure in its identity as a church school. The school has a clear set of Christian aspirations rooted in ambition, service and kindness.

Governors work effectively with the leadership team in setting strategic direction for the school. They are able to do so because of their thorough understanding of the school supported by, for example, learning walks to assess Christian distinctiveness.

The re-shaped curriculum at key stage 3 responds to the needs of all learners in preparing them for the world beyond school. The curriculum is driven by the vision for the school; staff and students serve each other by giving of their best. This has been very effective, as evidenced in outcomes, lesson observations, and feedback from staff and pupils. The new music suite is a symbol of the school's commitment to a broad curriculum. Outcomes are improving and work has been effectively completed to target key areas of under-achievement. Assessment is consistent across the school and a cohesive CPD programme for staff supports raising achievement. Data is used to inform curriculum planning for key groups who underachieve; regular pupil progress meetings ensure that staff focus on driving progress for everyone.

Pupils value the range of extra-curricular activities on offer to them, recognising that the school is widening their horizons. Pupils feel trusted, respected and safe. They appreciate the values that underpin their daily routines and they are supportive friends to each other. Bullying is rare, and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There is an emphasis on restorative justice which means that problems are resolved carefully. The school's Christian vision of growing all has shaped how the school's Student Support and Guidance Centre functions. This valuable resource gives pupils time and space to reflect and dedicated staff work with those needing extra help. Support for pupils with mental health challenges is effective and appreciated by pupils and parents from across the school. Parents remark on the strength of the community, the confidence the school gives their children and the welcoming atmosphere.

Pupils are ambitious and are able to articulate a wide range of future plans. They are helped to fulfil these goals because of the teaching and guidance they receive, rooted in the school's Christian vision to develop aspiration. This vision also drives strong relationships between staff who are inspired and supported in equal measure.

Pupils treat each other with respect, they know that being kind is a priority and they place high importance on the positive atmosphere in which they learn. Pupils serve their community consciously through leadership roles at key stages 3 and 4. Pupils feel 'known' and understand that this is vital for each of them to flourish. Lessons are focused and purposeful; learning itself is respected. Staff see themselves as 'custodians' whose stewardship of the community ensures that pupils thrive. Pupils enjoy visits from outside speakers, for example former students, and the work of local clergy who spend time with them through the week. There are good links with Salisbury diocese; staff comment on the positive input from their diocesan adviser in developing the school vision. There is a strong commitment in the school to supporting charities; pupils take an active part in supporting 'their' year group charity. This work is part of the service ethic so cherished across the school.

Beaminster School is proud of its inclusive character. There is on site provision for pupils with complex learning needs and links with a nearby special school. This is seen as an important strength of the school's identity, as something to be celebrated. Pupils are accepting and understanding of diversity and committed to fighting against injustice. The Christian character of the school means that the school looks out and has strong links with local churches and other schools.

Religious Education (RE) is taught with confidence and to a high standard, forming a crucial part of each pupil's education. Lessons are carefully planned, intellectually engaging and challenging. They encourage discussion of 'big' questions and support all pupils in making sustained progress. The teaching team for RE is led well and planning is effective. Staff use lessons to encourage pupils' aspirations and their understanding of the world as well as having a precise focus on the demands of the exam specification. Pupils are articulate and reflective in discussions in lessons, showing their informed understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. Statutory obligations for RE are met. Assessment is regular and feedback given to pupils helps them to understand how to improve. The department uses the curriculum to develop religious literacy. RE is valued and respected as a subject by pupils

and staff, shown by the high proportion of pupils sitting the full GCSE course at the end of key stage 4.

Collective Worship forms a regular part of the school week. Pupils' response is respectful and thoughtful and they value its invitational nature. There are strong links with local clergy, one of whom is a governor and involved in planning collective worship. Pupils know the clergy team well; those who have come to Beaminster School from local church primary schools already know them and value the sense of continuity this provides. Collective worship is explicitly Christian in its message. The 'Thought for the Week' offers pupils an effective opportunity to reflect in different ways. One pupil comments on using this time to reflect on how she can strengthen her friendships. Staff responsible for collective worship discuss spiritual development with pupils. One member of staff talks about reflecting on the beauty of God's creation on a trip to the Jurassic coast. Ties to the wider community are strengthened by the annual carol service held at the local church. Statutory obligations for collective worship are met.

Pupils shine at Beaminster School because of the rich education they are given. They are served by a talented staff team committed to the school's Christian vision for a flourishing community.

Headteacher	Keith Hales
Inspector's name and number	Elisabeth Stevenson 946