

All Saints' Academy, Cheltenham

Blaisdon Way, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 0WH

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- All Saints' Academy is an inclusive school. Leaders and directors have a passion and commitment for the community they serve. They have been successful in improving pupils' life chances by ensuring that they have achieved well in recent years.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. The majority behave well and show respect for one another. The school is calm and orderly during the school day.
- Teaching is typically good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support. Staff plan learning that closely matches their needs.
- Outcomes are improving. Low- and middle-prior-attaining pupils make strong progress. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not challenged sufficiently to reach the highest grades.
- Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Standards in science are not as high as in other subjects. Pupils do not show the same positive attitudes to their learning, take pride in their work or make strong progress.
- Directors ensure the effective use of additional funding. This is particularly the case for improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and raising Year 7 pupils' literacy skills.
- Pupils are safe. Staff work well with a wide range of agencies to assist pupils well.
- Pupils' attendance has improved rapidly because of the school's determined efforts to support families. Persistent absenteeism has fallen sharply.
- Leaders are attentive to the needs of individuals. However, they do not use this knowledge to evaluate plans and routinely review the effectiveness of strategies to raise standards further.
- Although behaviour has improved considerably, the number of incidents that lead to exclusions are not falling as quickly.
- Standards in the sixth form are not as high. Too few Year 13 students attend well; students following A-level courses do not make the progress they should. Not all students experience high-quality work-related learning. However, students who follow vocational courses make strong progress in their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop a more coordinated and systematic approach to enable leaders, including governors, to plan, monitor and refine their actions strategically to raise standards further.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in science by having consistently high expectations of pupils' work and attitudes to learning.
- Raise the attainment of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that they are fully challenged in their learning.
- Reduce the level of exclusions by ensuring that support is provided in a timely fashion.
- Improve standards in the sixth form by:
 - improving students' attendance
 - raising the attainment of those students who follow academic qualifications
 - ensuring that students' experience of work-related learning prepares them well for future employment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including directors of the trust, improve the life chances of pupils and the community that the school serves. They have continued to work to improve the effectiveness of the school successfully. As a result, outcomes for pupils have risen.
- Leaders have made significant improvements to the school since the last inspection. The constant drive to raise standards of behaviour and build pupils' positive attitudes to learning is evident in pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school. Attendance has improved markedly and the number of pupils who do not regularly attend school has fallen sharply.
- Senior leaders have forged a cohesive staff group. Staff hold fast to the school's values and ethos which unite them in their drive to improve standards. Areas of the school's work that have not been strong in the past have improved.
- Leaders know the school and the community it serves well. They have a deep understanding of the many challenges and barriers to learning that pupils face. There is a clear determination to support pupils and their families to overcome these barriers. A more inclusive, constructive approach is being taken now. Occasionally, the school's approach still tends to be reactive to events and support could be timelier. This is especially the case for the small number of pupils who have been excluded. Leaders and school staff are working more closely with the local authority, early help and support services to ensure that their work prevents the need for exclusion.
- The school's work to support pupils' personal development is strong. Staff support the most vulnerable pupils increasingly well. As a result, most pupils receive care and support that encourage them to reach the high academic expectations set by leaders. There is a strong culture of respect and tolerance.
- Strong leadership of SEND is ensuring that there is a good provision to meet the wide range of needs that pupils have. The programmes and the adjustments to pupils' experience of school, are improving outcomes. This is seen in the strong progress of many pupils with SEND.
- Leaders have developed their relationship with local primary and junior schools. They share with teachers the standards of work that pupils are capable of at the end of key stage 2. This partnership is helping to raise teachers' expectations of the standard of pupils' work.
- The school's curriculum provides breadth and balance for pupils and students in the sixth form. The wide range in type and level of courses in key stage 4 and in the sixth form offers pupils extensive opportunities to select paths which meet their career aspirations. Working with a local independent school further enhances the range of experiences for pupils in Year 11. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including the school's combined cadet force, and in sports and the arts.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school's approach to teaching and learning. The introduction of the new 'knowledge curriculum' this academic year builds on pupils' experiences in key stage 2. It is too soon to measure its impact.

- Most middle leaders say that they have benefited from training that is helping them to be more proactive in tackling underperformance of colleagues.
- Leaders are particularly effective in their work with individual pupils to ensure that they stay safe and are supported effectively. However, some strategies are not analysed sufficiently to identify how effective they are.
- A higher proportion of pupils than seen nationally leave the school roll during the year. School leaders are aware of the reasons pupils leave, all of them legitimate. For example, many of these pupils are foreign nationals who return to their country of origin having spent a short period of time in this country. Most pupils transfer to other schools because their families move away from the area.
- Senior leaders promote an inclusive ethos at the school. As well as those leaving, many pupils join part way through the year. These pupils adapt well when they transfer from other schools locally.

