

# Silvertrees Academy

Silvertrees Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 8NH

## Inspection dates

9–10 April 2019

<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>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher has high aspirations and has worked successfully with the school's leadership team to transform the quality of education at Silvertrees Academy. As a result, this is now a good school and pupils are making strong progress in their learning.
- Leaders have developed strong systems to monitor the progress and attainment of individual pupils. As a result, leaders have an accurate knowledge of the progress pupils make from their point of entry.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning activities. It is well enriched through trips, visitors and clubs. As a result, pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Attendance rates are similar to those nationally.
- Many governors are new in post but have an understanding of their role. They challenge the school and seek evidence to support their evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are aware of the need to extend their knowledge to challenge leaders more effectively about pupils' outcomes.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Consequently, both groups of pupils make good progress.
- Leaders have recently redesigned the curriculum. The quality of teaching in subjects such as history and geography is improving. However, the work set does not always deepen pupils' knowledge. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- The provision for early years is strong and improving rapidly. High-quality leadership and teaching create a stimulating learning environment and ensure that children have a good start to school life.
- The quality of teaching is good. While, in the past, published data has indicated that progress is weak, the inspection evidence shows that most pupils make at least good progress in their learning in a wide range of subjects. Despite this, the differences in attainment between boys and girls continue in reading and writing as the changes in the curriculum have not yet impacted fully on the older pupils in school.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
  - governors develop their knowledge and skills to challenge improvements in outcomes more effectively
  - actions are taken to accelerate the progress of boys to further diminish differences between their attainment and that of girls in reading and writing
  - planning for the curriculum further deepens the knowledge and skills of most-able pupils across the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Silvertrees Academy has improved greatly since its previous inspection in 2017. The new leadership team has made the changes necessary to enable pupils to do well. Leaders ensure that new members of staff receive good support and guidance. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils are making good progress in their learning.
- Leaders have a clearer picture than in the past of where improvement is needed. In some areas, such as mathematics and the teaching of phonics, recent initiatives are already securing better progress for pupils. Sharper use of school assessment information to target support for pupils who are in danger of falling behind is also helping to improve pupils' progress.
- School leaders have developed high-quality systems and processes to record pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers check their judgements of pupils' work with other local schools to ensure that their assessments are accurate. There is clear evidence in books and in the moderation carried out that pupils' learning improves as a result of this process.
- Leaders have developed a creative and engaging curriculum of well-planned activities. Topics often include a school visit or a specific event to stimulate pupils' imaginations. The curriculum motivates pupils and is broad and balanced. However, the skills, knowledge and understanding in some subjects are not developed in sufficient depth for the most able pupils.
- A wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, which include gymnastics, gardening and dance, complement the curriculum. Pupils talk about and take part in these clubs enthusiastically. Leaders monitor attendance at these clubs carefully and make every effort to ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from these wider opportunities. Leaders make good use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium to promote participation in physical activity.
- In the past, pupils with SEND have not always made progress in line with their peers. However, better training and improved staff skills are helping to ensure that these pupils receive timely and appropriate support that meets their needs. Very recent school information indicates that the majority of these pupils are now making secure progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, together with British values, is promoted well across the curriculum. Regular assemblies focus on discussing big issues in the real world and this enhances pupils' understanding of current topics.
- Staff develop effective relationships with parents and carers. The majority of parents value the support the school provides and the opportunity to share their children's progress using the well-developed learning journey system.

### Governance of the school

- The quality of governance has improved since the previous inspection. Vacancies on

the governing body have been filled and new governors are growing into their roles following training. They demonstrate good intentions and actively seek to develop and deepen their knowledge of the school and governance so as to inform their work.

- An experienced new chair of governors, who is a national leader of governance, was appointed in the autumn term and this has significantly added to the capacity of the governing body. Governors' focus since the beginning of the academic year has been to find a successor for the headteacher. As a result, they have not as yet concentrated on developing the skills needed to challenge leaders as effectively as they could on the school's outcomes for pupils.
- Governor scrutiny over safeguarding and health and safety is becoming more robust. A governor has completed designated lead training in safeguarding.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong and effective safeguarding culture within the school. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training and updates on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff are highly vigilant for any signs that a child may be at risk of harm. Staff, including those new to the school, are watchful and quick to identify the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They know how to report their concerns and how to access support for these pupils.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding records are well documented and up to date. They follow up referrals promptly and then systematically record their actions. Leaders are keen to support families at the earliest opportunity.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe, for example when using the internet.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. It is continuing to improve.
- Teachers plan and assess pupils' skills and knowledge well across all subjects. However, work in pupils' books shows limited opportunities for pupils to develop deeper understanding in history and geography. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- The teaching of creative subjects is strong. Art, music, PE and dance are particular areas in which pupils excel. Pupils' understanding of musical notation is strong throughout the school. This has been developed by a peripatetic music teacher, through participating in singing events and by learning and playing instruments. Pupils' art, displayed across the school, reflects a good development of skills and a depth of knowledge in this subject.
- Phonics is taught well. Staff have been thoroughly trained and teach well-structured lessons that help pupils of all abilities to attempt to read unfamiliar words. As a result,

pupils develop the skills and knowledge required to become successful readers.

- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often outside of school. The school has developed a series of reading challenges that pupils talked about with some excitement. Displays seen across the school focus on encouraging pupils to read more regularly. The provision of high-quality texts supports the curriculum well. As a result of these initiatives, pupils are making stronger progress in reading across the school.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable role in supporting pupils' learning across the school. They work closely with teachers and provide effective support to pupils who need to catch up and those with SEND. These pupils take part in the full curriculum and make good progress because of the well-targeted interventions and timely support that they receive.
- Well-thought-out classroom displays provide pupils with helpful resources and ideas that enable them to be more self-reliant in their learning. Pupils' work in books is neat and well presented. Well-established classroom routines mean that little time is lost as pupils move between activities.
- The teaching of writing has improved. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their writing. Pupils discuss how to improve their work. As a result, most pupils develop into successful writers.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- SMSC and British values are promoted well and pupils can talk with knowledge about the importance of these values in school. During a conversation with an inspector, a pupil exclaimed, 'Voting – that's democracy!' Pupils vote for the school council, the tidy team and playground buddies.
- Pupils are sensitive to each other's feelings and are very supportive of one another. Children as young as two were seen to be sharing resources and including others who felt left out of activities.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying does happen but that staff would soon sort it out. Pupils are confident that any type of discriminatory behaviour would not be tolerated.
- Pupils were keen to share their positive experiences of school with inspectors. For example, older pupils talked with great enthusiasm about educational visits, visitors and the range of sports clubs that are available at the end of each school day.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are proud of the work in their books. Work is nearly always neat and very well presented. The quality of work across the curriculum demonstrates pupils' good attitudes to learning, as pupils complete given work with enthusiasm.
- Pupils, including the youngest ones, get on very well together and they are polite to

each other and to visitors. There is a happy atmosphere when pupils play together at playtimes. The school has a very well-resourced outdoor area and pupils enjoy the equipment that has been installed to help them be active at these times. They take turns and use the equipment sensibly.

- Rates of attendance are in line with national averages for primary-aged pupils. Attendance has a high profile in the school. There are awards for pupils whose attendance is consistently above average, and attendance is highlighted in newsletters and at parents' evenings. Leaders work effectively with the families of the few pupils who do not come to school regularly enough.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2018, the proportion of boys achieving a good level of development in the early years, and their attainment at the end key stage 1, was below that of girls in reading and writing. The differences in the attainment of boys and girls in reading and writing were larger than those seen nationally. Leaders are taking actions to address this and adaptations to the curriculum are now having a positive impact on boys' progress, and differences between the standards of boys' and girls' work are starting to reduce. However, leaders are aware that their work to improve outcomes for boys is not yet complete.
- Evidence in current pupils' work indicates that the great majority of pupils are making strong progress. This is consistent across year groups and more pupils are working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The evidence supports leaders' views that rates of progress and outcomes are improving rapidly.
- In English, pupils do well because teachers focus on the basics of reading and writing and give pupils rich opportunities to read and write at length. They also learn how to enrich their use of language by developing a wider vocabulary. End-of-key-stage results indicate that pupils are not making such strong progress in writing as they are in reading and mathematics. However, leaders' actions are having a positive impact and pupils' work shows that current pupils across the school are making improved and better progress in writing.
- In the past, pupils with SEND had not always reached their full potential. However, better training and improved staff skills are helping to ensure that these pupils receive timely and appropriate support to meet their needs. School information suggests that the majority of these pupils are now making secure progress from their starting points.
- Improved actions taken by leaders indicate that the pupil premium funding is now enabling disadvantaged pupils to receive well-focused support for their learning. Currently, work in pupils' books shows that many of these pupils are making better progress than they have in the past.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Many children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are well below the levels that are typical for their age. As a result of good teaching, the majority of

children make at least good progress in the early years. They are well prepared for Year 1.

- The early years environment is vibrant and well resourced. Children come into school happy, motivated and ready to learn. Children have good relationships with adults, as well as with each other. Children's behaviour is good, both in the classroom and in the outside area. They have good opportunities for free play using a range of resources.
- The early years leader provides a strong vision to develop purposeful learning opportunities built on children's interests and experiences. The leader and his team know the children well and have designed the curriculum to meet children's needs effectively in all areas of learning.
- Teaching is effective in developing children's understanding. For example, learning activities enable children to explore and deepen their understanding. Children use mathematical vocabulary with increasing confidence.
- Classrooms are bright, displaying children's well-presented work. Children can access resources confidently and independently. Children are happy and sociable and love to share what they know with each other and adults, including visitors. They move freely and safely between outdoor and indoor activities with a purpose. In most areas of learning, they sustain interest for long periods of time.
- Adults are very skilled at asking questions to deepen children's understanding. Adults interact with children very effectively, probing them to extend their thinking and language.
- Children learn to read with increasing confidence. They are able to use their knowledge of phonics to attempt to read unfamiliar words. Children are starting to read with expression and some recognise punctuation, such as exclamation marks, in their reading.
- Phonics is taught well. Children choose activities that will develop their knowledge further. For example, two children were keen to practise their learning of 'igh' and diligently worked through an activity independently on the computer, sounding out the words correctly.

## School details

Unique reference number	140792
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10088506

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

Type of school	Nursery/Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs D De-Bear
Headteacher	Mrs D Garratt
Telephone number	0121 557 1923
Website	<a href="http://www.silvertreesacademy.co.uk">www.silvertreesacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:matt@silvertreesacademy.co.uk">matt@silvertreesacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2017

## Information about this school

- Silvertrees Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. It is a stand-alone academy.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are above the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not provide any alternative provision for its pupils.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class, including carrying out joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work in subjects across the curriculum.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from all year groups read, both individually and as part of classroom activities. They spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at lunchtimes and when pupils were moving around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views of the 11 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, such as the targets for children who are looked after and those with SEND, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development. They also looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this relates to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Max Vlahakis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Janice Wood	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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