

# St James' CofE Academy

Barbridge Road, Bulkington, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9PF

## Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust are ambitious for the school and they are committed to ensuring that pupils achieve highly and are well cared for.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Together with her senior leadership team, she has brought about considerable improvement in pupils' achievements and quality of teaching.
- Outcomes are improving and pupils in all year groups are now making good progress, especially in English and mathematics.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils show that they are rapidly catching up with others, although there is still some way to go before all underperformance is addressed.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and incidents of bullying are rare.
- The effectiveness of subject leadership, especially in English and mathematics, has developed well in recent years. English and mathematics leaders actively support others to improve pupils' outcomes. Leadership of other subjects is not as well developed.
- While parents are generally positive about the work of the school, parents are not always clear about their child's progress or how to effectively support their child's learning.
- Teaching has improved over the last two years as a result of high-quality performance management, training and opportunities to share good practice. All teachers have higher expectations of pupils and are better able to support pupils' learning.
- Leaders have developed effective systems to monitor pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and swift action is taken to address their needs.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers a wealth of opportunities to develop writing across a range of subjects. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it is relevant and engaging, particularly for boys.
- Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They are keen to do well and take a pride in their work. However, they do not always know what they need to do next to move their learning on. Occasionally, if the pace of a lesson slows, a minority of pupils lose concentration and they do not make as much progress as they should.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are respectful of adults and each other and demonstrate an understanding of the school's values.
- The school environment has been improved in recent years and is welcoming and secure.

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, so that they are at least as good as other pupils nationally, particularly in relation to reading and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that teaching meets the needs of all pupils
  - ensuring that all pupils know the next steps to take in their learning.
- Embed approaches to monitoring and assessing pupils' progress and subject leadership to ensure that current good practice in school is applied across a wider range of subjects.
- Improve links with parents so that they are clear about the progress their children are making and that parents are better able to support their children's learning at home.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust are all ambitious for St James' CofE Academy and have a shared goal to enable all pupils within the school to 'Enjoy, Achieve, Excel'. They are focused and determined and therefore have created an environment in which pupils are able to achieve their potential.
- The school is a member of the Diocese of Coventry multi-academy trust. The trust is a partnership of twelve academies which work together with a Christian ethos. The work of the trust and the school's improvement partner has been highly effective in helping to secure improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Since her appointment two years ago, the headteacher has worked hard to bring about significant improvements in all aspects of the school. Her leadership style has supported the development of others and there is now a strong leadership team. The headteacher is clear in her focus to raise standards and improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Teachers identify high-quality performance management as being central to bringing about the improvements within the school. The headteacher sets high expectations and is not afraid to hold teachers to account for their performance. Staff value the professional development programme that the school provides and the opportunity to work with other schools.
- Senior leaders have rightly been focusing on improving standards in English and mathematics as a priority. As a result, pupils are making good progress in these subjects. The leaders for English and mathematics, who are also senior leaders within school, are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. They have been instrumental in bringing about the improvements. Their approaches to planning and monitoring pupils' progress are effective. Leadership in other subject areas is less well developed.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing a wide range of interesting topics such as 'North America' and 'Evacuate, Evacuate'. This year, some topics have been introduced specifically to support the engagement of boys within the wider curriculum. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills within other subjects, for example reading 'The boy in the striped pyjamas' or writing a journal from the point of view of a Roman soldier, both of which link to class history topics. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the range of topics they study, and they like the way in which different aspects link together.
- Pupils attend a range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime or after school, such as multi-sports, tag rugby and cross-country running. In addition to the focus on sports and physical activity, the school has recently introduced some more creative activities, such as an art club and jewellery making. Pupils report how much they enjoy these opportunities.
- The school provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, linking this clearly into wider aspects of the curriculum. For example, during collective worship, pupils learned about tolerance and the importance of valuing

differences between people. All pupils have personal journals in which they reflect on their personal development, and pupils report that this helps them to better understand their feelings and emotions and to cope in difficult situations.

