

St Peter's Church of England Primary Academy

Main Street, Stonnall, Walsall, West Midlands WS9 9EE

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and head of school have taken swift and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the school, which they have successfully shared with all members of staff. They have created a culture of open, collaborative leadership.
- Members of St Chad's Academy Trust offer strong support for the school and know the school well.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Pupils read well, with confidence and enjoyment
- Leaders' decisive actions have resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. The progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is improving. However, there is not always sufficient challenge in lessons to ensure that all groups of pupils, particularly middle-attaining pupils, are making as much progress as they are capable of.
- Although current progress evident in pupils' books is strong, reported progress in mathematics is still below the national average by the end of key stage 2.
- Most teachers use questioning well to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, this is not always the case and when questioning is weak, it results in missed learning opportunities.
- Leaders have designed a creative curriculum and are now ready to enhance this curriculum so that it provides pupils with key skills.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Leadership is strong and supports the good quality of teaching and learning.
- Parents and carers say that their children are happy and safe in school. Pupils enjoy school; they say their teachers are kind and make learning fun. Pupils behave well around the school and are friendly, polite and well-mannered.
- Middle leaders have recently become more involved in monitoring and evaluating their subjects and areas of responsibility. However, they are not yet fully accountable for outcomes in their subjects and areas of responsibility, nor are they all fully involved in school improvement activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is a strength of the school. Pupils are mature and caring and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by continuing to develop all middle leaders, in order to ensure that they are all fully involved in school improvement activities and fully accountable for outcomes in their subjects and areas of responsibility.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - further developing the challenge for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics so all groups, especially middle attainers, are making the progress they are capable of
 - embedding the use of effective questioning to enable pupils to deepen their understanding and make greater progress
 - building on the recent successful developments to raise attainment in mathematics across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has gone through significant changes over the past 18 months. The appointment of the executive headteacher and a head of school in January 2018 has been successful in improving standards. New teachers have been appointed to the school and new assistant principals have been put in place. This has increased the capacity for leadership and improvement. The academy trust has provided a wide range of training recently to support and develop leadership across the school.
- Leaders of the school know the school well and have been swift to identify and improve areas of weakness. They have a shared vision and have worked hard together to develop a family orientated school where everyone values and respects each other. They know the pupils and families well and have developed good relationships with the wider community.
- Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for the school and are successfully creating a culture of high expectation and a determination by everyone to do their best.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop an ethos of openness, where all staff feel confident to express their views. Staff morale, after a period of instability, is now high. Staff value the opportunities they have been given to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding through professional training and visits to other schools in the academy trust. Staff are proud to work at the school. As a result, standards of teaching and learning are improving across the school.
- Leaders have analysed data carefully to identify strengths and areas of weakness. Having correctly identified that boys' attainment and progress should be improved, they took appropriate actions. These included adapting the curriculum and purchasing resources, for example reading texts, that would better meet boys' interest and needs. As a result, the attainment of boys has improved. The attainment of girls has also improved because of the more considered approach to planning. Leaders are also focused on improving the progress of pupils who are middle attainers. They carefully track the progress of individual pupils and regularly hold meetings with teachers to assess progress. Not all teachers, however, sufficiently challenge these pupils, so progress and attainment for middle-attaining pupils could be further improved.
- Leaders have, quite rightly, concentrated their actions on improving standards in English and mathematics and the application of these subjects in topic work. They are enhancing these topics by developing a creative curriculum that ensures all subjects are well delivered and pupils' skills are strongly developed. All staff are enthusiastic and eager about this development.
- The English and mathematics leaders are effective and have a clear understanding of the strengths of their subject areas and where they need to go next. They have recently become more involved in monitoring and evaluating their curriculum areas and in making presentations to governors.
- The development of pupils' SMSC understanding is a strength of the school. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the world in

which they live and the diversity of modern Britain. Visits, such as the one to the Houses of Parliament, and visitors are well planned to support topics and enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils enjoy and value the many experiences they are given, including residential trips that pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 attend together, trips to the local church and theatre visits. Relationships between pupils are very positive; they work very well together and respect each other's views.

- The number of disadvantaged pupils is very small. Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to support these pupils.
- Leaders use the physical education and sport premium funding well to encourage greater participation in sport. While there is some evaluation of its impact, it is not as thorough as it might be.
- Middle leaders are keen to develop their subjects and areas of responsibility and to contribute to the development of a strong, creative curriculum. However, at the moment, they are not all fully involved in school improvement activities or accountable for outcomes, which limits their effectiveness as leaders.
- The school website is under construction and not all documents at the time of inspection were fully accessible. School leaders, governors and the chief education officer of the trust are aware of this and are resolving the problem as quickly as possible. The required documentation was available in school to inspectors. Although some parents felt communication was an issue for the school, many other parents felt communication was not a concern and thought the recently introduced systems were excellent.