Governance of the school

- The directors of the trust are the governors of this single-academy trust. They bring much expertise and experience and have a broad overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use their skills to hold leaders to account.
- Directors are dedicated to improving the quality of education and the pastoral support the school provides. They are passionate about supporting pupils in the locality to succeed.
- Directors have specific responsibilities. They make checks regularly on the school's safeguarding systems and carry out other monitoring activities to assure themselves of the quality of the school's work. Additionally, they make effective use of an external consultant to provide them with an independent view.
- Directors have a reasonable oversight of the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up funding and the funding provided for pupils with SEND. Directors are acutely aware of the need to ensure that the pupil premium is suitably focused on improving the progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able disadvantaged.
- Directors are not always provided with the analyses they need to make sound strategic decisions and to deploy resources in a way that will have the greatest impact on raising standards.
- As a school designated as having a religious character, the board of directors has a duty under section 48(1) of the Education Act 2005 to ensure that an inspection of denominational education given to pupils, and the content of the school's collective worship is carried out at regular intervals set out in regulations. This means that these aspects of the school should have been inspected under section 48 by no later than the summer term 2018. Due to the potential withdrawal of the Roman Catholic diocese from the sponsorship of the school, no such inspection has taken place. As a result, the board of director's statutory responsibility in this respect has not been met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Leaders with specific responsibility for safeguarding ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are suitably detailed. Leaders have increased the levels of training that staff receive. This ensures that staff are trained so they can keep pupils safe from harm and the risks pupils may face from radicalisation and extremism.
- Recruitment procedures for staff and volunteers are compliant with safer recruitment principles.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of teaching about the risks they face, particularly when they are using computers or social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils make good progress in their learning because most teachers communicate clear expectations for their conduct. In most subjects, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They arrive punctually to classes and follow instructions swiftly. In discussions and group-work tasks, pupils show respect for one another. They reflect on the comments made and challenge others' views to develop their own understanding. Consequently, their ability to articulate what they have learned improves.
- Pupils benefit from a high level of challenge in English. This is supporting pupils to make strong progress. They study a wide range of authors' texts which are suitably demanding. These books give pupils an appreciation of a variety of writing styles. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils make strong progress in each aspect of mathematics. Pupils are confident in their use of algebra, which is helping them to understand some of the more demanding learning.
- Teaching staff have clear information about the strategies that are helpful to raise the rates of progress for pupils with SEND. Teachers task teaching assistants to support pupils with SEND well. Teaching assistants guide pupils through their learning, help pupils maintain their concentration and clarify instructions. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to help pupils move on in their learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. This is particularly the case in the arts, where teachers skilfully develop pupils' self-esteem and creativity. In drama, Year 13 pupils were performing a scene based on the writing of German playwright, Bertolt Brecht, for Year 11 pupils. The high-quality performance captivated the Year 11 pupils and they were able to evaluate the performance critically and accurately. This raised pupils' ambitions and aspirations.
- Work seen in pupils' books reflects the strong progress pupils make in most subjects. In the majority of books, teachers provide structures that help pupils to develop their understanding of the topic. Teachers use assessment effectively to move learning on. This is particularly strong in modern foreign languages, geography and history. Pupils value the discussions they have about their learning with teachers and make good use of the feedback they receive to improve their work.
- Leaders have introduced 'knowledge organisers' recently. These provide detailed resources which pupils in Years 7 to 11 use effectively to consolidate their learning. Pupils complete assessments at the end of each half term. Teachers use these assessments to identify where pupils' knowledge and understanding are not strong;

they then provide additional tasks and support pupils to ensure that pupils make better progress.

- Leaders use whole-school assessment information to organise interventions for pupils who fall behind. There is strong oversight of the funding provided for Year 7 pupils who had not met the expected standard in English and mathematics by the end of their primary education. Currently, progress in improving pupils' literacy skills is significantly positive. Pupils' progress in mathematics is less strong.
- Homework is set regularly, and a clear homework timetable is in place. Pupils and parents comment positively on the setting of homework.
- Leaders set targets for pupils which are realistic. Pupils feel that they are making progress in their studies; however, in some subjects, pupils are less clear about reaching the targets set.
- Leaders provide comprehensive information to parents about their children's progress. A few parents, who responded to Parent View, commented that they did not find these reports clear about the progress their children make. Leaders are currently reviewing the format of this information.
- Work in books is generally well organised, However, this is not the case in every subject, particularly science. Generally, inspectors observed a desire in pupils to improve their work.
- Although disadvantaged pupils are making progress in their learning, there is not the precision in teachers' planning, or teaching, to tackle the specific barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face.
- The level of challenge for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, is not as demanding as it needs to be if these pupils are to make better progress in their learning. Although teachers ensure that there is breadth in the topics studied, the most able pupils lack the depth of understanding they need to reach the highest grades.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff. They appreciate the availability of staff and the support they receive when needed. The majority of pupils could identify an adult in whom they would confide when worried. Pupils said that they felt safe in school.
- Pupils are smart and wear their uniform with pride.
- The provision of careers advice and guidance is particularly effective in helping pupils prepare for their next steps. Year 9 pupils feel well guided about their key stage 4 course options, including the opportunity to transfer to a local university technical college. Year 9 pupils have settled in to their courses well.
- Year 11 pupils value the careers interviews and fairs that staff organise. Students now

