

St Peter and St Paul Church of England Academy

Upper Church Street, Syston, Leicester, LE7 1HR

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, supported by her senior leaders, middle leaders and governors, has been unswerving in her drive to ensure that all pupils succeed and are ready for the next stage of their education when they leave the academy.
- The quality of teaching is good. This is because teachers have high expectations of the pupils and ensure that they are well motivated. Children make a good start in the Reception classes because of skilful teaching and teamwork in well-organised provision.
- Across Key Stage 2 pupils make consistently good and sometimes exceptional progress in mathematics.
- Teachers' marking provides good guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work.
- The academy's promotion of mathematics is very strong. In 2014, more than half of the pupils in Year 6 made more than expected progress in mathematics.
- The academy has been successful in accelerating progress and improving standards in writing, in all classes.
- Behaviour is good throughout the academy. Pupils are polite and respectful. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They work diligently and complete a lot of work in lessons.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work set by teachers is not always at the right level for all groups of pupils in reading and writing.
- At times pupils are not given time to act upon teachers' marking.
- Leaders do not check often enough on how much learning is taking place in the different phases of the academy.
- Parents are sometimes unclear about communication from the headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 learning sessions, four of which were observed jointly with the academy’s leaders. In addition, inspectors looked at the books of many pupils in all year groups in Key Stage 2 to see how well they were improving their writing.
- Formal and informal meetings were held with pupils of different ages. Inspectors also met with academy staff and the Chair of Governors. They spoke with a few parents and the Chief Executive of the Trust.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the academy’s self-evaluation, the academy improvement plan, the record of governing body meetings and the headteacher’s reports to those meetings, and reports made by external advisers. Inspectors also looked at planning files, monitoring records, safeguarding policies, behaviour and attendance records, and the academy’s own attainment and progress summaries.
- Inspectors took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 29 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 reading.

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Pitt

Additional Inspector

Renee Robinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- St Peter and St Paul Church of England Academy converted to become an academy school in March 2013. When its predecessor school, St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2012, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- It is a partner academy within the Leicester Academies Charitable Trust (LACT).
- Pupils attend the academy full time from Reception Year.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is a quarter. This is broadly average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about a fifth. This is a little above average.
- The academy runs a breakfast club and after-hours club. This provision is overseen by the academy's governors and operated by academy staff.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that more is outstanding, and more pupils achieve high standards in reading and writing by:
 - making sure that work is pitched at just the right level to challenge pupils to think really hard
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to act upon the good quality guidance they receive from marking.
- Strengthen the academy's leadership by:
 - ensuring communication between the headteacher and parents is clear
 - checking more frequently on the amount of learning taking place in the different phases of the academy.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is passionate about the academy. She is wholly committed to the progress and welfare of the pupils. She is well supported by an energetic team that provides strong leadership of teaching, and that is determined to improve the academy further. The quality of teaching has improved over the last three years.
- The academy's leaders have successfully created a safe and positive environment for learning in which equal opportunities are promoted and any kind of discrimination is tackled promptly. This is reflected in the calm day-to-day running of the academy and the very positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- Middle leaders work in effective partnerships with senior leaders to accelerate pupils' progress by monitoring learning in their areas of responsibility and by checking the quality of work in pupils' books. However, checks on the amount of learning in lessons are not as frequent in some phases of the academy as they are in others.
- The management of the performance of teachers and support staff is rigorous. Continuity of high quality teaching is held to be paramount. Pay rises and promotion are dependent on the amount of progress pupils are making. Teacher's performance is carefully judged against the national 'Teachers' Standards'.
- The pupil premium is used well to improve the education of disadvantaged pupils. For example, some is used to ensure that pupils do not miss out on extra-curricular activities, while another tranche of the money has been used to recruit additional teaching assistants who are well trained by the academy to provide high quality support for eligible pupils. These and other initiatives have significantly raised the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is used effectively. Skilled sports coaches work with teachers to improve their teaching of physical education. Pupils participate in many sporting and gymnastic activities. Their participation rates are high and this is having a beneficial impact on their fitness and well-being.
- The academy has a well-balanced curriculum. This enables pupils to put into practice the academy's key driving principles of Respect, Honesty, and Perseverance, through the many opportunities they are given to reflect on their learning and their everyday experiences. They can share their thoughts and feelings in what they know to be a safe environment. A wide range of additional activities, including cultural events, residential visits, trips and visitors, successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps them to prepare for life in modern Britain.
- The large majority of parents who completed Parent View support the work of the academy. Some parents expressed concerns about aspects of leadership and management within the academy. While communication between the headteacher and parents sometimes lacks clarity, many parents agree that the leadership of the academy is nonetheless moving the academy forward.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are stringent. Necessary procedures are followed meticulously. All current requirements are met.
- The Leicester Academies Charitable Trust has provided effective support in ensuring that the academy's strengths, for example progress in mathematics, are maintained, while ensuring that its areas for improvement, for example, progress in writing, are addressed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the academy is good. The Chair of the Governing Body sits on the LACT board. Governors come from a wide range of backgrounds, are committed to continuing improvement, and know the strengths and weakness of the academy. The records of governing body meetings clearly