- The school is now working more closely with the local infant school to support pupils as they move from one school to another. Staff get to know the Year 2 pupils through visits both by teachers and pupils. Information is shared about what pupils can and cannot do and any specific needs they may have. This results in new pupils settling quickly in Year 3 and minimises lost learning time at the start of the year.
- School leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils during whole-class teaching, small-group work and one-to-one support. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are now making good progress and rapidly catching up with their peers and other pupils nationally.
- Special needs funding is used effectively to provide support for pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make accelerated progress from their individual starting points. The pupils' needs are addressed in a variety of ways, including extra support in class, specialist interventions and access to support for their emotional needs.
- Leaders use the physical education and sports premium funding to employ specialist coaches and increase the level of pupils' participation in physical activity. For example, all Year 4 pupils attend swimming lessons and pupils can participate in a range of sporting competitions within the Bedworth area. Individual class teachers have not had sufficient training to provide this level of activity should the funding stop.
- Parents are generally happy about the education their children are receiving and many speak positively about the changes that have taken place in recent years. However, a minority of parents expressed concerns via Parent View. The issues raised were not substantiated by the inspection team, but communication with parents could be improved, especially in relation to parents knowing about their children's progress and how they can support them effectively.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the school well. They have an accurate understanding of the school's current performance and are clear about its strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. The governing body is well led by the chair of governors. Members of the governing body speak passionately about the improvements they have led over the last two years and they are clearly ambitious for the school. They are focused on improving outcomes for all pupils.
- The governors provide a good balance of support and challenge to the school leadership team and hold the headteacher to account for the progress pupils make.
- Each governor now has a lead role within the school that is linked to a particular area or priority. This approach is instrumental in driving improvements, for example in relation to improving attendance or ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make accelerated progress.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school. Outcomes and actions, as a result of these visits, are clearly recorded.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have regular and appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and are clear about what they should do if they have any concerns. The safeguarding team maintains the required records and information is shared with relevant external agencies. Leaders are persistent when concerned about a pupil's welfare and follow up with the appropriate agencies as necessary. Governors regularly monitor whether there have been any safeguarding issues and check whether school procedures have been followed.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries, and this includes keeping safe on line. One pupil explained that, through lessons focusing on personal development, they had each identified a network of people to approach if they had any concerns. Pupils are confident that any issues raised will be quickly resolved.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching across the academy has improved over the last two years. This is because of the headteacher making expectations clear, the provision of effective training and working with other schools. Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, making sure that teachers know what they need to do to be more effective.
- Teachers now have much higher expectations of pupils and ensure that work is planned, taking into account pupils' needs. It is clear that the majority of pupils enjoy being challenged and take pride in their work. Occasionally, when the pace is too slow or work is too easy, pupils become distracted or do not make the progress that they should.
- Where teaching is more effective, teachers ask questions to challenge pupils' thinking and pupils are encouraged to explain their ideas. Pupils are increasingly able to accurately choose tasks at the right level of challenge for their ability and understanding. Pupils generally make sensible and reasoned choices.
- Pupils' books show that pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, are making good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils reflect on their learning at the end of each lesson and ask for help if they are not clear about the content of the lesson. One-to-one or small-group support is provided to address their concerns, often on the same day.
- Pupils are generally clear about what they are learning within a lesson and teachers provide feedback to pupils on a regular basis. However, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve their learning.
- Homework is consistently set for each class and regularly marked. However, parents are not given sufficient information about how they can support their children to complete homework activities.