in the sixth form talk about the helpful support they received, including visits to a range of colleges and universities, information about apprenticeships and, for a few sixth-form students, visits to workplaces. However, pupils' understanding of the world of work and of the skills required for employment is not well developed.

- Many older pupils fulfil leadership opportunities, including the role of prefect. Prefects supervise pupil conduct and provide support for pupils who need it. Prefects provide a useful conduit of information to staff when a pupil expresses concerns. This enables staff to provide timely support. Year 10 student leaders have been appointed by staff. They are developing their skills in organising events, particularly those that involve supporting charities.
- Pupils have a good awareness of many of the risks that they may face in their local community and when online. Younger pupils spoke eloquently about keeping themselves safe from strangers and about road safety. However, pupils' understanding of the risks they may face from radicalisation and extremism is very limited.
- Pupils are particularly effusive about the wide range of extra-curricular sports and arts in which they can engage. Participation levels are high.
- Pupils are clear about equality of opportunity. They said that there is no discrimination but if there was, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The few pupils who attend alternative education providers attend regularly and behave well in most cases.
- Leaders have developed an extensive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development programme. The 'LIFE' programme encourages pupils to consider their own personal development, the risks they face and the needs of others. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities and support charities. Consequently, pupils' understanding of equality and injustice is strong.
- The quality of pupils' presentation of work is variable across year groups and subjects. In some subjects, including science and religious education, work is often incomplete or missing.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are loyal to the school and value their time at school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are thoughtful and articulate in expressing their views.
- Throughout the school, there is calm and orderly conduct. Pupils move around the school sensibly and show consideration for staff, other pupils and visitors.
- Leaders have shown a determined effort over many years to improve behaviour. This is paying dividends. In lessons, and around the school, behaviour is good. At social times, pupils play well together, with many engaging in sports. Conduct in the school canteen is good with pupils queuing patiently. In classes, incidents of pupils disrupting learning are infrequent.
- Directors have invested school funds heavily to improve attendance over recent years. Strategic appointments of staff members and clear lines of accountability have resulted in significant improvement. Attendance has been well below national levels for several

years, but improved in 2017/18 to be in line with the national average. Currently, attendance is slightly above the rates of attendance typically seen nationally for secondary schools.

- The attendance of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils has risen similarly and is in line with, or higher than, that of similar pupils nationally. There remain some difference in attendance across year groups. Pupils currently in Year 8 do not attend as regularly as other pupils. The attendance of Year 13 students is well below that of other year groups and, in the current academic year, is declining.
- As a result of the school's work, persistent absenteeism is reducing. Where the levels of persistent absenteeism had been above the national average and rising, they fell in 2017/18 to be in line with national figures. The current level of persistent absence is below the national figure typically seen.
- A small minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying. This is not widespread, but, in some year groups, pupils report that there is bullying but that it is usually dealt with well.
- Exclusions have been very high for many years but are reducing. Permanent exclusions remain above levels seen nationally. Evidence seen on inspection demonstrates that leaders have made significant efforts to avoid excluding pupils, for example using the school's in-house 'PACE' provision and alternative provision. Consequently, directors of the trust and the local authority are suitably assured that leaders have taken reasonable steps to prevent exclusion. Nevertheless, there is a need to ensure that pupils who begin to show challenging behaviours, or who are experiencing difficulties in their personal lives, receive the help and support they need in good time to reduce exclusions further.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Work in books, school information and observations of learning show an overall picture of outcomes that are improving over time in key stages 3 and 4. Year on year, there is an increase in pupils' attainment. This is particularly the case for those pupils who were working at the expected standard at the end of their primary education.
- Pupils currently in Year 11 are on track to make strong progress. This is a further improvement on previous years when achievement was in line with the national average. Discussions with pupils, and the work seen during the inspection, confirms this.
- The strongest progress is in French, Spanish, geography and history. Historically, these subjects had performed far less well than other subjects. Although improving overall, progress in science is less strong. For those pupils who struggle in their learning, progress has declined in science.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils' attainment has improved. The middle-prior-attaining disadvantaged pupils have improved consistently, year on year. In 2018, this large group of pupils achieved in line with other pupils nationally and more highly than their classmates. This pattern of improvement continues with current pupils.
- Although there is still an attainment difference between disadvantaged and other pupils, it is diminishing. This is closing most quickly for pupils achieving a standard pass

at GCSE.