demonstrate the challenge and support they give to the academy. They receive a range of useful information from the academy's leaders about the quality of teaching, and from external advisers from LACT about the academy's overall performance. Governors have effective systems to ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that statutory requirements are met. They have clear oversight of managing the performance of teachers. They ensure that good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance is tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They consistently behave well in lessons, at lunchtimes, and around the building at break times. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the vast majority of their classmates behave well.
- Pupils are polite, friendly, helpful and kind to each other and to visitors. Older pupils help younger ones at lunchtime and at break times. They routinely hold doors open for each other.
- In most lessons, pupils become engrossed in what they are learning about and this helps them to make good progress. They very quickly pick up on teachers' cues for attention, and they can be trusted to tidy away after an activity or move smartly to the next.
- The vast majority of pupils take care and pride in how they present their work. There is very little scribbling out in books. Pupils are proud of their academy.
- Low-level disruption of learning is extremely rare, but sometimes attention can drift when teaching is less demanding than it might be.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is secure. Rigorous safeguarding checks are carried out on all those who work with or have access to the pupils.
- Attendance is consistently at or above the national average, because the academy follows up unexplained absence diligently.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe on social media sites and when using the internet. They know, for example, not to give out any details about themselves and always to be suspicious of those they may communicate with. This is because the academy regularly reinforces these messages.
- Pupils understand the negative consequences of bullying. Those who spoke to inspectors knew of one or two instances that had apparently happened to others. However, they say that bullying is rare and always quickly and firmly dealt with if it does occur.
- The recently formed and well-attended breakfast club, subsidised for disadvantaged pupils, ensures both that they are punctual, and are well prepared for a good day's work. The after-hours club, similarly subsidised, ensures that pupils can take part in clubs, extend their studies or complete their homework.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the Reception classes is good. Teachers concentrate on improving children's communication and language skills by encouraging them to explain their thoughts in sentences, then asking them to write down what they have said. This means that children are increasingly well prepared for Year 1.
- In Key Stage 1 teaching is good overall though there are some inconsistencies in the level of challenge of the work set. When this happens, it is usually because teachers pitch work at a single level. On these occasions, it is too easy for the more able and too hard for the less able. In both cases, learning is slower

than it might be.

