

# St Giles' and St George's Church of England Academy

St Paul's Road, Off Orme Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 2NB

## Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>              |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>              |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b>              |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Outstanding</b>       |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>              |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>              |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have used this effectively to improve the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are well supported by other leaders. However, the leadership of key stage 1 is underdeveloped.
- The most effective teaching is planned well to meet pupils' learning needs. It is engaging and leads to rapid progress. Although the overall quality of teaching is improving, it does not consistently deepen pupils' understanding in order to ensure that more pupils reach the highest standards.
- Current pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects. All groups of pupils made strong progress during the last school year.
- Outcomes improved in the end of key stage 2 assessments in 2017. The proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics and writing was greater than the national average. In reading, outcomes were broadly average.
- Leaders are taking further action to improve outcomes in reading, spelling and boys' writing. These actions are recent and not yet fully embedded in practice.
- Leaders now analyse information from checking teaching and pupils' progress to decide on actions to improve teaching and outcomes.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They manage their own behaviour very well.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding pupils across the school. Keeping children safe is a shared responsibility and all staff know what they should do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare.
- Children make a good start to their schooling in the early years provision. It is well led and managed. Teaching is good and so children make strong progress.
- School staff have good working relations with parents. All parents who made their views known during the inspection would recommend the school.

## Full report

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that more matches the best found in the school.
- Continue to improve overall outcomes, particularly in reading, spelling and boys' writing, by fully embedding strategies that are now in place.
- Further increase the impact of leadership and management by:
  - refining leaders' analysis of information to continue to inform prompt action to improve teaching and outcomes
  - developing leadership capacity at key stage 1.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders and managers at all levels, but particularly the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have used this to make a number of improvements. As a result of well-informed strategies and decisive action, teaching, learning and assessment and the progress pupils make have all improved. Further action is now taking place to ensure that these improvements have a sustained impact on provision and outcomes.
- Pupils are at the centre of everything the school does. Leaders are ambitious for them and have high aspirations for pupils and staff. Positive and productive relationships between leaders, staff and pupils have helped to secure improvement.
- Staff value the support and training that they are given. They make the most of opportunities to improve their practice. Performance management is used effectively to help staff develop further. Targets for staff, which are based on the relevant standards, are linked to particular roles and school priorities. Teachers' progress towards achieving their targets is closely monitored.
- Middle leadership is developing well. Early years, key stage 2, provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, English and mathematics are led well. However, leadership at key stage 1 is not fully developed.
- The well-planned curriculum is broad, balanced and engaging. Learning in the classroom is supported by high-quality outdoor learning and interesting trips and visits. Pupils also take opportunities to develop their skills and understanding by participating in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and is leading to improved outcomes. It contributes well to pupils' outstanding behaviour by providing interesting and challenging activities that engage them in effective learning. The curriculum also shows pupils how to stay safe.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective, develop a sense of awe and wonder, and think about what is right and wrong. They are given opportunities to work productively with others and explore cultures and beliefs that are different from their own. They understand British values and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Additional funding is used well. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupil premium funding have been used effectively to support improved provision and outcomes for targeted pupils. The primary physical education and sport funding has been used effectively to provide training for staff and professional coaches for pupils, and to give pupils opportunities to take part in more inclusive sports, such as goalball. The use of this funding has led to increased participation in a wider range of sporting activities.
- Staff work well with parents, and parents are extremely supportive of the school. All parents who made their views known during the inspection would recommend the school and they believe that it is well led and managed. Parents receive regular newsletters and staff communicate well with parents at the start and end of the school

day. Parents feel that staff listen to them and suggestions made by the parents' forum are acted on. Consequently, all parents who responded to Parent View believe that the school responds well to any concerns that they may raise.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective. Governors have the skills, knowledge and experience to support leaders and hold them to account. They ask challenging questions about the range of information that they receive and attend training so that they keep up to date with developments. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that resources are managed well, that the website meets requirements and that safeguarding is effective.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe throughout the school. Staff are very well trained in safeguarding and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. As keeping children safe is a shared responsibility, all staff know what they should do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare.
- All pupils, staff and parents believe that pupils are safe in school. Processes for reporting concerns are clear and there are robust systems to keep pupils safe. Referrals are timely and outside agencies are used effectively.
- Procedures to recruit, select and check on staff are robust and the school's single central record is compliant. Visitors to the school site are checked appropriately.
- The site is secure and pupils are taught to stay safe in an age-appropriate way. For example, they are clear about the potential dangers of the internet and know how to keep themselves safe when they are close to traffic.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Pupils learn in a positive environment. Displays are used well to celebrate their achievements and to aid learning. High-quality artwork brightens classrooms and corridors.
- Some teaching is of a very high quality, particularly in upper key stage 2 and in early years. Where teaching is most effective, it is well planned, focuses on learning and builds upon knowledge and skills that pupils have already acquired. Often it is rooted in situations familiar to pupils so that it interests and engages them.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and usually set challenging activities. Most teachers have high expectations of all pupils and use questions well to assess understanding and move learning on.
- Feedback is used throughout lessons to encourage pupils, reinforce learning and to challenge pupils. Staff follow the school's marking policy and pupils are given time to respond to comments and complete additional activities. However, staff do not do this consistently well so learning time is lost. At times, pupils sit and wait for a teacher to help them rather than trying to resolve problems by themselves.