- Pupils with SEND are making strong progress in most year groups, particularly in Years 7 and 8, where they are working at standards close to other pupils. By the end of Year 11, as a result of effective teaching and timely additional support, the difference in achievement between pupils with SEND and other pupils is narrowing.
- The school's own assessment information, and inspectors' evaluation of pupils' learning and work, show that pupils' outcomes are continuing to improve. Pupils make progress in every year group, although the rate of progress is much more rapid in some year groups than others. Pupils are making particularly strong progress in English.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a constant increase in the proportion of pupils who continue to further education or employment with training. The stronger outcomes that pupils are achieving are allowing more and more to continue to higher level courses, such as A levels. It is now rare for a pupil not to be in education, employment or further training after leaving the school.
- The progress made by the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, has declined slightly in recent years.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Students who follow A-level courses have not made good progress over recent years. In sociology, psychology, information technology and English, outcomes have remained low. The most able sixth-formers do not make strong progress.
- Many students who did not achieve a standard pass in English or maths are successful when they resit these examinations in the sixth form. This is because specialist teachers provide high-quality teaching and additional support.
- The leadership of the sixth form has not been strong over time. Leaders and directors acknowledge that they have not given the sixth form the same level of scrutiny as they have given to the rest of the school. Leaders are tackling this by bolstering the leadership capacity of the sixth form and significantly increasing the intensity of their oversight. This is very recent and so the impact to date is not measurable.
- Pupils' attendance in the sixth form is lower than seen in other year groups. The attendance of Year 13 pupils is particularly low, especially that of female students. The attendance of Year 12 pupils is stronger.
- There is insufficient richness in students' individual study programmes. This is particularly the case for developing students' employability skills and their experience of work-related learning.
- Personal education plans for students in care are in place. However, the targets that are set and the measures to support these students are not specific enough.
- Students receive impartial careers guidance before entering the sixth form and during their time in school. There are plenty of opportunities for them to meet employers in local, national and international companies. Careers staff organise trips and visits to higher education institutions, such as universities.
- Students who take applied level 3 courses go on work placements relevant to their

studies. This is beneficial, and their outcomes are better than those for students taking A levels.

- Students who take level 1 and 2 applied courses do well. Some leave school after Year 12 as they have achieved the qualifications they need for employment or apprenticeships. Others leave because larger colleges offer the courses they want to follow. This shows that school leaders are preparing these students well for their next steps.
- Students are safe and kept safe. They are taught well about aspects of being a young adult and the need for healthy relationships. They are aware of many of the risks that they may face, including when they are using the internet, and the importance of British values.
- Students participate in a range of civil functions and citizenship activities through the Bishops' Award. This diocesan diploma recognises the activities students follow to develop personally and socially, building their leadership potential and encouraging contributions to the school and wider community.

School details

Unique reference number	136016
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10084112

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	901
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sue Padfield
Principal	Dermot McNiffe
Telephone number	01242 711200
Website	www.asachelt.org
Email address	admin@ASACHelt.org
Date of previous inspection	11–12 November 2014

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized secondary school and is currently jointly sponsored by the Church of England Diocese of Gloucester and the Roman Catholic Clifton Diocese.
- The school is overseen by the board of trustees of the All Saints' Academy, Cheltenham, an academy trust. Currently All Saints' Academy is the only school in the trust.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

- The school makes use of two alternative education providers: Cheltenham and Tewksbury Alternative Provision Service and Abbey View School, Tewkesbury.
- An unusually high number of pupils leave the school roll during the school year.
- A section 48 inspection of religious education took place at the school on 22 and 23 May 2013.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders. The lead inspector held a meeting with four directors.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school's improvement partner and representatives of the local authority by telephone.
- One inspector contacted alternative education providers to discuss pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups across a range of subjects, most of which were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including minutes of directors' meetings, improvement plans, analyses of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour information, details of pupils who have left and joined the school, safeguarding records and the school's self-evaluation documents.
- Discussions were held with pupils throughout the inspection and formally in groups.
- Inspectors took account of 38 responses to Parent View and 10 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Iain Freeland, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Her Majesty's Inspector
David New	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector

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