

Inspection of St John's Church of England Primary Academy

Addison Terrace, Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 9AR

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils give visitors a warm welcome at St John's. There is a strong sense of pastoral care across the school, which reflects the school's Christian values. Leaders teach pupils how to be responsible, caring citizens. For example, the school provides families with a community fridge and food shelves in the school reception area. Pupils in turn donate food to a local food bank at harvest time. The school is a valued part of the local community.

The school is a calm and orderly place in which to learn. Teachers make sure that pupils follow the school rules but also support pupils who need help managing their behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and are happy. Bullying does not worry them. They know that leaders will respond to any incidents of bullying and take effective action.

All leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils live up to these expectations. They achieve well and are proud of their successes.

Pupils value the activities staff provide for them. This includes a range of sports clubs and trips. Pupils can be sports leaders or members of the school council. They take on these roles willingly.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils will learn in different subjects. They have made changes to improve how subjects are planned and delivered.

Leaders prioritised the development of English, including reading, mathematics and science. In these subjects, teachers have secure subject knowledge. Pupils build successfully on what they know year on year. Work in pupils' books shows that they are making good progress. However, leaders have not set out the learning or knowledge pupils should remember clearly enough in a few subjects, for example geography and history. Some subject leaders are at different stages of their training and development. This affects how well they have developed their subject areas. Therefore, there is variability in teachers' subject knowledge across subjects. This limits some pupils' progress in those subjects.

Leaders' focus on reading is making a difference. Pupils develop a love of reading quickly in Reception. Adults base children's learning around different stories each week, such as 'One Snowy Night'. Pupils in all years visit the library with enthusiasm to choose a book to take home to read. An effective reading programme is in place. This starts in Reception. Staff receive training on how to deliver the programme. Leaders check how well pupils are reading. They put appropriate support in place if needed. Consequently, pupils are developing into confident, fluent readers.

Adults have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. There are well-established routines for learning in all years. This means that little learning time is lost.

Behaviour across the school is good. Pupils are eager to learn and answer questions about what they are learning.

Children in Reception get off to a good start. In Reception, adults use resources well to support their literacy and numeracy. Adults' consistent approach to teaching number prepares children well for their learning in Year 1. The development of children's vocabulary and communication is a key focus in the classroom. As a result, children speak with confidence about their learning.

Leaders provide good care for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify their needs and ensure that they all study a broad range of subjects alongside their peers. All pupils with SEND have a 'My Tracker'. These plans describe what the pupils need help with. However, leaders have not ensured that they are precise enough. They do not accurately identify what staff need to do to help pupils with their learning or manage their emotions. This limits pupils' progress in overcoming some barriers to learning.

Leaders check the attendance of pupils and act quickly when needed. Early indicators show that this is making a difference for some pupils. For those who do not attend school often enough, their attendance is improving over time. However, leaders know there is more work to do to improve attendance overall.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to work with the local community. They also have opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. For example, they celebrate Diwali, and leaders invite parents to school to mark Holi. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Recent changes to school leadership have brought an energy and drive for further improving the school. Staff speak highly about the support leaders provide for them. They feel valued and respected and are proud to be part of the school.

Trustees, members, the local academy committee (LAC) and the diocese are all fully committed to the school and its pupils. For example, they regularly check on the well-being of senior leaders in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare is taken seriously by all staff. They report concerns confident in the knowledge that leaders will take effective action. Leaders make sure that staff have regular training. The school completes all the appropriate checks on all adults who work at or visit the school.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through lessons and visitors who come into school to speak to them. For example, they know not to share their personal details when working online. As a result, pupils say they feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have had limited training in how to effectively lead and develop their subject areas. This impacts how well the curriculum is delivered, especially where staff do not have the depth of subject knowledge to deliver the planned curriculum effectively. Leaders should continue to support subject leaders to enable them to successfully develop their subject curriculum and support staff with its implementation.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils' written SEND provision plans are as effective as they could be in supporting the learning of pupils with SEND. Information about what support will look like for individual pupils is not precise enough. This means that some staff do not adapt the curriculum to precisely meet pupils' needs. Leaders need to ensure that provision plans clearly set out the specific support the pupils need to enable staff to plan and deliver effective additional support for pupils with SEND.
- Some pupils are absent from school too often. This means they miss out on key learning and find it difficult to keep up with their peers. Leaders should ensure that the strategies they use to improve attendance help all parents to understand the importance of school attendance and its impact on pupils' success at school.

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	140856
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10256892
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alison Primrose
Principal	Laura Hopley (Executive Principal)
Website	www.stjohnsacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new executive principal was appointed to the school in September 2022. In October 2022, a new assistant principal joined the school. The head of school was seconded to another school in the trust in December 2022. The assistant principal then became the interim head of school.
- The school is part of the St Chad's Academies Trust. The school is made up of 20 schools.
- A diocesan inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school took place in November 2017. Inspections take place approximately every five years.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club operating on the site. This provision is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the executive principal, the head of school, the chief executive officer, the director of learning, other leaders, the chair of the trust, members of the LAC, including the chair, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons in other subjects and looked at pupils' work in science.
- Inspectors talked to pupils and staff at unstructured times during the day.
- An inspector talked to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Lesley Yates, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Beech

His Majesty's 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 2023