

Inspection of a good school: St Peter and St Paul Church of England Academy

Upper Church Street, Syston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 1HR

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 March 2023

Outcome

St Peter and St Paul Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are polite and respectful. They show good manners as they go about their school day. They describe the school as a very positive environment. They say it is one in which they feel safe and happy. The pupils truly do demonstrate the school's three values of respect, honesty and perseverance.

Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to sit up, answer questions and 'track the speaker'. This helps pupils develop good learning behaviours which, in turn, helps them learn.

Pupils are kind to each other and accepting. They know that derogatory language or bullying is not acceptable. Staff are sharp to deal with these rare incidents, if and when they occur.

Pupils develop a thirst for learning. They come to school excited about the new things they will learn. There are ample opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Teachers help pupils develop to be resilient in their setbacks. As a result, pupils will often say 'It is not I can't, but it is I can't yet.'

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers hold positive views about their children's experiences at the school.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious at this school. The range of subjects allows pupils to experience a breadth of learning. Core subjects, such as early reading and mathematics, are very well established and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Leaders have made necessary changes to some parts of the curriculum, so that pupils can gain a depth of understanding. For example, there have been changes to the art

curriculum. This is now beginning to expose pupils to the work of a greater range of artists. Leaders have considered how pupils build on what they know. The curriculum is well sequenced.

Subject leaders have planned out the essential knowledge, such as facts and vocabulary, that pupils must know. Teachers use resources and activities effectively, so that pupils know and remember this important knowledge. In a few subjects, the knowledge that leads to pupils developing subject-specific skills, is not as yet precisely identified. Some pupils do not develop these skills as well as they could.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use expert questioning to check if pupils have understood key concepts well. Teachers' effective use of 'cold calling' ensures that pupils are ready to answer questions at any point during a lesson. This keeps pupils focused.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) study the full curriculum. Leaders are diligent in identifying pupils' needs and ensuring that teachers support all pupils to overcome any barriers to learning. Leaders review the 'small steps' targets for pupils with SEND regularly. This helps pupils with SEND achieve.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Children start to learn to read as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Teachers are early reading experts. They ensure that all pupils learn the sounds that letters make. Pupils are able to use this knowledge to read books that are well matched to the sounds they know. Pupils become fluent and confident readers. As pupils get older their love for reading continues to grow. Carefully chosen books expose them to different genres and styles. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about books, such as the 'Nowhere Emporium' and 'The Boy at the Back of the Classroom'. Teachers help pupils develop cultural and social understanding through the class books they read.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. Adults plan activities carefully. For example, children are able to paint daffodils. This not only helps them express themselves artistically but helps them understand the changing environment as spring approaches. Teachers ensure there is a focus on vocabulary. Children use terms such as 'cuboid' and 'sphere' with accuracy. The well planned and delivered early years curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Leaders have ensured that there is a focus on teaching pupils how to behave. This culture resonates throughout the school.

Leaders have ensured that pupils develop as individuals. Many pupils are proud to represent the school in different sports teams. Many pupils are nervously looking forward to taking part in the annual school musical, which is 'Oliver!' this year. Pupils benefit from extra-curricular trips and residential. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe.

At all levels, leaders protect staff from external pressures, including workload. Well-being of staff is a priority. Staff are proud and happy to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant at this school. They record and report any concerns they have straight to the designated safeguarding leader. Leaders have trained the staff well to recognise the signs that indicate that a pupil might be at risk.

Leaders keep detailed records of concerns. They record the swift actions they take to keep pupils safe. Leaders work with external agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils.

Governors and executives from the trust monitor and evaluate how well staff adhere to safeguarding policies and procedures. They understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the knowledge that enables pupils to develop subject-specific skills is not as precisely identified as it is in others. In these subjects, pupils do not always develop these subject-specific skills as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers know and teach the essential knowledge that leads pupils to develop subject-specific skills in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged 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 school to be good in December 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](#)' 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	139349
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10254927
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	412
Appropriate authority	Board of directors
Chair of board of directors	Stephen Adshead
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Mulhern
Website	www.spspacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Rise Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult. The inspector looked at plans and books, and spoke to children about other subjects.

- The inspector met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, the early years foundation stage, and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- The inspector met with the safeguarding leaders to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector met with the chair of the local governing committee and members of the board of directors.
- The inspector met with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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