

# Inspection of a good school: St John's Church of England Academy

Raymoth Lane, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 7LU

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Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

## Outcome

St John's Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Gez Rizzo. This school is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chris Moodie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Blinston.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto, 'belong, believe, achieve', captures the impact of being a pupil at St John's. It is a happy school that pupils say they really feel part of. They are keen to explain how they feel safe there because teachers care for them. They say that there is very little bullying because everyone gets on so well. If it ever happens, staff sort it out. The school is one big family.

Staff help pupils to believe in their own abilities. This grows their confidence so they want to show how much they can do and are keen to learn more. One pupil summed up the views of many others in describing the school as 'inspirational'. The school also helps to develop their belief in the need to behave respectfully and to do their best. They love getting 'Rizzo rewards' for their hard work and conduct.

Pupils value the good quality of education they receive. They say that teachers make lessons exciting. They become fluent readers from a young age and achieve well across subjects. Pupils particularly like the many opportunities the school provides, such as trips to Perlethorpe and, especially, taking part in the Young Voices concert at Sheffield Arena.

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

The school's ambition for all pupils to receive the best education is clear. Staff want everyone to flourish and to achieve their potential. This begins in Nursery, where children encounter a wealth of activities to excite their interest. In mathematics, children put plastic milk bottles in order from full to empty. They count using buttons and paint circles

and rectangles. The curriculum builds knowledge over successive years so that, by Year 6, pupils can calculate that  $2/3$  minus  $1/10$  is  $17/30$ . In history, children in early years learn about the concept of change over time by looking at how they are growing up. Staff teach those in Year 3 about ancient civilizations, such as the Shang Dynasty. The oldest pupils study how Worksop has been impacted by mining and the Industrial Revolution. Pupils say that they particularly like events, such as 'history day', that make learning come alive for them. Staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and give them effective support to learn. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as other pupils and have equal access to the wider provision the school offers. All staff are driven by a strong desire to include every child at every point.

At the heart of the curriculum is staff's uncompromising desire to get all pupils to read without delay. A new phonics scheme is being delivered well, and pupils develop the fluency they need. Children in Reception Year sing their alphabet chant and chant sounds such as 'th' and 'sh' with speed. Those in Year 1 read words such as 'fortune' independently and can explain terms such as 'digraph'. Pupils love learning their phonics. However, although the weaker readers usually are given books that help them, they sometimes receive books that are too hard. Leaders know that they need to give staff more training in the new book-banding system.

Teachers have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the different subjects effectively. They are given regular training, including that facilitated by the trust. Staff check what all pupils are learning. They repeat and explain things that pupils do not understand and answer their questions. As a result, pupils achieve well. By the time they leave for secondary school, pupils' attainment is significantly above average.

Pupils behave well. They do not disrupt lessons. Teachers are positive and passionate in their delivery and give pupils engaging work. As a result, the attention of even the youngest children does not wander. The school is a calm learning environment. Pupils are very respectful of property and move sensibly about the school. They are polite to each other and to adults. The teaching of relationships and the moral development of pupils are clear strengths of this school.

The personal development programme teaches pupils about other cultures using, for example, books such as Ibtihaj Muhammad's 'The Proudest Blue'. It also gives pupils many opportunities to join clubs such as for netball and the play-in-a-week drama club. Pupils take part in inter-school sporting competitions. Many have positions of responsibility, such as the pupil tech leaders and librarians.

Staff morale is high, and adults work as a united team. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload and treat them with respect. They are proud to work at St John's.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The recent introduction of a banding system for reading books has resulted in staff sometimes not being sufficiently experienced to choose the right books for the weakest readers. Occasionally, these pupils are given books to read that are too difficult for them. They contain too many sounds the pupils do not yet know. This risks hampering these pupils' ability to catch up quickly. The school should ensure that any staff who need it receive further guidance so that they give the weakest readers reading books that are consistently and precisely matched to their ability.

## 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 would 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St John's Church of England Primary School, to be good in June 2014.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142507
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10324181
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	459
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Philip Blinston
<b>CEO of trust</b>	Chris Moodie
<b>Principal</b>	Gez Rizzo
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjohnsworksop.co.uk">www.stjohnsworksop.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- In order to judge whether the school continues to be good, the inspector focused the inspection on specific subjects of the curriculum. He undertook deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. This involved meeting with senior and subject leaders, scrutinising curriculum planning and visiting lessons where pupils were learning these subjects. He met pupils from the lessons and looked at their work. He met with teachers about the curriculum they were delivering. He listened to pupils in different year groups reading books.

- In addition, the inspector met with representatives of the local governing body and the coordinator for pupils with SEND. He spoke with a representative of the multi-academy trust. The inspector read a wide variety of school documents. He checked whether pupils were safe and happy at the school's breakfast club.
- The inspector took note of the responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire. He met pupils from a wide variety of year groups to ask them about their views of the school and what they feel it provides for them.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Roary Pownall, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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