

Inspection of All Saints Academy Dunstable

Houghton Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5AB

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022, and 24
January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Too many pupils do not feel safe at All Saints Academy Dunstable. A significant number do not feel happy and many parents and staff have concerns about provision. A large proportion of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils have low attendance. Those pupils who receive education at alternative provision are not closely checked to ensure they attend and are achieving well. The small number of sixth-form students have a better experience than pupils throughout the rest of the school.

Behaviour is variable. Pupils experience frequent disruption to learning. There is not a culture of respect. Aggressive and abusive language towards peers and staff is common. Bullying happens. While pupils say that leaders deal with it if they know, it is often not reported. Pupils do not feel there is an adult in school they can talk to about concerns. They comment that some of this is down to the constant changes in staff.

Pupils have the opportunity to access a range of activities beyond the classroom. However, the curriculum for personal development is not effective at ensuring and developing positive attitudes in pupils towards others.

Pupils are mostly taught a well-planned curriculum. While this is the case, their experience of its delivery is inconsistent.

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

Leaders do not have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. Leaders' self-evaluation has been over-generous. As a result, leaders' actions for improvement have had limited impact. For instance, leaders have done a lot of work on the curriculum, but this has not been as effective as it should have been.

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have reviewed and revised the curriculum again. They identify what pupils should learn and when across the full range of subjects. Leaders outline how pupils should build their knowledge over time in each year group. Teachers use this information to plan what to teach. They help most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum. However, some teachers do not adapt what they teach in response to what pupils already know. They do not check pupils' understanding effectively. This means that sometimes pupils do not build on secure prior learning and do not develop the detailed knowledge they need to achieve well.

Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read are supported well. Leaders identify their needs accurately. Staff provide regular help so that pupils improve their confidence and fluency as readers.

Leaders have not created a culture that leads to positive behaviour. They react to incidents rather than developing effective processes that will improve pupils' behaviour over time. They do not deal successfully with the underlying reasons for misconduct. The numbers of suspensions and exclusions have increased. Pupils who are removed from lessons do not learn the curriculum they would access in class. This does not support them to achieve well. Staff do not apply the consequences and rewards detailed in the behaviour policy consistently. This creates confusion for pupils.

Processes to address poor attendance are weak. Leaders do not have a clear understanding of the causes of pupils' poor attendance. As a result, attendance is low. Leaders have not successfully improved the attendance of pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. As a consequence, pupils miss significant parts of their education.

Leaders do not check effectively on the safety and curriculum provision for pupils who attend alternative provision. They record the attendance of some of these pupils incorrectly. Leaders do not ensure that pupils with an education, health and care plan receive the support they require.

The personal, social and health education curriculum supports some aspects of pupils' personal development. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, benefit from careers guidance that prepares them well to make decisions for their future steps. They learn about healthy relationships and online safety. However, some pupils do not demonstrate an understanding of respectful attitudes and behaviour.

The provision in the sixth form is better than in the rest of the school. The curriculum for the sixth form is well considered. Students are motivated to learn and achieve well. They appreciate opportunities for leadership and are positive role models for younger pupils.

Leaders have not built a clear and shared understanding with staff of their priorities. Too many staff are not confident in leaders' plans and actions to improve the school. Some staff feel supported by leaders. However, others say that leaders' approach causes high levels of workload.

Governors do not rigorously hold leaders to account. They accept assurances too easily. Governors do not check closely enough for themselves that leaders' work is improving the provision for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not ensure that all safeguarding concerns are recorded. Systems for recording safeguarding concerns and serious incidents of behaviour are muddled. This means the right actions are not always put in place to ensure pupils are safe.

There are gaps in safeguarding records. This means that leaders cannot be confident that they have all the information they need to keep pupils safe.

Leaders ensure appropriate checks are made when recruiting new staff.

A significant proportion of pupils do not feel safe when they are in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not developed robust systems and procedures for recording and triangulating safeguarding concerns. This means that leaders do not know if staff follow through potential issues of safeguarding as they should. Leaders must ensure thorough oversight of safeguarding processes so that staff record and follow up all safeguarding concerns promptly and appropriately.
- Teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding, and so do not adapt what they teach to meet the needs of pupils. This means that some teaching does not build on what pupils know and understand. Leaders should ensure that all staff are confident in checking learning so that teaching enables pupils to secure the detailed knowledge they need to achieve well across the full range of subjects that they study.
- Leaders have not created a culture of respect and positive behaviour across the school. Pupils regularly experience disruption to their learning. Pupils, parents and staff report many incidents of disrespectful behaviour, including abusive language. Leaders must ensure that staff receive the support and guidance they need to maintain consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and urgently establish a culture of mutual respect.
- Leaders do not have a clear understanding of the causes of pupils' poor attendance. Leaders' actions to address poor or declining attendance are ineffective. Persistent absenteeism is high, including for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders must ensure that they gather the information they need to develop effective strategies to support pupils to attend school regularly.
- Leaders' oversight of pupils attending alternative provision is weak. Leaders do not check on the safety and well-being of pupils or whether they are in receipt of an appropriate curriculum. They do not accurately record the attendance of some pupils who attend alternative provision. Leaders must put in place robust systems to ensure the safeguarding of pupils who attend alternative provision and assure themselves that the curriculum and provision are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Too many staff do not have a shared understanding of leaders' priorities. This means that leaders' initiatives do not get effectively implemented. Leaders need to ensure they work collaboratively with staff and motivate staff so that staff are confident in implementing leaders' plans to improve the 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	135946
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10241611
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	655
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	35
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	David Fraser
Principal	Liz Furber
Website	www.allsaintsacademydunstable.org
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All Saints Academy Dunstable is a stand-alone academy.
- The school is sponsored by the Diocese of St Albans and the University of Bedfordshire.
- All Saints Academy Dunstable has a Christian character. The religious aspects of the school's provision were last inspected in June 2017, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.
- Leaders use four alternative providers to support a small number of pupils. One is registered. The other three are unregistered.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- Inspectors first visited the school on 22 and 23 November 2022. Ofsted deemed that further evidence was required to secure the inspection judgements. As a result, this inspection was deemed 'incomplete'. Four of His Majesty's Inspectors visited the school on 24 January 2023 to gather more evidence about the quality of education for pupils with SEND, those pupils who attend alternative provision, behaviour and attitudes, sixth-form provision, and leadership and management, including the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: English, science, history, business studies and languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and students from all year groups about their experience of the school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed behaviour during breaktimes.
- Inspectors conducted behaviour learning walks specifically to observe pupils' behaviour in lessons.
- Inspectors met with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders and other leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, careers, early career teachers and personal development. Inspectors also met with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss the provision in the school for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence. This included the school's self-evaluation document, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised the systems and documentation linked to safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss the alternative providers they use and their provision. Inspectors spoke to leaders of the alternative provision.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff about what it is like to work in the school.

- The original lead inspector met with four members of the governing body and spoke with the diocese director of education via video call. The second lead inspector met via video call with the chair of governors and one other governor.
- Inspectors considered the 76 responses and 41 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View. The first inspection team spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered 48 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff. They also considered 240 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for school pupils. When inspectors visited the school on 24 January 2023, they considered 20 further responses from parents, 46 further responses from staff, and 245 further responses from pupils.

Inspection team

Wayne Jarvis, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Carrie McMorn	Ofsted Inspector
Likhon Muhammad	Ofsted Inspector
James Shapland	Ofsted Inspector
Charlie Fordham, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Chris Davies	His Majesty’s Inspector
Tracy Fielding	His Majesty’s Inspector
Katherine Douglas	His Majesty’s Inspector

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