

Inspection of St James' CofE Academy

Barbridge Road, Bulkington, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9PF

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school where pupils and staff feel respected and valued. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and show kindness to each other and to adults. They follow the school's values. Pupils enjoy talking with others and take a genuine interest in what they have to say. This is because adults take the time to talk to and listen to pupils. The relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of this school community.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils grow in confidence, independence and resilience while attending the school. Pupils behave well, are proud of their learning and discuss this with enthusiasm.

Bullying is not tolerated, and any that does happen is dealt with well. Pupils feel safe. They know that there is always someone to talk to if they are worried or upset. They value the use of the class 'chatterboxes' to seek support if they do not wish to speak to someone straight away.

Leaders have created an inclusive community. All staff want pupils to be fully involved in the life of the school. Pupils' aspirations are prioritised by staff. They support pupils in deepening their understanding of the wider world and of future career opportunities.

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

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the school to continue to develop its curriculum, and are taking the right actions to make this happen.

Pupils, of all ages, talk about their learning with confidence. Pupils value the support that they receive, which they feel helps them do well. Staff are ambitious for pupils with SEND and make sure that they can access the whole curriculum. They do this by making suitable adaptations to how the curriculum is delivered and by providing effective support.

Leaders and staff have prioritised reading. There are clear systems in place to support all readers, at all levels. The teaching of phonics is clear and consistent. Pupils speak positively about reading in school. They are excited to read to adults and talk about their class texts. Senior leaders carefully choose books that link to learning in other lessons. This supports pupils in developing their vocabulary and applying this across the curriculum. As a result, pupils gain the knowledge and skills to become confident and fluent readers.

In subjects such as English and mathematics, pupils feel that they are pushed and challenged. In other subjects, however, the work pupils are given is not always demanding. Levels of challenge vary. This is because teachers' assessment of pupils'

work is inconsistent. Where assessment is used effectively, it informs teaching, and pupils receive work that is suitably demanding. This is not always the case in some subjects.

There is a respectful school culture. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are positive in lessons and around school. This is because staff hold high expectations of pupils and their behaviour. They use the behaviour policy consistently and effectively. Leaders and staff take swift and effective action when there are concerns about bullying or a pupil's behaviour.

The personal development of pupils is very important in this school. Leaders focus on how to provide enriched experiences for all pupils. There is a school council and pupils hold a range of responsibilities. They are proud of their achievements. These include helping to develop the environment in and around school. Pupils take part in a range of lunchtime and after-school sports clubs. Leaders prioritise supporting pupils with their attitudes towards learning and in developing future aspirations.

Leaders, including members of the governing body, are reflective and know the school well. Governors offer appropriate support and challenge. Leaders know the school's strengths and the areas that the school is continuing to develop further. Leaders at all levels consider the well-being and workload of staff effectively. Staff speak highly about the support and training that they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture. Staff and leaders have an excellent knowledge of pupils, their families and the community. When staff have concerns about children, they pass these to safeguarding leads, who deal with them appropriately.

Leaders are relentless in making sure that pupils receive timely and effective support. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and well. They know there are adults in school to help them.

Leaders make all the required checks on adults to ensure that they are safe to work with pupils in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The design of the curriculum is less well sequenced in some subjects than it is in others. Consequently, pupils' learning doesn't build as well as it could, especially for the most able. Leaders need to make sure that the curriculum is well sequenced in all subjects, and that pupils are provided with work that is suitably demanding.

- Teachers' use of assessment varies. Checks on pupils' understanding do not consistently tell staff how well pupils have learned and remembered what they have been taught. Consequently, teaching does not always address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Leaders should ensure that staff throughout the school use assessment effectively, to inform their teaching and improve pupils' learning.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	140694
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10211155
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	228
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paula Whitfield
Headteacher	Jane Cook
Website	www.stjames.covmat.org
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Coventry. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2021. The next section 48 inspection will be within five years of the most recent one.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. They also met with representatives of the trust and a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, 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.

- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with governors, leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met the members of the safeguarding team to evaluate their knowledge, records and actions. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those related to safer recruitment of staff.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Gemma Mann, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Ogden

Ofsted Inspector

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