Governance of the school

- Members of the local academy committee (LAC) know the school extremely well. They are proud of their school and value the incisive improvements the recently appointed leaders have made. They share the vision and aspiration of the executive headteacher and head of school.
- Members of the LAC have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement for the school. They receive detailed and valuable information from school leaders, including presentations from the leaders of English and mathematics. They ask challenging questions of these leaders and also take many opportunities to visit the school to find out about teaching and learning for themselves.
- The academy trust offers strong support to the school. The chief executive officer (CEO) and the trust's head of school improvement regularly visit the school to monitor standards and the 'raising achievement board' meets regularly to review all aspects of the school's performance. Members offer valuable advice to aid the school's development and support members of the LAC. This is helping members of the LAC strengthen their skills and understanding. The trust holds the LAC to account for its actions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff have been well trained and take their responsibilities seriously. There are regular updates at weekly briefings, including quizzes to ensure that staff knowledge is robust. Safer recruitment procedures are fully in place and governors frequently review safeguarding procedures as part of their meetings and visits to school. As a result, pupils are safe in school and well cared for.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They are given many opportunities to learn about how to keep safe, including lessons on internet safety and visits, for example to the local fire station. Monthly online safety newsletters are published for parents, alongside other valuable information about internet safety, on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of teaching and learning since their appointments. They have developed successful strategies to closely monitor and support teaching, learning and assessment, which are having a positive impact.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. When learning is carefully matched to pupils' needs and abilities, pupils make strong progress. However, where learning is not so well-matched to pupils' starting points, progress is not as strong because pupils do not fully understand what they are learning.
- Where teachers' questioning is used well to probe pupils' understanding, it encourages them to explain their reasoning. This in turn enables pupils to become more resilient and independent learners. However, where questioning is not so well developed, there are missed opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge.
- The new approaches to the teaching of writing and mathematics are having a positive effect. Pupils are now more able to write at length, with improved spelling and use of punctuation, and sentences that are more interesting and varied. The introduction of objective-led assessment and the sharing of success criteria with pupils are helping teachers accurately identify pupils' next steps and build these into their planning. New resources have been purchased to support the teaching of mathematics, which is helping to develop pupils' basic skills and their problem-solving and reasoning skills. The use of pre- and post-assessments in mathematics lessons supports teachers' planning, helping them to focus on individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses. As a result of these new initiatives, most pupils are making stronger progress and more pupils are working at the higher levels. Where these approaches are well established, pupils are being challenged more regularly and attainment is higher. But this is not yet embedded across the school, especially to support middle-attaining pupils, many of whom could achieve more than they currently do.
- Teachers value the range of training they have received recently, which is targeted at the needs of the school as a whole as well as individual staff needs. The training provided by the trust to improve teachers' knowledge and opportunities to moderate work with other teachers in the trust have supported recent improvements. This is helping leaders at all levels to become more effective.

- The teaching of phonics is strong. Pupils use phonics to read and write confidently and accurately for their age. Pupils across the school read well with good expression and understanding. They told inspectors they like reading.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning. They currently work mainly with the lower-ability pupils to support progress and check understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's Christian ethos and its mission statement, 'One family under God – believe and achieve', underpins all aspects of school life. The six Mission Keys, which are symbolic of St Peter, are well known to pupils and staff. They promote the virtues of working together, respect for each other and the world they live in, forgiveness, justice, humility and trust. This results in a school that is calm, caring and happy. Pupils work in collaboration with, and show great respect for, each other. They listen well to the contributions others make to learning and conversations.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They take a pride in their work and try their best. Most pupils concentrate very well in lessons and follow recently established routines and expectations.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are confident to talk to adults if they have any concerns or worries. Pupils say that bullying does not happen in their school. They are aware that sometimes pupils fall out with each other but say that issues are quickly resolved. They understand what constitutes bullying and they value chances to discuss bullying, such as during anti-bullying week.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe, how to eat healthily and the importance of keeping active.
- The breakfast club supports the school's ethos and values. Pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils enjoy the club.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders, since their appointments, have carefully tracked attendance and introduced a range of strategies since September 2018 to promote the importance of high attendance. Any absence is quickly followed up. Attendance is now in line with the national average and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is now below the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour at the time of the inspection was very good. Pupils walk around the school calmly and are respectful of the school environment. Playtime was a happy time and pupils told inspectors that they have good friends and enjoy the equipment available. They are well-mannered, polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils told the

inspectors that any new pupils would be welcomed 'with open arms' and that it was a great school.

