

# St Gregory's Catholic Academy

Spring Garden Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 2QN

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The executive headteacher provides outstanding and visionary leadership. She is extremely well supported by the head of school and assistant headteachers who share a commitment to providing high-quality care and education for pupils and families.
- Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points. The large majority reach or exceed age-related standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers are provided with excellent support and training. This has led to considerable improvements and outstanding teaching.
- The youngest children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes as a result of outstanding teaching, strong leadership and highly effective support for children and their families.
- Staff morale is very high, reflecting how well staff are supported, trained and developed in their teaching and support roles.
- Teachers' accurate assessments and very well planned support ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress.
- The school goes above and beyond what is required to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Governance is strong. Governors (the academy committee) share the executive headteacher's and senior leaders' high aspirations. They are skilled, knowledgeable and rigorous in holding leaders and staff to account.
- Most pupils achieve exceptionally well in key stage 1, particularly in early reading, phonics and writing. This lays strong foundations for developing literacy skills in key stage 2. However, some of the most able children who leave the early years could still be doing better in reading and mathematics in key stage 1.
- The staff provide exceptional teaching and support for disadvantaged pupils. National assessments show that disadvantaged pupils make more progress than pupils who are not disadvantaged, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are extremely well behaved, respectful and polite. There are excellent relationships between pupils, parents, governors and staff. The school's values and ethos make a strong contribution to improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides a stimulating and varied curriculum. Lessons and extended learning, such as out-of-school clubs, music, creative arts and sport, enliven pupils, who thoroughly enjoy coming to school each day.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Build on the excellent start made in the early years by checking that the most able children, including the most able who are disadvantaged, all reach the higher standard in reading and mathematics in key stage 1.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The executive headteacher and head of school are highly effective and inspirational leaders. They have steadfastly and expertly led the school extremely well since its previous inspection, laying strong foundations for continuous improvement.
- The executive headteacher believes very passionately in what she describes as 'transformational leadership'. Senior and middle leaders have blossomed under the direction and stewardship of both the executive headteacher and head of school. Staff morale is very high and the whole school community shares common high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Leaders at all levels develop as skilful professionals, many of whom go on to external promotion. Newly qualified or relatively inexperienced teachers and support staff rapidly improve their professional skills and competencies under the expert leadership of senior and middle leaders. Ongoing professional development such as this is an outstanding feature of an aspirational leadership team.
- School improvement has been based on accurate evaluations and robust assessments of teachers' performance and pupils' learning and progress. The school development plan sets out very clearly the right priorities for leaders, governors and staff to focus on. Regular reviews, book trawls, visits to lessons and progress reviews of pupils' performance are carried out. These routine checks make sure that any pupils who are at risk of falling behind are identified and interventions put in place to avoid any underachievement. Leaders, rightly, recognise that some of the most able children leaving the early years could still be doing better to reach high standards by the end of Year 1 and Year 2.
- Training and professional development are core strengths of this outstanding school. In addition to routine lesson visits, the executive headteacher has been innovative in introducing video conferencing capability and resources to observe teaching and learning in classrooms. Teachers and support staff are fully supportive of this practice, which was recently introduced to enhance still further the way staff learn from each other and share best practice.
- The previous inspection in 2012 also judged that there was outstanding leadership and management. Leaders, governors and staff are never complacent though. They have continued to secure more improvements to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Robust evaluations of pupils' progress and staff performance, as well as substantial improvements and additions to the curriculum, are having an outstanding impact on pupils' academic and personal development.
- In addition to leaders' well-devised adaptations to the new national curriculum without levels, there is a common commitment to preparing pupils for citizenship and the next stage of their education. 'We are determined to provide pupils with the life skills they need for the future,' explained the executive headteacher. The outstanding range of experiences and extended curriculum activities planned for pupils go above and beyond what would normally be expected of most primary schools.
- The curriculum is outstanding. A few of a wealth of examples include pupils engaging in national public speaking and debating events with remarkable success. Older pupils recently attended a conference and organised a presentation to a host of business

leaders. In one classroom there is a role play 'customer service desk' where pupils learn about public relations and communication protocols in the world of work. Pupils develop strong communication skills and become confident, polite, mature and articulate young people who are more than ready for secondary education and beyond. Inspectors were very impressed with the articulate way some older pupils explained their educational experiences by referring to their learning profiles, which are class pictorial and written records of the range of lessons, experiences, visits and curriculum projects that pupils experience right across the school.

