

Inspection of St Richard's VC Academy

Marfleet Lane, Hull, East Yorkshire HU9 5TE

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in this warm and welcoming school. They are confident that adults keep them safe from harm. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Everyone wants the best for one another. Pupils' high level of attendance shows that they enjoy their time at St Richard's.

Starting in the Nursery, children conduct themselves well. They behave well and are attentive in lessons. At lunchtimes, the lively 'smile squad' encourages pupils to be busy and active. Pupils say that there is very little bullying. They say that teachers deal with it quickly on the rare occasions that it happens. Pupils appreciate the support they get from the kind staff in the 'calm room'. They say that this helps them to understand their feelings and manage their emotions.

Leaders have made many improvements in the school since the last inspection. However, they know that the quality of education is still not good enough. The curriculum has not developed pupils' knowledge and skills well enough in the past. Leaders have made successful changes to the teaching of reading and mathematics. They are determined to quickly improve pupils' learning in all subjects. Leaders are working hard to make sure that pupils remember more of what they have learned.

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

There have been many changes in staffing since the school was last inspected. The new leadership team has taken effective action to improve all aspects of school life. There is now a stable staff team whose members work closely together to improve pupils' education.

Leaders have undertaken a complete review and designed a well-sequenced curriculum. This has begun to be implemented but it is too soon for it to be effective in all subjects.

Leaders are aware that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills. Teachers do not always consider this in their planning. Pupils do not always reach their full potential, particularly at the highest levels.

Leaders have made sure that reading has a high priority. The teaching of phonics is consistent and effective. Books are well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. As a result, most pupils quickly gain the skills they need to become fluent readers. Pupils who fall behind get the support they need to catch up. However, this was not the case in the past. This means that some older pupils still lack the skills they need to read fluently. Most pupils say that they enjoy reading. They look forward to their 'drop everything and read' sessions and listening to their teachers read to them.

Work in mathematics is well structured. Pupils have opportunities to apply their developing skills in different contexts. Teachers use resources to help pupils to

complete 'golden ticket' challenges in mathematics. Teachers help pupils to understand and use the correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils can talk with confidence about their learning. Pupils' reasoning skills have also improved.

Senior leaders recognise that the quality of pupils' work is not as high as it could be in all subjects. Teachers are not always clear about what pupils need to know and understand in all subjects. For example, during a discussion about geography, pupils in Year 5 could not remember using maps before.

The leader of early years has clear priorities for the curriculum. It is well sequenced but it is at an early stage of being put into practice. Adults encourage most children to develop their speech quickly. Children are taught phonics well. Adult-led activities encourage children to practise their letter sounds and understanding. Children can describe 'smaller', 'taller' and 'higher' when comparing the height of objects, for example.

However, some children make slow progress. They are at an early stage of learning to write. They do not form letters and numbers correctly. The recently developed early years classroom is new. However, the large spaces, inside and outside, are not stimulating enough for children. Resources encourage physical play but, in some areas, tasks are not as clear to children. There are not enough activities to promote pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Staff expect all pupils to behave and work hard. They set high expectations and promote resilience. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high-quality support.

Pupils' attitudes in lessons are positive. As pupils progress through the school, they become even more eager to learn. They enjoy opportunities to act as play-makers, buddies, Mini Winnies and school councillors. Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop essential life skills. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible and mature citizens.

Leaders place a high priority on staff well-being. Staff are unanimous in reporting that they feel valued by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff fully understand their roles in keeping children safe. They follow leaders' high expectations, and safeguarding concerns are immediately followed up. All appropriate checks are in place on adults who are regularly in the school. Key staff have a strong understanding of the needs of families and the processes around safeguarding in the local area.

Leaders liaise with a variety of outside agencies to meet the needs of their pupils.

Leaders are persistent when seeking the right external support for families. There are a number of specialist staff who provide helpful services and support for the most vulnerable pupils. Parents value the assistance they get at difficult times for their families.

Pupils benefit from a clear emphasis in the curriculum on how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They have a good understanding of the potential dangers they face when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The headteacher and senior leaders have worked tirelessly to improve the school, and this is working. The curriculum has a clear and ambitious intent. However, the implementation of this is only at a very early stage in subjects other than English and mathematics. The curriculum and teaching in these subjects are improving, as is pupils' achievement. Pupils are not yet able to recall and apply knowledge and vocabulary from previous topics to a high enough standard across subjects. Therefore, leaders need to hasten work already started to improve teachers' and teaching assistants' skills so they can support pupils effectively to catch up with their peers in other schools.
- Learning in some subjects is not always planned well to help pupils who have gaps in their knowledge to improve quickly. Leaders need to establish effective systems to check how well their subject is taught in all classes to improve pupils' learning across the curriculum. Subject leaders need to ensure that teachers consider what pupils already know and what they need to learn to help pupils to reach their full potential, particularly at the highest levels.
- Leaders are improving the teaching of early reading and mathematics in Nursery and Reception. Improvements to the curriculum for the other areas of learning are at an earlier stage of development. Leaders should improve the indoor and outdoor environment to enable the curriculum to improve and to increase the proportion of children reaching a good level of development.

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 the school and 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

Unique reference number	141649
Local authority	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	10121725
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	323
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Fearnley
Executive Headteacher	Karen Siedle
Head of School	Cate Coldham
Website	https://www.st-richards.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8–9 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Several members of staff have been appointed since the previous inspection, including the assistant headteachers, teachers and learning support assistants.
- In June 2019, the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The purpose of this inspection was to evaluate the quality of religious education and the Christian nature of the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- We held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, and senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the Chief Executive Officer and directors of the academy trust.

- We also looked at a range of policies and documentation related to school improvement planning, including the quality of provision in early years and planning in the wider curriculum across the whole school.
- We looked in depth at the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. We held discussions with senior leaders and subject leaders with responsibility for those subjects, undertook lesson visits, looked at pupils' work and held discussions with pupils and teachers.
- We looked at safeguarding procedures and records of safeguarding and behaviour. We spoke to staff and pupils to evaluate their understanding of safeguarding procedures and checked pupils' attendance.
- We observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around school.
- We also spoke to pupils about their school life and their views on personal development and behaviour. We took account of the 62 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- We spoke to parents and took account of their responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- We met with teachers and took account of the 11 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Fearn	Ofsted Inspector

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