

# Inspection of St Nicolas C of E Academy

Windermere Avenue, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 6HJ

---

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The interim co-headteachers of this school are Angela Parsons and Martyn Yeo. This school is part of the Diocese of Coventry 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, Michael Cowland, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Barry Cockcroft.

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

Children get off to a tremendous start at St Nicolas C of E Academy. They soon adopt orderly routines and learn quickly. Learning moves smoothly from one key stage to the next. The school has high expectations of all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils go on to make strong progress through a broad curriculum, so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Staff forge strong relationships with pupils, and pupils know that adults will listen to them if they have a concern. This means that they feel safe in school. Pupils attend regularly and behave well in lessons. At social times, they play happily together. They are well mannered and treat each other with respect. The school feels calm and purposeful.

The school takes effective care of pupils' mental health. Through the parliament, for example, pupils have good opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Representatives have negotiated for storage sheds to be installed on the playground. Trips and visitors add to the richness of the curriculum. A high proportion of pupils take part in clubs after school, including sewing, Lego and sporting activities. Fine, relevant displays contribute to a most attractive school environment.

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

The school makes learning to read a top priority. From the very start of Reception, all pupils are taught in a logical way how sounds correspond to letters or groups of letters. Staff use the language and routines of phonics in a consistent way. They check on how well pupils are learning. The school provides effective support for any pupils at risk of falling behind. Staff work closely with parents, and pupils read frequently to an adult. Books are well matched to pupils' knowledge of phonics. Pupils quickly become fluent readers. For older pupils, teachers pay precise attention to different reading skills. Most pupils are keen to read in their own time.

Pupils study all the subjects in the national curriculum. The curriculum includes each component of a subject so that in art, for example, they learn about artists, how to create and how to evaluate their own work. Leaders have planned learning in detail so that it builds on what pupils already know.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan the day-to-day activities for pupils so that they meet the school's long-term learning aims. Teachers present information clearly and check on what pupils have learned. They ensure that pupils recap their knowledge to help them remember it. Teachers use resources effectively. In geography, virtual reality goggles allow pupils to see what they cannot experience first-hand. In some subjects, however, the key learning gets a little lost in the knowledge for pupils to learn. On occasion, the learning is not broken down carefully enough into small steps that pupils find easy to follow.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND promptly and effectively. Staff draw on guidance to ensure that they meet pupils' needs well. As a result, pupils with SEND make effective progress through the full curriculum.

The school has clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils learn to treat their peers with respect. They are keen to succeed. Pupils concentrate well in class, especially when they find the work stimulating. For example, Year 4 pupils were enthused by the way that their work in both science and geography taught them about the water cycle. Pupils present their work neatly. The school provides effective support for those pupils who need additional help with their behaviour.

Pupils follow a planned programme of social and personal education. This teaches pupils about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe, including online. Through the choice of texts for study and subjects like religious education, the school has taken important steps to widen pupils' social and cultural knowledge. Pupils commonly vote to decide on reading texts. This has contributed to a good understanding of fairness and democracy. In the early years, children make exceptional progress in developing their language skills. Older pupils are noticeably confident and articulate.

The school works very effectively with parents and carers, for example showing them how to support their children's learning in different subjects. Staff at all levels have contributed well to the development of the school. They are happy, motivated and believe that the school is considerate of their well-being and workload. The trust provides the school with a good level of support.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, the school has not identified precisely the key learning that pupils need to learn. The learning is sometimes not broken down into sufficiently small steps. As a result, gaps appear in some pupils' knowledge. The school should ensure that in all subjects it is clear what knowledge is essential for pupils' progress, and that it is broken down into manageable steps for them to learn.

## **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 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>	140878
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294599
<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>	422
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Barry Cockcroft
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Parsons (interim co-headteacher) Martyn Yeo (interim co-headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stnicolas.covmat.org">www.stnicolas.covmat.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Coventry. The school received its last section 48 inspection of church schools in April 2024. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school's breakfast and after-school clubs are provided by an external company.
- The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the interim co-headteachers, other senior leaders and with curriculum leaders. They also spoke with staff about their experience of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, the academy's school improvement partner, the chair of the academy governance committee and three other members. They met remotely with the chair of the trust.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and with groups of pupils more formally.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' behaviour and attendance, and the school's curriculum.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. An inspector met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art, geography and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to a number of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.

## Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Ellen Taylor	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 looked after children, 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024