- The school's curriculum is skilfully tailored to meet the needs of each year group. It includes stimulating projects and activities, such as interesting motivational themes for pupils like 'let's go wild' outdoor projects and educational visits to France, theatres and the Black Country Museum. Pupils experience a wealth of extra-curricular sport, creative and performing arts, including musical ensembles and religious observance on special 'Holy Days of Obligation' as part of the school's commitment to the Catholic faith. Pupils learn to speak French and Spanish and there are many opportunities for academic extension activities outside of the school day through workshops, including 'watch me learn' sessions for parents and pupils. Senior leaders and staff have excellent oversight of curriculum plans to make sure that pupils cover core skills in all subjects and have access to extended learning which helps them to excel and reach high standards.
- The staff make an outstanding contribution to pupils' welfare and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 'Learning is really fun and challenging,' enthused one pupil who, along with a group of Year 6 pupils, explained to an inspector why they enjoy their mathematics work so much. High-quality displays of fine art, sculptures, models, as well as factual and story writing adorn every corridor and classroom wall. Leaders and staff have created a very positive and productive climate for learning throughout the school.
- The school is successful in promoting a strong emphasis on British values of tolerance, respect for democracy and on equality. This prepares pupils very well for life in modern multicultural Britain. Pupils have many opportunities to debate and present their work and progress to others in lessons and during special presentation events or democratic debates on polarised issues, for example whether homework is a good or a bad thing, or the merits and disadvantages of wearing school uniform. On the latter debate, pupil consensus in most classes fell in favour of uniform as pupils also demonstrated and stated that they are very proud of their uniform and wear it with pride.
- The primary school physical education sports premium fund is used extremely well to provide an outstanding range of opportunities and resources for pupils to engage in team games, sports and activities that promote healthy and active lifestyles. In addition to specialised coaching from professional athletes, extra-curricular sport is promoted very well and attracts large interest as participation rates are high. These include traditional competitive sports and team games, dance, multi-sports activities and even, more unusually, fencing, yoga and archery. There are strong links with the partner high school in the MAC which enables pupils to use more expert facilities and resources. The most remarkable aspect of this strong curricular provision is the input of pupils who have a large say in the organisation and choices of activities each year.
- Pupil premium funding is used highly effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils

make outstanding progress over time from their different starting points. Support work and interventions are devised for any pupils who find learning difficult. This ensures that these pupils catch up quickly.

- Special educational needs funding is also used effectively and ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well.
- Leaders and governors have earned a strong reputation across the local authority for their high-quality skills in training and staff development. The executive headteacher, head of school and assistant headteachers are all specialist leaders in different subjects and fields of education and are often invited by the local authority to deliver training and to moderate the work of other schools. The national college for teaching and leadership has granted leaders the accreditation of becoming a 'lead teaching school' across the MAC as well as the local authority.
- The school's Catholicity and core values guide leaders, staff and governors through common and shared values, continually striving towards excellence for all through partnership and respect for everyone's beliefs, values and customs. The school's motto and part of its mission statement rightly summarises this simply as, 'service before self'.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is strong and the academy committee (governing body) is skilfully led by a highly competent and experienced chair.
- Governors keep in regular touch with the school's leaders so they can hold them and the staff team to account for standards achieved and staff performance. They are diligent when recruiting new staff and monitor closely the impact of leaders' efforts to improve and train staff, never accepting anything less than good practice.
- Governors are strong leaders who ensure that newly appointed teachers are supported, trained, monitored and challenged to continually improve their practice.
- The curriculum committee scrutinises the performance and achievement of disadvantaged pupils to make sure that any differences between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally diminishes.
- The results of national assessments and leaders' assessment information enable governors to see how well particular groups of pupils are achieving.
- The governing body keeps in regular touch with the multi-academy company and there are effective arrangements in place to share good practice across the MAC schools.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The leadership team and governors have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and that staff recruitment and vetting are rigorous.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff and governors understand their roles in relation to child protection procedures. They know what to do and who to ask to seek advice about the safety and welfare of pupils, and on referring concerns on to

designated staff within the school, the local authority and NSPCC.

