

Inspection of Saint Nathaniel's Academy

Westport Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 4JG

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Saint Nathaniel's provides a warm welcome for everyone. Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly and safe school. Parents and carers are very positive about the care given to pupils by staff. Pupils say that the school is like a family. At Saint Nathaniel's, pupils learn, grow and achieve together. The motto, 'With God all things are possible', reflects the school's ambition to fulfil all pupils' potential.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave well in and around school. They help and are kind to each other. Bullying and other unkind behaviour is rare. Staff usually deal with any concerns or worries straightaway.

Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop wider interests or talents. They take part in lots of out-of-lesson clubs and trips. They enjoy singing at public events. Older pupils take pride in their roles as school leaders and ambassadors.

Pupils are enthusiastic about learning. They love reading. They enjoy using computer tablets in classrooms. Leaders and staff are working hard to help pupils achieve well in all subjects. Despite this, teaching and the curriculum design do not help all pupils learn as much as they could.

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

Leaders recently introduced a new approach to teaching early reading. It starts in the early years and continues for older pupils where necessary. Any pupil who falls behind in reading gets regular help until they catch up. Leaders have put reading at the heart of the curriculum and pupils read widely and often. Many staff in school are now experts in teaching phonics. All this helps pupils to read with fluency and confidence.

Leaders recognise that many pupils struggle with fluency and problem-solving in mathematics. Work to tackle this is in the early stages. Some mathematics teaching does

not help pupils learn new knowledge. Teachers' explanations of what pupils are expected to learn are not always clear. The work teachers set does not consistently help pupils practise what they do learn. Because of this, some pupils struggle to make sense of their learning in mathematics.

Leaders have made other important changes to the curriculum. For example, pupils study the foundation subjects in greater depth. In most subjects, leaders set out what pupils should learn by the end of year. However, the curriculum does not always set out in enough detail what pupils should learn over a series of lessons. The lack of detail also makes it more challenging for teachers to carefully check on what pupils know and can do. This makes it difficult for teachers to make sure that new learning builds on what pupils know already. As a result, pupils are often expected to move onto new work before they have a secure understanding of previous learning.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive effective support. They struggle in lessons because they do not understand what they are taught. Teachers often ask pupils to complete work without checking if they have the knowledge to do it. The help pupils receive focuses on explaining what the task might be, such as writing a sentence, without helping them to understand how to do it well.

In the early years, children get off to a good start. They settle quickly and enjoy effective care. Children achieve well and are ready for the key stage 1 curriculum by the time they leave Reception. Leaders make sure that children are supported as they move from Reception to Year 1. Children's attitudes to learning are positive in the early years and continue throughout the rest of their time at school.

Pupils benefit from rich and varied experiences that promote their wider development. Extra-curricular activities include opportunities to exercise leadership, build teamwork, be involved in charitable activity and take part in the arts and sport. Staff work hard to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This reflects the school's Christian values. Staff actively celebrate pupils' diverse backgrounds.

Senior leaders are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They support staff and take steps to manage their workload. Leaders know the school's strengths and its areas for development. Trust executives provide useful guidance to leaders and staff, including on well-being and safeguarding. Trustees and the local governing committee hold school leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff know how to identify and help pupils who are at risk of harm. They work as a team to create an inclusive, safe and caring community. Leaders and staff work closely with outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive the help they need, including any who need protection from harm. Leaders keep well-organised records, including of all appropriate checks on new staff.

Effective arrangements, including assemblies, help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online or outside of school. This includes teaching pupils about any local risks they may face.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not precisely set out what knowledge should be taught and when in some foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of what to teach across a series of lessons. Leaders should complete their programme of review of foundation subjects and ensure that the knowledge is clearly sequenced.
- In mathematics, teachers do not consistently explain key knowledge clearly enough before they ask pupils to practise or apply new learning. This means that pupils struggle to understand the learning. Leaders should provide teachers with support and training to ensure that they explain and teach mathematics effectively.
- Teachers do not use assessment well enough across subjects to check if pupils have gaps in their knowledge before moving them onto the next stage in learning. This makes it harder for pupils to build on their previous learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge before moving pupils on to the next stage of learning.
- Pupils do not always receive effective support in class. When this happens, their learning is hindered as they do not understand what is being taught. Leaders should make sure that all pupils get the support they need to make strong progress.

Background

When we have judged a 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school may now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 24 and 25 January 2017.

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.

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	140562
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10211286
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mr Johnny Anderson
Principal	Mrs Rosemarie Patrick
Website	www.saintnathaniels.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This voluntary controlled primary school is sponsored by The St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school offers provision for two-year-olds in Squirrel Lodge.
- The principal was appointed since the last inspection and took up post took on 1 January 2020.
- The school was last inspected under section 48 on 26 January 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due within eight years of the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal, senior leaders and other school staff. The inspector met with those responsible for governance and other representatives of the trust also.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading and phonics, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at safeguarding across the school. He spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding. Senior safeguarding leaders met the inspector to discuss recruitment and safeguarding records.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and attitudes in classrooms and during play and lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the Ofsted staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022