

# Inspection of St Edmund's Academy

Kilhams Way, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 2HU

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Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils say that they like their school. Lots of children speak different languages and arrive at the school in the early stages of learning English. Pupils make friends with their classmates quickly. Some pupils have special jobs that help everyone to work and play well together. Adults in the 'hive' help pupils to manage their feelings and improve their behaviour.

Pupils work and listen to each other in lessons. Most try their best. Sometimes, adults do not understand what help individual pupils need. When this happens, a few pupils get distracted.

Pupils say that they learn about interesting things, especially when activities are fun. Many enjoy working with visitors or going on trips, when these are part of their topics. Pupils enjoyed science week and working as investigators at a crime scene. The breakfast club helps pupils get ready to learn each morning.

Pupils get on well with adults. They know that adults care for them and will listen to any of their concerns. This makes pupils feel safe at school. Pupils understand the different types of bullying but say that it is rare in their school.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The headteacher and her leaders know that pupils do not achieve as well as they could. There have been many changes in staff since the school became an academy. The headteacher is building a new team of teachers. Many leaders are new to their roles. This means that there are differences in how well subjects are planned.

Too often, curriculum plans do not show what pupils need to have learned before moving on to the next topic. For example, in history, pupils know about some key events. However, pupils do not understand chronology. As a result, they have a weak understanding about why events are important in shaping history. Where subjects have received greater attention, pupils do better. For example, in science, the subject is well planned because it is building on what pupils know.

Teachers develop children's early communication skills well in the early years. This is not sustained for pupils when they move into key stage 1. Pupils who struggle with their reading are not helped quickly enough to develop their understanding of phonics. This means that they are still behind in their learning as they move into key stage 2.

Pupils in key stage 2 are making better progress in their reading. Recent plans ensure that there is a common understanding of what pupils need to know in every year group. Pupils enjoy what they read and the books read to them by their teachers. More books are being provided to improve pupils' wider reading opportunities.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised. Pupils have opportunities to practise and apply what they know. Subject experts have provided staff training and resources. However, some teachers do not check that all pupils have a deep understanding of each concept before moving on to the next topic.

Teachers, supported by leaders, adapt plans to meet the academic needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Adults are more effective in helping pupils in developing their social skills, or in helping those who have mental health needs.

Children settle quickly in the early years. Adults plan rich experiences that help to meet children's early language development needs. Activities encourage children to talk as they play and explore the world around them. Adults support children who speak English as an additional language effectively. This helps to prepare children for the next stage of their learning. Adults set clear routines. Children soon learn the rules because adults expect them to do so. This means that they play happily together. Children maintain their focus because there is a purpose in what they do.

Leaders are thoughtful about the different experiences provided to support pupils' personal development. Clubs are accessible for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. The activities contribute well to developing pupils' understanding of how to be fit and healthy. An inclusive school community promotes pupils' sense of belonging and citizenship.

The multi-academy trust is supportive of the school. Members check the progress that is being made towards achieving leaders' ambitions. Some governors who do this work are new to their roles. They are developing their skills to ensure that they hold leaders to account.

Staff appreciate that leaders share new ideas and listen to their opinions. They are grateful for the ways leaders help to manage their workload.

Despite efforts, leaders are still struggling to find ways to get parents and carers involved in their child's learning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, give safeguarding the highest priority. They ensure that staff are well trained and know what to do if they have a concern. Consequently, staff are alert to the signs that children are at risk of harm. Leaders respond quickly to ensure that pupils are safe. Safeguarding records are up to date and managed systematically.

Leaders understand the risks pupils face within the local community. Leaders work with agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the help they need.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum plans are not well thought out. Many subjects do not provide an order to the sequencing of lessons so that pupils acquire the intended knowledge and skills well enough. Leaders need to identify the most useful content that they want pupils to know and consider how it is ordered in each subject, so that pupils know more and remember more over time.
- Teachers do not have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach and the pedagogy about how best to teach those subjects. Teachers need to be confident with the subject knowledge that they are teaching. Leaders also need to monitor how well staff are providing well-sequenced learning opportunities for pupils that build on what they already know and can do.
- There is not a consistent approach to teaching phonics which builds on the good start pupils receive in the early years. Teachers do not always identify and address emerging gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge. The books pupils read are not always precisely chosen to match their phonic knowledge. Leaders should review the programme for teaching phonics so that pupils who need to catch up acquire the phonic knowledge to help them to read accurately and fluently.
- New leaders and new teachers do not understand how pupils secure the concepts they require to build their mathematical knowledge. Leaders must ensure that teachers develop the pedagogical understanding of how to deliver the school's mathematics curriculum. Pupils need more opportunities to apply their knowledge through well-sequenced and well-planned activities.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142968
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110242
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Karl Jermyn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jill Graver
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-edmunds.norfolk.sch.uk">www.st-edmunds.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Edmund's Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 October 2016. When its predecessor school, St Edmund's Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- St Edmund's Academy is a member of the Ad Meliora multi-academy trust.
- St Edmund's Academy is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- The school has a breakfast club that is managed by the school.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the leader of the early years and key stage 1 and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors held discussions with the local governor committee responsible for standards and pupil well-being and members of the Ad Meliora multi-academy

trust, including the chief executive headteacher.

- During the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics, science and history. This included discussions with leaders of the subject, visits to lessons, discussion with teachers about the subject, scrutiny of pupils' class books in the subject and discussions with pupils about the subject.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including that relating to attendance and behaviour, the single central record and records of staff training. Inspectors spoke about safeguarding with the designated leaders of safeguarding, other school leaders, teachers, including a newly qualified teacher, and two trainee teachers.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, to be considered. Inspectors also considered 16 responses made to the online staff survey. Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joanna Pedlow

Ofsted Inspector

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