

Stretton Church of England Academy

Stretton Avenue, Willenhall, Coventry, CV3 3AE

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The very strong leadership of the headteacher has successfully transformed this academy. She has driven improvements in the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement. Other leaders and governors contribute strongly to achieving these priorities.
- Senior and subject leaders share the headteacher's high expectations. They make good use of information about pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that all pupils achieve exceptionally well.
- The governing body is highly effective in supporting and challenging leaders. Governors make an outstanding contribution to the success of the academy.
- The academy's core values, particularly resilience and perseverance, are evident in all aspects of its work. These contribute to pupils' outstanding behaviour and the rapid improvement in their achievement.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their academy. They show a love of learning and a willingness to engage in the wide range of clubs and activities.
- The quality of teaching over time is outstanding, leading to exceptional achievement by pupils. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils make excellent progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. At the end of Year 6 they achieve standards that are ahead of national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making the same outstanding progress as that of their classmates.
- Strengths in subjects such as religious education and physical education enhance the quality of the curriculum. However, the checking of pupils' progress is not yet as rigorous in other subjects as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The academy works closely with parents and external agencies to ensure the safety of all pupils. Pupils learn well how to keep themselves safe in the academy, outside and on the internet.
- There is good early years provision and, as a result, children get off to a good start to their education. They have yet to make the same outstanding progress seen in other years.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 15 lessons across the academy, including in the early years provision. Nine of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. The inspectors also looked at pupils' work in their books.
- As well as conversations in lessons and at social times, a discussion was held with a group of pupils about the quality of their educational experience and the standard of behaviour in the academy.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, representatives of the multi-academy trust and parents of pupils at the academy.
- The inspectors took account of the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the 31 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors examined: the academy's information on pupils' progress; its evaluation of how well it is doing; its records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and those relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Richard Boswell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Needham

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy was established in April 2013. It is sponsored and managed by The Diocese of Coventry Multi-Academy Trust.
- The academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, at about a third, is above the national average.
- Over a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language, a proportion which is above the national average. Some are at an early stage in learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The academy runs a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body. The after-school club is privately run and is not reported in this inspection.
- Pupils attending the academy's early years provision do so full time.
- There have been significant changes in the staffing of the academy since it was established.
- The academy is a member of the Willenhall Network, a group of local primary and secondary schools.
- In the last 18 months, the academy has received support from a National Leader of Education based at Whitley Academy, Coventry.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the successful steps already taken to improve the progress children make in Reception, particularly their understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics).
- Complete the work the academy has started in applying the same rigorous checking of pupils' progress in all other subjects that is already evident in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- At the time the academy was established, in April 2013, all aspects of its work were improving but from the lowest of starting points. The headteacher has secured a remarkable transformation for the pupils of this academy. This has meant a culture of rapid and sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and in pupils' behaviour. This in turn has led to pupils making outstanding progress and attaining standards ahead of the national average when they leave the school.
- Everyone shares the headteacher's high expectations for all pupils and a determination to give them the widest possible range of learning opportunities within the academy and beyond. The headteacher has the full support of governors in ensuring that pupils receive the best possible quality of teaching. Senior leaders have developed and refined the most effective systems for meeting the specific needs of the academy's pupils. Consequently, all pupils in the main school achieve exceptionally well.
- All who work at the academy are committed to maintaining outstanding behaviour and safety. This priority creates extremely positive attitudes to learning and an environment in which pupils make outstanding progress. The academy's exceptional track record of improvement indicates a capacity to improve further.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by governors, have relentlessly pursued the best interests of the pupils by tackling any underperformance in the quality of teaching. Very well targeted professional development, the use of external expertise and best practice from other schools have contributed to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching. These, in turn, have resulted in the pupils' improved results in reading, writing and mathematics. However, while making good progress, the youngest children are not yet receiving the consistently high quality of teaching that other pupils experience.
- Leaders of subjects and standards are highly effective. For example, the academy recognised that boys' reading was relatively weaker than other skills and applied effective measures to ensure much better progress and strong improvement in this skill. Academy leaders have fostered and promoted the current strength and popularity of reading in the academy. Consequently, all pupils achieve very well in reading.
- Leaders and governors, through careful and considered spending of the pupil premium funding, have boosted the performance of the most disadvantaged pupils in the academy. They have also had a significant impact on the exceptional achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those at an early stage of learning English. As a result, the academy ensures equal opportunity for all groups of pupils and vigorously tackles any discrimination.
- The many highly productive links with the Multi-Academy Trust have assisted the transformation of the academy. Regular visits from a representative of the trust focused on improvements in the academy and collaboration with other academies in the trust and have helped to accelerate the pace of necessary changes.
- The academy's links with other schools locally are also beneficial, including establishing close ties with pre-school provision and a smooth transition to secondary school. The headteacher has received valuable support and guidance from a National Leader of Education at Whitley Academy, Coventry. External support has contributed considerably to the academy's rapid improvement.
- The academy maintains its links with the local authority and, in addition to administrative support, benefits from the experience and expertise of highly effective advisers. Local authority support has a positive impact on the academy's outstanding performance.
- The academy is developing its own approach to the assessment of pupils' progress. This approach effectively combines aspects of the National Curriculum, commercially available schemes of assessment and the academy's own systems. Teachers use a good range of evidence, such as, test results, observations and scrutiny of pupils' books to inform their judgements. This results in pupils, staff and