- Pupils are given responsibilities around the school, including becoming members of the school council or house captains. They are also developing greater resilience and independence in their learning.
- Occasionally, when lessons are not challenging enough, pupils do become distracted and go off task. But the recently developed behaviour management strategies are being consistently applied by teachers, and pupils quickly resume their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The work of current leaders is improving outcomes.
- Information provided by school leaders shows that pupils are making secure progress in reading, writing and mathematics and that progress made by boys has improved. Lesson observations and work seen in pupils' books during the inspection support this.
- Starting points in mathematics are lower than those in reading or writing, and attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 was below the national average. Attainment is improving, but current data indicates it will still be slightly below the national average by the end of key stage 2. The development of new teaching strategies is having an impact on standards and is beginning to reduce the impact of previously weak teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported and make strong progress from their individual starting points. This is because of strong leadership, assessment and support.
- Progress in phonics is very strong. The proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national average for the past two years.
- Progress in topic books studied by inspectors was strong and showed good evidence that pupils are able to apply their English and mathematical skills and abilities in a variety of subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- The head of school is currently the early years leader. He has a secure knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years provision. He is providing robust and effective support for the newly appointed teacher who is at an early stage in her career. He has modelled best practice and uses moderated work from last year to share expectations and standards. This support, and the support of 'learning circles' with other schools in the academy trust, have ensured that the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The support of the early years leader and opportunities to moderate children's learning with teachers from across the academy trust have helped the Reception class teacher to effectively assess children's work and identify next steps.

- The majority of children enter Reception class with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Evidence explored during the inspection indicates that children make good progress over time. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development last year was above the national average and work in children's books shows that current outcomes are equally positive. Many children are on track to exceed some early learning goals.
- Early phonics is well taught and children read well for their age and enjoy books. Standards of letter and number formation are high and pupils take a pride in their learning. The children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- The learning environment is attractive and covers all areas of learning. The outdoor area is stimulating and provides strong links with the indoor learning area. Children's interests are well covered and both adult- and child-led activities help develop the children's curiosity and knowledge. The children are confident and happy learners who were eager to share their learning with the inspectors, making imaginary hot chocolate in the role play café and writing a bill to be paid. Similarly, outside, a group of children were eagerly searching for worms and told the inspectors they must be careful not to hurt any.
- The teaching assistant in Reception provides good support to children's learning and well-being.
- Routines are well established and the children are happy, polite and play well together. Occasionally children are not fully engaged in whole-class activities and progress is slower. However, the early years leader is supporting the class teacher to ensure that all time is well used.
- Children are safe in Reception class. Risk assessments are made regularly and all welfare requirements are met. Parents say their children settled very well and enjoy coming to school.

School details

Unique reference number	142982
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10088437

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

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	192
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Michelle Painter
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Cockshott
Telephone number	01543 372060
Website	www.stpetersacademystonnall.com
Email address	office@st-peters-stonnall.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Peter's Church of England Primary Academy is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school converted to an academy in July 2016 when it joined St Chad's Academies Trust. The trust holds the ultimate responsibility for the school. The LAC oversees the school's work.
- The school does not have any provision for two-year-olds.
- The great majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is very small.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is very small.

- The school had a section 48 inspection of its religious character in February 2017, when it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school provides a breakfast club, which is run by school staff.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons in all year groups. Many of these observations were made jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books across a variety of subjects with school leaders. The lead inspector also studied work relating to SMSC education and modern foreign languages.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including: the school's own self-evaluation; school leaders' improvement plans; information and data on pupils' starting points, achievement and progress; documents relating to the work of the trust and the LAC; and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding. The lead inspector scrutinised the school's website.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school and leaders of other aspects of the school's provision. The lead inspector also held meetings with five members of the LAC, the CEO of the trust and head of school improvement for the trust. She also had a telephone conversation with the chair of the board of trustees.
- An inspector visited the breakfast club and spoke to the manager of the club and pupils attending the club.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons and at playtime. Inspectors heard pupils from Years 1 to 6 read and met with pupils from across key stages 1 and 2 to ask them for their views about the school.
- One of the inspectors spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- The lead inspector analysed the 64 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the 55 free-text comments. The lead inspector also took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Walker	Ofsted Inspector

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