

Inspection of St Andrew's Church School

Grove Terrace, Taunton, Somerset TA2 6HA

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Kaye Frounks. This school is part of The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nikki Edwards, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Oliver Cofler.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Andrew's is a welcoming and inclusive place. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They benefit from warm and nurturing relationships with staff. This helps them to feel safe. Staff visit the children who are joining Reception Year at home and in any pre-school setting they attend. This enables children to build familiarity with staff and settle into school life quickly. Parents and carers appreciate the strong pastoral guidance that staff provide for their child.

The quality of education that pupils receive requires improvement. Published outcomes at key stage 2 remain significantly below national expectations in key areas such as mathematics and writing. The school and trust have not tackled these weaknesses quickly enough. Some pupils do not gain sufficient knowledge and skills to be well prepared for their next steps into secondary education.

Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. The majority behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils make the most of opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities. They demonstrate the school value of wanting to 'make a difference' through being sports leaders, pupil chaplains, librarians or a member of the school council. The school helps pupils to develop their independence and resilience through attending residential trips.

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

Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum. Children in Reception Year learn in a vibrant and well-thought-out environment. The curriculum is ambitious, and they get off to a flying start. The school and trust have delivered subject-specific training to staff. This has improved their confidence in delivering the whole curriculum. However, the specific knowledge pupils should learn is not always broken down into enough detail. As a result, some knowledge is not taught, and pupils develop gaps in their understanding.

Across the school, there is variability in the quality of teaching that pupils receive. Where practice is stronger, teaching regularly checks pupils' understanding. Staff then use this information to carefully plan what happens next. In weaker teaching, misconceptions are not always identified and so they persist.

The school has welcomed an increase in the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff receive training to enable them to support these pupils well. There is also a rise in the number of pupils being identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most of these pupils follow the same broad curriculum as their peers. Staff receive helpful information about the needs of individual pupils with SEND. Staff use this to support pupils effectively in the classroom. However, the targets for pupils with SEND are not always linked to their progress through the curriculum.

Reading is enjoyed by pupils across the school. Children in Reception Year benefit from daily nursery rhymes, songs and stories. Each class has 50 special books which they explore across the year. Pupils also learn more about three different authors each year. These have been selected to introduce pupils to a diverse range of text types, styles of

writing and cultures. Children start to learn to read as soon as they join Reception Year. Teaching carefully follows the school's chosen phonics programme. Pupils learn new letters and their corresponding sounds in a logical order. If pupils fall behind, they receive support to catch up quickly. As with other areas of the curriculum, the checks on whether pupils remember previously learned sounds, and are acquiring new ones, are not always as precise as they could be.

Pupils learn an age-appropriate, well-planned personal development curriculum. Children in Reception Year develop social skills that allow them to take turns and engage in effective play. They start to understand what it means to be a good friend. As pupils get older, they learn about different types of relationships and how to stay safe online. Pupils understand fundamental British values such as democracy. They embrace the spiritual ethos of St Andrew's as a church school.

The school has experienced significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. This has hindered progress towards the areas of improvement identified by the school and trust. However, there has also been a lack of rigorous analysis of pupils' outcomes or checking on the impact of any changes over time. There is further support and training now in place, but this has yet to have the positive impact leaders intend.

The majority of staff are supportive of the planned changes and the leadership of the school. They say St Andrew's is an enjoyable and rewarding place in which to work. Staff appreciate the opportunities for professional development, including working with other schools in the trust. They feel their workload is thoughtfully managed by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There has not been effective checking of the impact of changes on improving pupils' progress through the curriculum. This means improvement towards the school's identified areas of weakness has not been rapid enough. The trust should ensure that the impact of school improvement strategies is evaluated regularly, so that pupils are better prepared for their next steps.
- Across the curriculum, the knowledge that pupils need to learn is not broken down into sufficient detail. Therefore, pupils do not always build secure and consistent knowledge as they move through the key stages. The trust should ensure that the knowledge it wants pupils to learn is precisely defined in all subjects.
- The effectiveness of the delivery of the curriculum is variable across classes. Weaker classroom practice does not consistently check pupils' understanding of prior and new learning. This results in staff not addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge before they move on to delivering the next part of the curriculum. The trust should ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently high, and that assessment is being used effectively.

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

Unique reference number	140062
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10334706
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Oliver Cofler
CEO of the trust	Nikki Edwards
Headteacher	Kaye Frounks
Website	www.standrewsbwmat.org
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Andrew's Church School is part of The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust.
- The school uses three providers of alternative provision.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- St Andrew's is a Christian church school. The last section 48 inspection took place in April 2019. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, representatives from the local governing body, the chair of the trust board, a trustee, the deputy chief executive officer of the trust, and two assistant directors of education of the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. 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.
- 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 considered responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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