

Inspection of a good school: St Giles School

Babworth Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 7NJ

Inspection dates:

22–23 January 2020

Outcome

St Giles School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to St Giles School. They know and trust the staff. Staff use their skills to make sure that all pupils' needs are met. Bullying is rare, and pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

Staff have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils have a positive approach towards their work and learning.

Pupils behave well at social times and during lessons. As a result, the school is a positive place to learn.

Pupils have a strong voice in the school. They help to decide which extra-curricular activities they would like to take part in. This includes a range of activities during the school day. The sporting events and life-skills programmes inspire pupils to do well. Pupils feel listened to and know that their opinions matter. One pupil summed up for others in saying that 'staff are supportive' and 'help us when and where they can. They never fail'.

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

Leaders have developed a new curriculum. It is clearly sequenced and well planned and is intended to offer pupils a rich and broad experience and meet their needs well. This curriculum has been in place for less than one year. Leaders' intent for the curriculum is not yet fully realised.

Leaders have devised a well-structured programme to develop pupils' reading and communication skills. Pupils have lots of opportunities to practise their phonics. Staff ensure that all pupils have time to sound out their letters. All staff make good use of resources, such as symbols, to help pupils become better readers. If any pupils fall behind with their reading, teachers give them extra help, so that they can catch up. However, the plans for reading and communication are not fully in place. There is more to do to involve

all parents in developing their children's reading skills at home. Some pupils need a more personalised approach to help them with their reading.

Subject leaders know the curriculum well. Shared planning means that all teachers teach in a consistent way. This helps pupils increase their knowledge over time. School leaders provide staff with plenty of training opportunities to improve their expertise.

Teachers know and understand the pupils well. They plan learning according to pupils' needs, and this helps pupils to learn. Staff encourage pupils to have a go at every activity and correct pupils when they get things wrong. Lessons interest pupils and link to life beyond St Giles. In a reading lesson, pupils were reading fluently and staff asked questions to help pupils to understand what they had read. In mathematics, staff used their understanding of pupils' sensory needs to help pupils complete the activities correctly. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge to real-life situations.

Most pupils achieve well across the curriculum, including in mathematics, reading and communication. The broad curriculum prepares pupils well for adulthood. For instance, a number of subjects focus on the skills pupils need to become more independent.

Staff help pupils to become resilient and confident learners. Pupils take part in activities including cooking, soft-play, sports and beauty club. Many visitors come into school to help pupils better understand the wider world. For example, pupils are taught about other faiths and how to become responsible members of society, showing tolerance and respect.

The early years curriculum forms an important foundation for the wider school curriculum. Staff encourage children to become more independent through play. Early reading is encouraged, with phonics at the heart of the teaching. Children achieve well in mathematics and early reading. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. Children are ready to make the transition from early years.

In the sixth form a well-planned curriculum and high aspirations for students mean they achieve well. Leaders have created close links with the local community. Students appreciate the opportunities to have 'DREAMS' and work with great resilience to achieve them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. All safeguarding checks are carried out quickly and efficiently, including detailed checks on an adult's suitability to work at the school.

Leaders respond to any safeguarding concerns in a timely manner. Staff are well trained and receive regular safeguarding updates. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and who they can talk to if they have a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is still relatively new. Leaders have not yet implemented all aspects of the curriculum thoroughly. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they could across all areas of the curriculum, including in reading and mathematics. Leaders must ensure that all areas of the new curriculum are implemented effectively, so that pupils gain more knowledge over time and achieve well.

Background

When we have judged a special school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 13–14 December 2012.

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 are 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

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| Unique reference number | 122955 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 10121288 |
| Type of school | All-through special |
| School category | Maintained special |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 131 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 30 |
| Appropriate authority | Interim executive board |
| Chair of interim executive board | Mr Chris Levy |
| Headteacher | Mr Matthew Rooney (Head of School) |
| Website | www.st-giles.notts.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 16 January 2016 |

Information about this school

- The school has expanded significantly since the last inspection in 2016 to provide additional places for pupils with communication and interaction needs.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher and senior staff. We spoke with the school's improvement adviser, by telephone. Meetings were also held with members of the interim executive board.
- We undertook deep dives in reading and communication, mathematics and preparation for adulthood. For each of these subjects, we met with senior leaders and subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work and met with pupils to discuss their experience of learning.

- We reviewed documents relating to safeguarding. Staff explained to us how they kept children safe.
- We observed pupils during social times, at lunch and breaktime.
- We spoke with parents at the start of the school day. We also took account of the 58 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as the 42 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jason Brooks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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