- There are clear routines in classrooms and pupils work very well together and with staff. Pupils are happy to discuss work with each other and solve problems together. Praise is used well and behaviour in class is positive and productive.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported in class. Teaching assistants lead and support high-quality learning very well and allow pupils to develop their independence.
- Where teaching is less effective, instructions are unclear and staff do not ensure that different groups of pupils make rapid progress. For example, pupils are not consistently given opportunities to explore mathematical problems in depth.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are developed across the curriculum. However, leaders are aware that more needs to be done to improve spelling and that pupils would benefit from further opportunities to develop their writing skills in different subjects. Developments are taking place to address these areas but they are yet to have a full impact.
- Assessment is accurate and teachers use this information to help their planning. Leaders are now interrogating this information in a timelier manner in order to inform actions to further improve teaching, learning and assessment. However, this is yet to have a full impact.
- Teachers follow the school's homework policy and pupils are given tasks to consolidate their learning in mathematics and English, or extend their skills through project work. All parents who made their views known during the inspection believe that their child is set appropriate homework.
- Parents are given clear, detailed and accurate information about how their child is progressing in relation to national expectations for their age and what they need to do to improve. Parents confirmed to inspectors that that they find this information useful.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. A strong caring ethos permeates the school and relationships are extremely positive between pupils and adults. Pupils care for one another.
- Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. They display good manners and they are very proud of their school. They are keen to learn and are proud of their achievements. They are also happy to celebrate the successes of other pupils.
- Pupils have a keen sense of responsibility. They enthusiastically assume the roles of play leader, house captain, 'eco-knight' and school council representative. They look after each other and the school environment very well.
- Physical and emotional well-being are promoted very well. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and take regular exercise. They know whom to talk to if they are concerned about anything.
- Bullying is extremely rare and pupils are confident that staff would deal quickly and effectively with any minor fallings-out, should they happen.

- Pupils are taught to stay safe when using the internet and they are taught how to stay safe in a range of situations in an age-appropriate way. As a result, all pupils, parents and staff who made their views known to inspectors indicated that pupils feel safe in school. Every parent who responded to Parent View indicated that pupils were happy and well looked after in the school.
- Robust systems to keep pupils safe are evident in the before- and after-school care. Staff take opportunities to promote personal development and welfare and pupils behave extremely well during their time in this purposeful, caring environment.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and their conduct around the school is exemplary. They are well mannered, considerate and friendly.
- Pupils play sensibly during social times, often in activities led by pupil play leaders. The atmosphere in the dining hall is calm and orderly.
- Pupils respond well to the high expectations of behaviour. They have a clear understanding of how to behave well and manage their own behaviour.
- The very few pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are effectively supported to behave very well. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are very rare and there have been no exclusions since the academy formed.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average. The vast majority of pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, have excellent attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress across a range of subjects. All groups of pupils, in every year group, made strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics during the last school year.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 6 improved markedly in last year's key stage 2 assessments. A greater proportion of pupils than the national average reached the expected standard in mathematics and writing and a similar proportion to average reached the expected standard in reading. Overall, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average in 2017.
- Last year, disadvantaged pupils made good progress across the curriculum in every year group. Consequently, they achieved better outcomes than other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics in the assessments at the end of key stage 2. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was similar to the national average for other pupils.
- The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving. They, along with pupils who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
- Girls achieve well in the school and boys do well in mathematics. However, although staff are taking effective action to improve their reading and writing skills, boys still do

not reach the standards achieved by girls in English.

- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 improved in 2017. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was above the national average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. Disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 did not achieve well in writing last year.
- Outcomes in phonics improved in 2017 and the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in Year 1 was in line with the national average. However, as a result of targeted support, all pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils enjoy reading and most read widely and often. Most-able readers read fluently and pupils of all abilities are able to apply their phonic skills well. Leaders and staff are currently embedding a range of strategies to build upon the improvements in the teaching of reading to ensure that all pupils attain consistently well in this area.
- Although a greater proportion of pupils reached the higher standards in key stages 1 and 2 in 2017, outcomes at the higher level are still below the national averages in reading and writing in both key stages and in mathematics in key stage 1. As a result of careful analysis of test papers, leaders are aware that they need to further develop pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics and inference skills in reading, and to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. Action taken to address these areas is beginning to have an impact.
- Leaders know that many pupils do not spell as well as they should. Strategies are now in place to address this in every year group but they are yet to have a marked impact.
- Pupils in the school achieved well in 2015 but outcomes declined in 2016. Pupils, particularly boys, made slow progress in reading and writing and a smaller proportion than the national average achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2. Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 also declined in 2016. However, interventions that are now in place are helping current pupils catch up quickly.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They have a broad range of skills and experiences that allow them to be successful learners.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for development. Leaders have shared good practice and provide training to improve the quality of provision. High-quality teamwork ensures that staff are responsive to the needs of every child.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are skilled in questioning and motivating children to move learning on. There is a careful balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities that are focused on helping the children make good progress.
- The curriculum is well designed and engaging. It often provides rich, varied and imaginative experiences.
- Staff know the children well and assessment is accurate and used to inform planning. Progress is tracked throughout the year and information collected usually informs challenging activities. At times, though, the most able children are not given

opportunities to fully explore concepts and ideas.

- Children make good progress in the early years setting and they are well prepared academically, socially and emotionally for Year 1. They write and use mathematical skills well, but their reading skills are not of the highest standard. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development is consistently similar to the national average.
- All groups of children make strong progress from their different starting points. Children who need to catch up, those who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children are well supported to make good progress. Additional funding is used well to improve the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged children.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are developed well. Children enjoy positive relationships with adults and other children and they are willing to share resources and take turns. Children follow instructions and respond well to high expectations and established routines.
- Safeguarding is effective and all statutory welfare requirements are met. Children's health, safety and well-being are enhanced by the consistent implementation of clear policies and procedures.
- Staff communicate with parents very well. High levels of parental engagement and regular contact between staff and parents allow the learning and development that take place in school to be supported at home. Parents contribute to initial assessments and many take the opportunity to be 'TA [teaching assistant] for a day'.



## School details

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Unique reference number | 141486        |
| Local authority         | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number       | 10037867      |

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                 | 3 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 333  |
| Appropriate authority               | The board of trustees  |
| Chair                               | Reverend Robert Daborn   |
| Headteacher                         | Lynne Evans  |
| Telephone number                    | 01782 917640   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.st-giles-st-georges.staffs.sch.uk">www.st-giles-st-georges.staffs.sch.uk</a>                 |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:headteacher@st-giles-st-georges.staffs.sch.uk">headteacher@st-giles-st-georges.staffs.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- St Giles' and St George's Church of England Academy converted to become an academy on 1 October 2014. When its predecessor school was inspected by Ofsted in June 2012, it was judged to be good.
- Since the academy was formed, there has been considerable building work on the school's site. This has taken place to accommodate a growing number of pupils.
- The school is an expanding average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group, apart from Years 3 and 5, which each have one class. Most children attend Nursery on a part-time basis.
- Some staff, including a long-serving deputy headteacher, have left the school since the academy was formed. More have joined so the number of teachers has increased by a third in the last three years. The current deputy headteacher was promoted from another post in the school in April 2015.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national

average.

- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- The school provides before- and after-school care.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is a stand-alone academy with its own governing body.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other leaders and a group of staff. The lead inspector also spoke to three governors, including the chair and the vice-chair of the governing board.
- Inspectors made short visits to every class on both days of the inspection. Some of these visits were made with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' books from this school year and from last year.
- Pupils were spoken to formally and informally. Inspectors heard pupils read and observed behaviour during social time.
- Inspectors considered 14 responses and five free-text comments on Parent View. They also spoke to parents on the first day of the inspection.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, information about managing teachers' performance and staff training records. Minutes of meetings of the governing board and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and inspectors looked at published information on the school's website.

## Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Harwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Wright

Ofsted Inspector

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