- Both governors and staff keep up to date with legal requirements and undertake regular reviews of the school's child protection and safeguarding policies. The safety and well-being of children in the early years (Nursery and Reception classes) is very well managed and the early years welfare requirements are fully met.
- Pupils and the parents spoken to by inspectors were unanimous in their belief that pupils are safe in school. Pupils say that the staff and other pupils make them feel very safe, valued and secure. The before- and after-school clubs comply fully with their responsibilities to safeguard and care for pupils. The staff are vigilant, including the family support staff and home-school links manager.
- The executive headteacher and governors have put in place very safe parking arrangements for parents at the start and end of each school day. This is supervised by a school warden and parents are very pleased with this highly organised and effective routine, which ensures that parents and carers can drop off and collect their children safely to and from school.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Outstanding

- Pupils benefit enormously from outstanding teaching and consistently effective classroom practice right across the school and early years. Assessment information, pupils' work and observations of lessons show that the teaching across the school is ambitious, well organised and highly effective. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress in all year groups.
- Teachers often use excellent questioning skills that stimulate discussion and enable pupils to think for themselves. Pupils enjoy thinking creatively and sharing ideas about their written work. For example, pupils in key stage 1 discussed and shared ideas about which words and phrases were the most appropriate to connect and extend into a sentence. In Year 6, pupils researched information about Tudor times to map out particular characteristics that would help them write empathetic and descriptive accounts of that period.
- Leaders and staff use assessment information very well to ensure that there is a good balance of whole class teaching and targeted support for pupils taught in small groups. Specialised intervention programmes are carefully tailored to meet the needs of specific groups, which are particularly effective for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to achieve exceptionally well. In addition, resources are carefully deployed and used very effectively to support pupils with physical disabilities, such as inclined desktops or computer tablets to help pupils with a visual impairment to read. Pupils in the early stages of learning English receive well-focused support, including bilingual intervention and opportunities to improve their knowledge of letter sounds and words when reading aloud to an adult.
- The teaching of reading in the early years and key stage 1 is highly effective. In particular, the phonics screening test results show that both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils make very good progress improving their basic reading skills. Across the school, pupils enjoy reading both fiction and non-fiction and have many opportunities to use the school library; many often visit the local library.

- Teachers allow pupils to explain their ideas or set out how they intend to solve a problem in mathematics. This is consistent and common practice in lessons, which is having a significant effect on developing pupils' speaking skills and vocabulary, as well as improving pupils' self-confidence to persevere and be resilient with their learning.
- Pupils' workbooks and assessment information, as well as the lessons observed during the inspection, show that the teaching of mathematics is very effective. Pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are improving rapidly across the school because teachers provide ample opportunities for pupils to think logically and apply the most efficient methods of calculation. Pupils say they enjoy learning their mathematics because it is challenging and as one pupil put it, 'It is like trying to solve puzzles, which I particularly enjoy doing.'
- Regular assessments, reviews and analyses of pupils' progress enable teachers to identify pupils who may be falling behind. There is now scope to improve this further by checking more frequently to identify children in the early years who are capable of reaching high standards. The most recent national assessments in 2016 identified that a few children did not attain the higher national curriculum standard in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 1. However, leaders have recognised this. Senior leaders improved the way assessments are checked by asking key questions through their analysis of pupils' progress to help teachers focus more on specific groups, such as the most able pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Day-to-day life across the school is calm, friendly, exciting and enjoyable for pupils. Pupils care for each other and are friendly, polite and courteous to others. It is usual to see very happy and contented pupils who trust and respect the adults caring for them, including supervisory staff at lunchtime, family liaison staff during the day and the adults who run the before- and after-school care clubs.
- Pupils respond very well to learning in lessons and the outstanding opportunities they have to research using books, encyclopaedias and computer tablets. Leaders and staff are very inventive with the school's curriculum as they manage to incorporate and teach pupils important British values, such as respect for law, democracy and tolerance of all faiths, customs and traditions that exist in and beyond the United Kingdom. These values are clearly reflected in pupils' work, such as the recent study of the current and 44th president of the United States of America, Barack Obama, as part of Black History Month. Pupils are very proud of the many roles and contributions they make to their school as elected school councillors, ambassadors, house captains, librarians and peer mediators. These opportunities make a significant contribution to their personal and spiritual, moral and social development.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is excellent. They are systematically taught how to deal with bullying, internet safety and any form of intimidation. Pupils learn a lot about staying safe and healthy. Pupils are very clear about what to do if they have concerns. For example, pupils can explain the precautions they need to take

