

# Inspection of St Loys Church of England Primary Academy, Weedon Lois

Milthorpe Road, Weedon Lois, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8PP

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Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Loys Church of England Primary Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Loys Church of England Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as St Loys Church of England Primary Academy as a result of conversion to academy status. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in St Loys Church of England Primary School's effectiveness before it closed. Changes in the effectiveness of St Loys Church of England Primary Academy may have happened at any point since it opened.

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

Pupils like being at school. They told inspectors, 'People care for each other. The school is like a big family.' Pupils enjoy their learning. They concentrate very well during lessons. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know that there is always a member of staff they can speak to if they are worried about anything.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They promote pupils' well-being. The school's six values are a central part of this inclusive school. Pupils understand the values. They are highly motivated. Pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the school.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They behave with consistently high levels of respect for others. Pupils are polite and caring. They know that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils have a very clear understanding of equality. They are good at listening to others. Pupils told inspectors, 'Everyone's accepted here.'

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, whose comment was typical of many, said, 'St Loys is a very nurturing environment where the children develop a strong sense of self-worth.' Parents appreciate that the staff are approachable. They like that the staff know their children well. Parents are impressed with how the staff capture their children's interest in learning.

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

Leaders are reviewing curriculum plans. They have developed a strong curriculum in some subjects. However, some other subjects, such as science, computing and history, are at an earlier stage of development. In these subjects, leaders have not identified precisely the key knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Reading is a priority in the school. From the moment pupils start at the school, there is a strong focus on phonics. Leaders have ensured that pupils build up their phonics knowledge to enable them to learn to read. Pupils use their decoding skills well to sound out unfamiliar words. Staff regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. If pupils fall behind, staff are quick to provide support.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised. Leaders have planned the order in which pupils learn new knowledge so that pupils build their understanding and skills over time. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They can explain their learning well using mathematical vocabulary. Teachers provide mathematical equipment to help pupils understand the learning. For example, children in Reception use counters to help them count to 20. Staff regularly check pupils' learning. They take the time to explain if pupils get stuck.

The classroom environment in the early years is very engaging. Relationships are excellent between children and adults. Leaders ensure that there is a strong focus

on children's communication and language. Leaders have set out how learning in the early years connects with learning which they will encounter as they move through the school. This is very clear in plans for phonics, reading and mathematics. However, plans are at an early stage of development in other areas of learning.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They ask questions which support pupils to deepen their understanding of the learning. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding in phonics, early reading, spelling and mathematics. However, there is not an agreed approach to checking pupils' understanding in all subjects.

Teachers are quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that staff provide high-quality support in lessons. Staff ensure that all pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum. Teachers work well with external specialists. They ensure that resources are suited to pupils' needs.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is of a high quality. Leaders create a respectful culture. Pupils like being house captains and school councillors. They organise playground games for each other. Pupils understand British values, such as the rule of law and democracy. However, some pupils' understanding of different faiths is weak.

Representatives of the multi-academy trust (MAT) and governors know the school well. They support leaders and hold them to account. They understand their statutory responsibilities. Governors and MAT representatives support leaders to develop the curriculum. Leaders engage very well with staff. They provide regular professional development and take account of workload. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school's leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Leaders know pupils and their families well. Leaders check that staff know how to spot pupils at risk. Staff pass on concerns promptly. They provide strong support to vulnerable pupils. Record-keeping is comprehensive. Governors and representatives of the local authority regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders ensure that they provide regular training for staff and governors.

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

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

- The key content and knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects, such as science, computing and history, are not sufficiently well planned and sequenced. It is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn and when, to build

their knowledge over time. However, it is clear that leaders have begun to review and plan the curriculum from Reception to the end of key stage 2 in these subjects. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

- The school's approach to assessment in the school is inconsistent. Staff assess regularly in phonics, early reading and mathematics. However, there is not an agreed approach to checking pupils' understanding in all subjects. As a result, staff do not have a precise enough understanding of how well pupils achieve across the range of subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the use of assessment in all subjects has a clear rationale and provides teachers with the necessary information to help them support their pupils to know more and remember more.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140102
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199412
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gill Nunn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Crawford
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stloys.co.uk">www.stloys.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 May 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2020.

## Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors and the chief executive officer of the academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, PE and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader. The safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also considered the responses to the survey for staff and the pupils' survey.

### **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jason Brooks

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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