- In Key Stage 2, teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding in mathematics. This is reflected in the progress pupils make over time. Evidence seen in pupils' books shows that the concerted focus on improving the quality of pupils' writing is succeeding.
- When teaching is most effective, teachers use their subject knowledge to fire pupils' curiosity into taking the next step. Pupils are able to think things through for themselves as they respond to teachers' prompts and suggestions. This engages the interest of pupils and enables them to aspire to, and reach, the higher levels of attainment, especially in mathematics.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and are given many opportunities to be heard by an adult. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were keen and proud to read to inspectors, and even those just beginning to read, enjoyed the challenge of blending sounds to read a compound word such as 'sailboard', and persisted until they had managed it.
- Pupils enjoy being in the classrooms and are keen to learn. Relationships in every classroom are good. Pupils are given many opportunities to work together to discuss their work, develop their ideas, and take the views of others into account. They cooperate well in solving problems and this deepens their understanding.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is very informative, giving clear guidance on what they need to do to improve. However, there is little evidence, for example through comments or corrections from pupils, to show that pupils have had the time to act upon this good guidance.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively throughout the academy. Their work in classrooms in support of the teacher is often impressive as they help pupils to practise things or go to over something a pupil may not have understood clearly.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the academy, in Reception, with skills that are typically lower than those found in pupils of the same age because of a wide variation in children's experiences before starting school. Though overall attainment can vary markedly from one year to the next, children's skills in language and communication and writing are usually well below what is typical. Because teaching is good in the early years, children make good progress. In 2014, a smaller proportion of children left the Reception classes with a good level of development than nationally.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have been on a rising trend over time. Gaps in attainment between pupils in the academy and other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics are closing because teaching is now settled and more challenging.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have made better overall progress than other pupils nationally for the last three years. In the 2014 national tests, the proportion of pupils making expected progress and more than expected progress in mathematics was high compared to the national average. In reading, it compared favourably with national averages. In writing, it was a little below the national average. The academy has taken concerted action to improve pupils' writing. Extensive inspection evidence confirms that this is the case, and work seen by inspectors in pupils' books shows that the actions taken have been successful in promoting more rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 disadvantaged pupils were half a term ahead of other pupils in the school and attained similar results to other pupils nationally. In reading, they were one and a half terms behind others in the school and two and a half terms behind others nationally. In writing, disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind others in the school and four terms behind others nationally. The good support for these pupils means that gaps are closing throughout the school.

- In 2014, a greater proportion of the most able pupils made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics than the national average. Work set in mathematics consistently makes the most able pupils work things out for themselves. This enables all pupils to make good progress, and almost two thirds to make outstanding progress. However, not enough pupils reached the higher levels made in reading and writing. This is because their teachers do not always provide them with work that challenges them.
- In 2014, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs made similar rates of progress to their classmates. In 2014, several pupils had additional difficulties which presented significant barriers to learning. Most pupils now on the roll of the academy are making good progress because they are closely monitored and supported skilfully.
- Evidence in the academy's tracking system shows that pupils currently on roll are making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors' observations of writing in pupils' books confirms the academy's records. The academy's investment in reading materials is encouraging pupils to develop a love of reading from an early age.

The early years provision

is good

- The quality of the new leadership and teaching in the Reception classes is good. Children benefit from a range of well-planned activities, some led by the teacher to stimulate curiosity, and others chosen by themselves to extend their interest. This ensures that learning is good and that any gaps in children's knowledge and understanding are quickly filled.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development in 2014 was below the national average. The work in children's learning journals, supported by comprehensive and convincing assessment and tracking, shows that most children currently in the Reception Year are already ahead of the 2014 cohort's finishing point.
- Children settle quickly into the routines of working successfully together. They behave well and are thoughtful and considerate to each other. This is due to the clear and persistent guidance they receive from adults. This lays very solid foundations for the good behaviour that pupils display throughout later years in the academy.
- Children have access to a wide range of learning opportunities and activities, both indoors and outdoors. Adults engage purposefully with the children during their play, asking them to explain what they think. This extends their vocabulary and raises their confidence and ability to express their thoughts and ideas in both words and writing. This ensures that learning moves forward consistently well.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139349
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	448004

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Stanford
Headteacher	Fiona J Buchan
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	0116 2607577
Fax number	0116 2697301
Email address	fbuchan@spspacademy.org

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