when using computers, including the use of the internet or text messaging on mobile devices. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. Pupils confirmed that the few incidents, like name-calling or when friends fall out, are dealt with very well by specially trained pupil peer mediators and staff.

- Pupils are energised by the range of subjects and topics they study and the activities and visits provided by the school. The school's indoor and outdoor environment and resources are well maintained, clean and stimulating which is appreciated and respected by pupils. They willingly offer to tidy up after eating their lunchtime meal or sandwich and there is no litter or unkempt area of the school, reflecting how well pupils care for their school community.
- Leaders and staff are successful in tackling any form of discrimination in a cohesive and supportive school community. Special topics, cultural and religious festivals and celebrations, and the wide range of educational visits or visitors, improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different cultural, religious and ethnic traditions that exist in the United Kingdom and beyond. These activities make a very positive contribution to pupils' cultural development.
- Pupils at St Gregory's learn and grow into confident, well-rounded and positive members of their community and are a credit to their parents, carers and the school.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils form positive and trusting relationships with other pupils and staff. They are attentive and exceptionally well behaved in lessons and at other times. It is very rare to see any pupils disrupting lessons or interrupting the work of other pupils. Pupils are keen to answer questions, share ideas or contribute to discussions in lessons. During a stimulating and thought-provoking writing lesson, for example, pupils in Year 6 offered to help others by contributing ideas so they could improve their sentences. This is a common feature of teaching and learning across the school. Pupils empathise with others and try to help if they get stuck rather than rely on an adult to intervene. This independence and self-confidence is an outstanding feature of pupils' behaviour across the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in high attendance rates. There is very effective monitoring and supervision of pupils and families who arrive at school by car. Leaders and governors have arranged for supervised parking by appointing a school warden who ensures safe access and exit to and from the school. This is also helping the local community as it reduces significantly any traffic congestion around the school's busy main roads and ensures that pupils and families are safe.
- Leaders and staff are vigilant and keep regular contact with families to ensure that pupils are safe and attend punctually. The work of the family support team, which includes home-school liaison staff and parenting mentors, is very effective. This highly skilled and competent team are visible and keep in regular touch with pupils and their families. Learning mentors provide highly effective nurture sessions for pupils who find learning difficult or who have emotional and behavioural needs. Leaders and support staff carry out daily checks if pupils do not attend to ensure that pupils are safe when