- The school's leaders have devised their own assessment systems. These are now being used effectively to track the progress pupils are making, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress is discussed at half-termly meetings and swift actions are taken to address any pupils who are at risk of falling behind. The accuracy of these systems is checked when teachers within the local area or multi-academy trust meet to compare outcomes and standards.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have created a positive climate in which pupils are able to thrive. The school provides regular sessions to support vulnerable pupils. The pupils involved talk about the positive impact that the provision has had on their behaviour. The focus of this work is on younger pupils, as often the older pupils have developed sufficient skills to no longer require the support. Pupils whose parents are in the military also access support which targets their specific needs.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take, including cyber bullying. They are clear that incidents of bullying in school are now rare and they are confident that any concerns would be dealt with quickly by an adult.
- Year 6 pupils each take on a school-wide responsibility, for example play leaders, school ambassadors, house captains and assembly monitors. Pupils take these roles seriously and are proud to undertake them. This is helping to prepare them for the next stage in their education.
- All classes are represented on the school council, which meets regularly and represents the views of pupils to school leaders and governors. As a result of their input, new play equipment has been purchased. The school council has also led a significant change in lunchtime arrangements. This has resulted in pupils all eating lunch at the same time, allowing more time for playing and socialising together.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school is a welcoming, calm and orderly place.
- Pupils are well mannered, confident and friendly. They take a pride in their work and their school. Pupils show a respect for others' ideas and views, actively listening to each other and working together cooperatively.
- Behaviour in classrooms is of a high standard, with most pupils being keen to learn. As a result, pupils are able to make good progress.
- Positive behaviour is explicitly taught through the school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum, religious education and collective worship. Pupils know and understand the rewards and sanctions systems in school and these are now applied more consistently by teachers. Leaders closely monitor instances of poor behaviour and

act to reduce the risk of them reoccurring.

- Overall attendance is improving and is now similar to the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and are keen to learn. Strategies to improve attendance are proving effective and staff are rigorous in following up any absence to ensure that pupils are not missing from education.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving, although it is still lower than other pupils in school. The school is monitoring this closely and working with families to rapidly improve attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes are improving in English and mathematics. In the 2016 key stage 2 tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was the same as that seen nationally. Regular checks on pupils' progress indicate that standards continue to rise.
- Current pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects and across all year groups. Evidence in pupils' books and the school's assessment systems confirm that pupils are making more rapid progress than they have done in the past.
- Work seen during the inspection shows that by the end of the autumn term, the proportion of pupils working at the standard appropriate for their age increased across all year groups. Middle-ability pupils are making particularly good progress as they are being given more challenging work and are rising to the challenge.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving, especially those of middle ability, and there is evidence that they are making accelerated progress, so the difference in performance between them and other pupils nationally is decreasing. This is because of better teaching and higher teacher expectations.
- In all year groups, the most able disadvantaged pupils do as well as other most-able pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. This is due to the effective support they receive in class and through tailored support. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and adapt support and intervention according to need.
- Outcomes in the 2016 key stage 2 reading test were lower than expected. School leaders have identified reasons for this underperformance and are addressing these with current pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy reading.
- Pupils have the opportunity to read widely and often and have access to a well-stocked library. Pupils generally read with fluency and comprehension appropriate for their age. Younger pupils use phonics skills to help them read unfamiliar words.

## School details

Unique reference number	140694
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10025163

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Mrs Alison Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Cuskelly
Telephone number	02476 313227
Website	<a href="http://www.st-james-jun.warwickshire.sch.uk/">www.st-james-jun.warwickshire.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin3015@we-learn.com">admin3015@we-learn.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about examination and assessment results, the curriculum and information about governors on its website. During the inspection, school leaders took action to address some of these aspects.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school became an academy in April 2014. It is a member of the Diocese of Coventry multi-academy trust.
- This is a smaller than average junior school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.



- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below national average levels.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to national average levels.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils learning in 11 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken together with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with two representatives from the Diocese of Coventry multi-academy trust. The lead inspector also met with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body and information relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 37 free-text responses. Inspectors spoke to parents on the first day of the inspection and also considered outcomes from the school's own survey of 150 parents.
- Eight responses to the staff questionnaire were considered as part of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Barry Yeardsley

Ofsted Inspector

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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. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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