



Selwood Anglican/Methodist Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123894
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281589
Inspection dates 14 June 2006 to 15 June 2006
Reporting inspector James Sage HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Berkley Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Frome
Age range of pupils	7 to 13		Somerset BA11 2EF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01373 462798
Number on roll	702	Fax number	01373 465712
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	8 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr Dario Atkinson

Age group 7 to 13	Inspection dates 14 June 2006 - 15 June 2006	Inspection number 281589
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Selwood Anglican/Methodist Voluntary Controlled Middle School is a 9-13 mixed school situated in the small town of Frome. Pupils are drawn largely from the local area and surrounding villages, an environment that is neither strongly advantaged nor disadvantaged in economic terms. The school has 702 pupils on roll with the number falling, due to local demography. The proportion of boys and girls is roughly equal. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) is below the national average, although the school is home to a language resource base, providing specialist provision for pupils with language and communication difficulties; these pupils are drawn from a wide area and there are currently 13 pupils in the unit.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory and this is recognised by the school. Achievements and standards are no better than satisfactory because there is too much variation in the quality of the provision. Although no teaching is unsatisfactory, only half is good or better. Academic monitoring is in the early stages of development and too few teachers use the data available to set high levels of challenge for their pupils. Improvements in developing pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum are not fully implemented, and insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' learning skills. Variations in the quality of middle management means that the range of improvements made to the provision have yet to become embedded in practice across the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money. However, as a result of the strong leadership provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body, there have been improvements in all aspects of the provision over the previous two years. There have been recent significant changes in staffing, including both the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Due to other recent appointments, there is also strong leadership in some other key areas of the school. There is good capacity for further improvement and planning for improvement is good. The school is clear about its current performance, where it needs to be and how it will get there. In some key issues arising from the previous inspection, progress was very slow until the arrival of the current headteacher and deputy headteacher; since this time, progress has been much more rapid.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the quality of middle management to ensure that improvements in the provision are embedded in practice across the school
- ensure that learning objectives are sharper and improve the assessment of pupils' achievement so that they are completely clear about what they need to do to achieve as well as they can
- ensure that teaching is matched better to pupils' abilities and set high levels of challenge for all pupils
- improve pupils' engagement with their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. The attainment on entry to the school in Year 5 and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with expectations, although there is underachievement in writing and in the attainment of high-attaining pupils. The progress made during Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory, but better than that indicated in the value added data for the whole of Key Stage 2, and has improved over the last three years. Both attainment at the end of Year 8 and progress through Years 7 and 8 are at least satisfactory and improving, with some aspects now good. However, highattaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils with LDD in all year groups make good progress, including those in the specialist unit. In both key stages,

although the standards of work in lessons are broadly in line with national expectations, there is significant variability, both across and within subjects. The targets set for pupils are often insufficiently challenging, although there is some good practice, for example in mathematics and in some English lessons. The school makes good use of the analysis of assessment data to monitor performance, although its use by class teachers to set challenging targets for all pupils is not fully embedded in practice across the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual development is good; they are given many opportunities to develop self-esteem. Moral and social development is effectively developed through discussions in tutorial time, and themes for active worship often have a moral element. Teachers provide good role models. Although some subjects contribute to multicultural education, this is underdeveloped. Most pupils enjoy their lessons, are positive about their teachers and proud of their school. Attendance is good. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is usually good, but a number of pupils and parents are concerned about the bullying and racist behaviour that occurs out of lessons. Although the school deals with these effectively, these incidents indicate that more work needs to be done in these areas. Pupils feel that rewards and punishments are not applied consistently. The majority of pupils feel safe and well cared for. They are confident that there are adults to whom they can go with problems. The school is beginning to raise pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles by emphasising healthy eating and daily exercise. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to find out more about, and contribute to, their community by becoming involved with local events, entering competitions and charity fundraising. Plans to develop the skills that contribute to pupils' future economic well-being are at an early stage.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is significant variability in the quality of lessons, both across and within subjects. The school has identified a range of areas that require improvement. Where these have been implemented, teaching is good or better. This is particularly the case regarding improvements made in assessment for learning. This good teaching fully engages all pupils and they respond well. However, in almost half of lessons, these improvements have not been made. In these lessons, the learning objectives are often insufficiently precise and pupils are not clear what is expected from them. Here teachers do not make use of the information available to match the work to the pupils, and the level of challenge, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, is often too low. The feedback to pupils does not provide them with a clear indication of current levels of achievement or what they need to do in order to improve. Opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy

across the curriculum are not fully exploited. The use of ICT to support learning in all subjects is significantly underdeveloped. Much teaching does not encourage pupils' independent learning skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in Key Stages 2 and 3 meets all statutory requirements and there are strengths in the provision for modern foreign languages, drama and music. The school collaborates well with its partner first and upper schools to ensure the curriculum has good progression and meets local needs. Good attention is given to the provision for pupils with LDD. However, the curriculum provision is satisfactory overall as it does not enable all pupils to progress and develop well. Insufficient attention is given to developing literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects in Years 6, 7 and 8. Although the provision for developing pupils' ICT skills through dedicated teaching has improved, the application and further development of these skills in other curriculum areas are underdeveloped. Although a good range of activities is provided for gifted and talented pupils, more attention needs to be given to highattaining pupils in lessons. Pupils are keen to attend the good range of enrichment activities available at lunchtime and after school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are effective systems in place to manage risk assessments. The school takes care to ensure pupils' safety, and child protection procedures are secure; vulnerable pupils are identified and supported well. Good support is provided for pupils with LDD, but pupils at the early stages of speaking English have insufficient support. The school uses outside agencies, staff expertise, other pupils and local projects to help pupils who lack confidence or social skills or have difficulty controlling their behaviour. Academic monitoring is at an early stage of development; some year leaders are beginning to use the data about pupils' achievement and progress to focus guidance to good effect, but this is not uniform across the school. The fortnightly newsletter to parents keeps them well informed about many aspects of school life. Although there are improving methods by which parents can get in touch with the school, a significant number of parents feel that their suggestions and concerns are not given enough consideration.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management have improved substantially, especially since the appointment of the new headteacher, and are now good. The school works well with partner schools to ensure coherence and progression. The governing body, headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear view of the current performance of the school and have taken decisive action to improve it. New appointments have been made and

all staff are required to look at how effectively they teach and manage their areas of responsibility. The pupils' progress and personal development are still not better than satisfactory, but tangible improvements have been made. There is much more effective provision in English and mathematics, resulting in rising standards throughout the school. This is strong evidence that the school is well placed to continue improving, although it is well aware that there are pockets of weaker practice that need to be tackled. Senior managers' good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses stems from a secure analysis of performance data and an extensive programme of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work that is focused well on the actions required to improve practice. The findings help to focus the priorities for the school's improvement plan and improvement planning is now good. The quality of subject leadership is variable. In some cases, change has been enthusiastically embraced, but there remain areas where improvements are slower. A more consistent approach across all subjects to the improvement of teaching and learning is rightly seen by the school as a key to its future success. The governing body has played a significant role in promoting change, by securing changes in the senior management of the school and by keeping a watchful eye on the progress the school is making. Despite a considerable change in membership, governors have continued to hold managers to account while working in a productive partnership with them.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 June 2006 Dear Pupils We enjoyed visiting your school recently and would like to thank you for all the help that you gave us. We particularly enjoyed talking to you and were impressed by the way you made us feel welcome in your school and how sensibly you answered our questions. Our overall judgement is that the school is providing you with a satisfactory standard of education. Most of you are making the progress we expect, although the standard of work you produce in lessons does vary depending on the subject and teacher. The lessons you enjoy are those where the teachers make the work interesting and make sure you know what is expected from you. The teaching in your school is at least satisfactory, and some of it is good, but we think that it would be helpful if teachers made sure that all of you understand how well you are doing and made it clearer what you need to do to improve. This would help teachers match the work better to how well you are doing and help you to become more involved in lessons. The school also needs to do more to develop your skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT through your work in all subjects. We believe that the staff care about your personal development. Most of you feel safe and well cared for and you are confident that there are adults you can go to with problems. Your behaviour in lessons is good. Around the school, most of you also behave well, although some of you tell us that you are occasionally picked on by other pupils. We have made sure that the headteacher is aware of this. The school is beginning to help you to have healthy lifestyles by emphasising healthy eating and daily exercise. You make good use of the opportunities to find out more about and contribute to their community by becoming involved with local events, entering competitions and charity fundraising. Very many of you join in the very wide range of extra-curricular activities the school provides for you. The headteacher is clear about what the school is doing well and where it needs to improve. Changes have already been made that should help you all to make better progress, and others are planned. We wish you the very best for the future. James Sage Her Majesty's Inspector
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