not in school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress over time, taking into account pupils' different starting points. As the school has grown in numbers over the last four years, a significant proportion of pupils have joined the school at times other than the usual starting point in the early years.
- The national test results for Year 6 pupils in 2015 showed that pupils reached well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The most recent national assessments (2016) and test results cannot be compared with previous test results because the assessment criteria are different, following recent revisions to the national curriculum. However, the large majority of pupils reached or exceeded the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics and this represents outstanding progress in relation to their different starting points. The school met the national floor standards in 2015, which were the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- In key stage 1, standards are improving very well and pupils make very good progress that builds on the excellent start made in the early years. In 2015, national tests showed that the overall attainment of pupils was in line with the national average. This represented good progress at that time, although some of the most able children leaving the early years did not reach the higher standards in reading and mathematics. Although not comparable, in 2016, assessment results show encouraging signs of sustained improvement in both Year 1 and Year 2. This is because the proportion of pupils in Year 2 last year attaining the new higher measure of 'learning at greater depth' was in line with national figures in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. For these pupils, who are currently in Year 3, this represents good progress in relation to their starting points at the end of Reception.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to provide support for disadvantaged pupils. The school's accurate assessments show that disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as that of other pupils. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in all year groups make outstanding progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Support work and interventions in lessons, particularly English and mathematics lessons where pupils are organised into groups of similar ability, are very effective in helping pupils who find learning difficult to catch up with others. Last year's national assessments (2016) showed that the disadvantaged pupils made outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 is highly effective, resulting in the large majority pupils reaching the required standard in Year 1 and all pupils reaching the standard by the end of Year 2. This lays secure foundations for early reading and literacy by the time pupils start key stage 2.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language make rapid progress, building on the very good foundations laid in the early years and key stage 1. It is significant to note that approximately one in six pupils who join the school have little or no spoken

English. By the time they finish key stage 1 and key stage 2, the large majority of these pupils reach the standards expected for their age.

- Leaders and teachers use assessment information regularly to check that pupils are on course to reach their expected attainment targets. Regular half-termly progress reviews enable leaders to see if, for example, the most able pupils are acquiring skills and knowledge in greater depth. The most recent national assessments in 2016 show that the vast majority of pupils achieve very well, although some of the most able children who left the early years two years ago did not reach the higher standard in reading and mathematics. More attention is now needed to make sure that all of the most able children leaving the early years reach high standards in reading and mathematics in key stage 1.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- The children make very good progress in early phonics, reading, writing and mathematics, which prepares them well for Year 1. Typically, one in six children join the early years with little or no spoken English. These children soon engage with adults and other children, learning songs, nursery rhymes and traditional stories. The children soon pick up and use conversational English during the varied and stimulating indoor and outdoor activities which they experience with their classmates.
- Most three- and four-year-old children start school with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. Outstanding teaching and strong pastoral support for both children and families in the Nursery and Reception classes are getting the youngest children off to an excellent start. The integration of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective, enabling these children to also make outstanding progress.
- Outcomes are exceptional. Three quarters of the children reach a good level of development overall. In addition, the large majority, four in five children, reach a good level of development in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they start Year 1. These assessments represent exceptional rates of progress considering children's starting points.
- Excellent use is made of additional pupil premium funding for children from disadvantaged families. The combined efforts of teachers, teaching support assistants and the family liaison team enable disadvantaged children to make outstanding progress, particularly in communication skills such as listening and speaking with understanding. The proportion of children, including those who are disadvantaged and who are learning to speak English as an additional language, reaching a good level of development in these communication skills is in line with the national average.
- The children in both the Nursery and Reception classes play safely and settle into school quickly. They are enthusiastic about school and learning and inspectors could see this as they arrived with smiles on their faces and keen to take off their coats and empty bags ready for school.
- Children engage in, and develop, communication and mathematics skills in role play activities, such as dressing up, gathering and counting shapes, and handling utensils skilfully in outdoor wet and dry areas when experimenting with tactile resources such

as water, sand, dough and rice. Children enjoy problem-solving, such as making a 'pretend bonfire' outdoors and some children remembered, 'We need to keep everyone away to keep safe' so placed plastic cones around the pile of sticks ('the fire'), replicating what adults would do to keep people away from harm.