parents knowing how well each pupil is doing and the best next steps in their learning. There is rapid identification and support for pupils who have special educational needs. However, the rigorous practice in the assessment of pupils' reading, writing and mathematics has yet to be fully extended to all other subject areas.

- All staff apply the academy's policies with great consistency, particularly in regard to the management of behaviour and promoting positive attitudes to learning. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged by the effective use of the physical education and sports premium funding. For example, pupils regularly compete in local competitions to a high standard, particularly in football, and all groups benefit from the use of this funding and from professional coaching. The use of the outdoor area and the academy's participation in 'Forest Schools' activities also contribute to helping pupils, individually, to overcome obstacles in their learning.
- The academy's meticulous safeguarding of pupils is exemplary. Leaders and managers check every detail and any concerns, however small, are reported by well-trained staff and swiftly followed up. The most-vulnerable pupils are closely monitored and there are regular opportunities for these pupils to have their voices heard. The care provided for each individual is, consequently, exemplary.
- Pupils are fully engaged by the range of subjects taught. They are encouraged to make links between different areas of knowledge and understanding of the wider world, particularly in religious education. Pupils' books show how well they use literacy and numeracy skills in scientific or historical investigations. The broad curriculum also promotes British values of tolerance, respect for the rule of law and the protection of liberty which, combined with the academy's core values of resilience and perseverance in the face of difficulty, prepare pupils very well for secondary school and for life in modern British society.
- Teachers are skilled in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons and a wide range of other activities. Pupils make regular visits to churches, mosques, temples, local galleries and museums and, consequently, gain an understanding of cultures and beliefs different from their own.
- Assemblies, educational visits and academy clubs all strongly promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. What 'doing the right thing' might be in any given situation is debated and contemplated from Reception to Year 6. The academy's breakfast club provides good opportunities for pupils to do additional work or to prepare quietly for the start of the academy day. The result is that pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they treat others with respect.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an excellent understanding of the performance of the academy and are ambitious to improve it further. Following training and development of their skills, they are able to offer a robust challenge and strong support to the headteacher.
 - Governors visit the academy frequently and know its strengths and areas for improvement. They have a very clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the importance of it being of high quality. They rigorously check how teachers' performance is managed and they have helped to tackle any underperformance.
 - The governors' analysis of the academy's data on pupils' progress and attainment is sophisticated and they use the information to check that funding achieves the best results for pupils. They check closely the impact of use of the pupil premium and of sports and physical education funding to confirm the benefit to pupils. There is financial expertise within the governing body to assist in this process.
 - Governors work closely with parents and seek out their views on a regular basis. They actively promote the academy's values and ensure that British values are a part of the academy's curriculum. They are alert to dangers of extremism. Their recent visits to the academy have involved: work scrutiny with a focus on books; a cultural diversity day; and focused discussions with groups of pupils.
 - All legal requirements for safeguarding are met and governors are diligent in checking records and procedures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their own and their academy's achievements and they are eager to share and celebrate their successes with others.
- Pupils are very polite and friendly and help each other in the playground and in the classroom. They take their responsibilities very seriously as class monitors or as elected members of the academy council. The wide range of sporting activities for all pupils offers opportunities for developing leadership skills and promoting teamwork.
- There are many opportunities for pupils' voices to be heard. Pupils have played an important part in establishing the academy's core values. They are tolerant and know that it is not right to use unkind words about others. Pupils are clear that homophobic or racist language, for example, has no place in their academy.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality have steadily improved and is in line with the national average. Attendance has improved through working closely with parents, who are increasingly involved in the life of the academy. The number of temporary exclusions from the academy for incidents of poor behaviour has declined significantly and are now extremely rare.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff are meticulously checked prior to appointment and the building is secure from intruders. Visitors are closely checked before being admitted.
- Pupils feel very safe in the academy. They trust the staff to help them if they have any concerns and staff are vigilant in looking for any signs of unhappiness or distress. Pupils are clear that bullying is a rare occurrence and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. They are aware of the dangers of cyber bullying and of protecting their identities online.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe outside the academy through talks by visitors, such as the police, and through educational visits.
- The academy is meticulous in its record keeping and follows up any incidents very thoroughly. The academy works very closely with external agencies to provide as complete a package of care and support for pupils as possible.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The rapid improvements made by senior leaders and governors since the academy was established ensure that pupils experience an outstanding quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils respond very well to teachers and show great enjoyment in learning. They get straight down to work from the moment they enter the classroom and are fully engaged in their learning. Pupils, from Reception onwards, are familiar with the academy's clear and consistent routines and are eager to follow teachers' instructions. Relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils are mutually respectful.
- Teachers have the highest expectations for the progress of all pupils, while being aware of the different needs that different groups may have. These include disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teachers freely offer praise whenever the opportunity arises and so boost pupils' self-esteem and encourage perseverance and resilience.
- Teachers carefully assess their pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics and adapt their teaching to ensure that concepts and skills are fully understood. The same rigour in assessing progress is evident in the teaching of religious education and physical education, but is only beginning to be applied to other subjects.