- The teaching and support provided for children in both the Nursery and Reception classes is of high quality. Many children, for example, were keen to point out to an inspector what they were doing when writing letters on behalf of 'Goldilocks' to 'the three bears' apologising for 'breaking the baby bear's chair'. Similarly, in the Nursery, children are already forming letters and writing accurately by holding pencils and crayons correctly; 'Look, I can pinch the pencil between my fingers like this,' stated one child confidently and enthusiastically. Children share and communicate with each other with increasing confidence, skill and enjoyment. They confidently read and write independently. For example, in one of the Reception classes, children read from a non-fiction book about turtles and explained to an inspector they love to read at home and change their books regularly. It is very clear that the teaching of early reading and the teaching of phonics is highly effective as most children are already starting to read independently in the Reception Year and writing with increasing confidence and skill.
- Adults engage with both children and their parents or carers so that early relationships with families are strong and trusting. Home visits are carefully planned before children start school to make sure that parents are familiar with the school's expectations and that there is a smooth transition for the children when they first come to the Nursery or one of two Reception classes.
- The leadership and management of the early years are very effective in providing children with an outstanding start to their schooling. The staff liaise with other early years settings within the school's partners in the MAC and across the local authority to undertake and moderate accurate assessments of children's needs and abilities. Assessments are regular and help to monitor how well each individual child is doing, as well as providing parents with clear evidence of their children's progress and development in the 'learning journeys' (ongoing written and pictorial evidence kept in books).

## School details

Unique reference number	140297
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10019489

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Chadwick
Executive headteacher	Margaret Yates
Telephone number	01782 235340
Website	<a href="http://www.saintgregorys.org.uk">www.saintgregorys.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@stgca.org.uk">office@stgca.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	9–10 January 2012

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The executive headteacher and the academy committee (the equivalent to a governing body) manage two of the five schools in the multi-academy company (MAC), the 'All Saints Collegiate'. There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection, many of these due to staff being promoted to positions in other schools and the recruitment of newly qualified teachers.
- The school is one of five in the MAC and is the lead teaching school approved by the national college for teaching and leadership. The executive headteacher is a national leader in education. The head of school, two assistant headteachers and the executive

school business manager are specialist leaders of education.

- The school met floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- This is a large primary school. School numbers are growing so that, in nearly all year groups, the school admits up to 60 pupils. There is early years provision comprising a Nursery class for three-year-old children who attend full time, and two Reception classes for four- and five-year olds. Governors manage before- and after-school care clubs for St Gregory's pupils; the 'early birds' and 'night owls' respectively.
- The school provides additional family links provision which is coordinated by a home-school liaison manager who leads and oversees the work of learning mentors, including an accredited parenting mentor and family support worker.
- Just over two thirds of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds representing minority ethnic groups, including Pakistani, Indian and African or Caribbean heritages. One in five pupils speaks English as an additional language and approximately half of these when first joining the school, particularly in the early years, speak little or no English.
- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that of most schools.

## Information about this inspection

- In addition to lesson observations, some of which were carried out with the executive headteacher and head of school, inspectors reviewed pupils' recorded work; met with groups of pupils to discuss their work, behaviour and safety, or to hear them read. Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during break and lunchtimes to ask them their views about the school. Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons about their work and progress and observed pupils' behaviour and safety in the playground and at other times. Two inspectors visited the 'early birds' club at the start of the second day of inspection and an inspector checked the morning and after-school parking and dropping-off arrangements organised for parents, which is supervised by a school warden.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: leaders' and governors' evaluations of the school's effectiveness; the school development plan; information about pupils' achievement, progress and performance; documents and information related to governance, teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, head of school, assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, early years leader, executive business manager and members of teaching and support staff. The lead inspector met the chair of the academies committee (governing body) and chair of the board of directors of the MAC. He also met with an education improvement adviser and spoke by telephone with a senior representative of Stoke local authority's school improvement service.
- The lead inspector spoke informally to a number of parents and carers to seek their views about the school. Inspectors considered the 88 responses from parents to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views of 75 parents who sent their comments to the West Midlands Ofsted regional office by text or email.
- Inspectors spoke to nearly all teaching staff to provide feedback on lessons observed and to listen to their views about the school and how well they are supported by leaders and governors.

## Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ben Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Melanie Callaghan-Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Justine Lomas	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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