- Teachers work closely with support staff to provide work that is matched to pupils' abilities and that offers a high level of challenge, particularly for the most able. This includes homework that inspires and motivates pupils to explore and research a topic on their own. Pupils are frequently encouraged to share their work with their parents, who are very positive about their children's progress.
- Teachers show excellent subject knowledge and skilfully question pupils to assess their learning and understanding throughout lessons. They also provide a stimulating range of resources to support learning and give pupils plenty of opportunities to share their ideas and to learn from each other.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are at an early stage in learning English make excellent progress. Teachers ensure that there are no barriers to learning for these pupils and that their English language skills are effectively developed.
- All teachers consistently apply the academy's approach to marking, which is straightforward and effective. This means that pupils are completely clear about what they need to do to improve their work and are regularly given time to do so.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Many children enter Reception with skills and understanding in their language development that are below those typical for their age. They leave the academy at the end of Year 6 with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are ahead of those found nationally. This represents outstanding progress.
- In 2014, every pupil left Key Stage 2 having made, at least, the nationally expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most made good progress in all three subjects.
- As a result of greatly improved teaching, the progress of all groups of pupils currently in the academy in reading, writing and mathematics has shown exceptional improvement in the last two years. All pupils are, currently, making outstanding progress.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding. There was a gap of around half a term between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 and other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. The gap with other pupils in the academy was around two terms in the three subjects. This attainment gap was because disadvantaged pupils' progress was not, then, exceptional.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has accelerated because teaching has improved and these pupils' learning needs are much better supported. As a result of very well targeted use of pupil premium funding, the current progress of disadvantaged pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 is outstanding and they are attaining as well as their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same excellent progress as that of their classmates. This is because their needs are identified early and they are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Other groups of pupils, including those of minority ethnic heritage and those who speak English as an additional language, make similarly rapid progress.
- In Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved at a faster rate than nationally and they are in line with the national average. This is because improved teaching has led to pupils making rapid progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils achieve very well in reading. However, many pupils struggle with language and communication skills in their first few years in the school. Their initial difficulties were reflected in the results of the phonics (sounds that letters make) screening check in 2014, which were behind those in most schools. Although children make good progress in Reception, and this accelerates in Year 1, there is insufficient time to enable them to attain more in reading skills by the time they do the screening check.

- The most-able pupils achieve exceptionally well. In 2014, the proportion of these pupils attaining results of Level 5 or above in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was ahead of results in most schools in reading, writing, mathematics and in the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some individuals with special educational needs and some disadvantaged pupils have been among those achieving the higher levels.

The early years provision

is good

- Children achieve well, often from low starting points in their use of English and their knowledge and understanding of the world. These weaknesses are swiftly addressed by the good quality of teaching they receive. However, the early years provision is not outstanding because teaching and children's response to learning, although good, do not enable them to make the excellent progress they go on to do in Years 1 to 6.
- Teachers keep a detailed check on the progress that children are making and provide strategies to help individuals and groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. While the children make good progress, the proportion reaching a good level of development by the end of the year is below that found nationally, although the proportion who do so is rising.
- Teachers know the children well and have increasing expectations of what they can achieve. The leader of the early years provision has successfully created an environment in which children cooperate in learning together. This results in them making good progress in developing their personal and social skills. As in the rest of the academy, praise and carefully targeted questions are used effectively to boost confidence and to stimulate children's curiosity, particularly of the most able.
- Children are currently making good progress in recognising letters and the sounds they make (phonics). However, their skills have not developed rapidly enough for them to achieve above-average standards by the time they take the phonics screening check in Year 1.
- Children's behaviour is good. They quickly learn to take turns and to share, and show their growing understanding of the academy's values. They learn about other faiths and cultures, and develop tolerance and understanding of the diversity of modern Britain. They enjoy their time outdoors, showing resilience to wet and wind and a good knowledge of how to stay safe.

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	139384
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	449863

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Brookes
Headteacher	Sarah Bates
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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