

St James' CofE Academy

Address: Barbridge Road, Bulkington, Bedworth, Warwickshire, CV12 9PF

Unique reference number (URN): 140694

Inspection report: 15 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a caring, inclusive and highly ambitious school where every child is known, valued and encouraged to flourish. Staff build very positive relationships with pupils and take the time to understand each child's strengths and needs. They identify barriers to learning quickly and ensure that pupils get the right support. This means pupils feel safe, confident and fully included in school life.

High expectations are evident for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and those who may face challenges beyond school. Staff work together to make sure pupils enjoy the same opportunities and experiences as their peers. Support is carefully tailored and reviewed regularly. As a result, pupils thrive personally and academically.

Effective systems ensure that pupils with SEND receive support that meets their individual needs. Close partnerships with external professionals help staff respond quickly when additional help is needed. Parents and carers are valued partners. They play an important role in planning and reviewing support.

Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. This helps them achieve well and participate fully in school life. Pupils who are vulnerable or known to social care receive personalised support that helps them feel secure, included and successful.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Trustees, governors and school leaders demonstrate a passionate commitment to helping all pupils succeed, regardless of background, needs or starting points. Shared values and a determination to improve life chances are clearly evident throughout the school community. Leaders set consistently high expectations for pupils and staff. Through their actions and example, they serve as positive role models and promote a culture of ambition, respect and continual improvement.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and priorities well. This helps them focus on what makes the greatest difference for pupils. They regularly review the school's effectiveness and take prompt action when improvements are needed. As a result, pupils continue to benefit from a high-quality education and the support they need to thrive.

Inclusion sits at the heart of the school's work. Staff strive to remove barriers so that all pupils can participate fully in school life and achieve their best. Families value the support they receive. They appreciate the genuine care shown towards children and their wellbeing. Leaders build positive, trusting relationships with parents and carers. This helps every child feel valued, confident and fully included in the life of the school.

Professional development is a strength. Staff continually enhance their skills, learn from one another and work together to enhance pupils' experiences. New staff receive excellent support, while experienced colleagues are encouraged to share their expertise. Positive, supportive partnerships with parents, the wider community and external organisations

further enrich pupils' experiences. This helps ensure all pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their learning journey.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Pupils benefit from a highly effective curriculum that helps them grow into confident, caring and responsible young people. Staff know pupils extremely well. Staff have created a warm, nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued and listened to. Positive relationships help pupils develop confidence, build friendships and know where to go if they need help. As a result, pupils enjoy school, feel a sense of belonging and approach new challenges with resilience and determination.

The school places great importance on helping pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need for life. Pupils learn how to stay healthy, keep themselves safe and build positive relationships. They understand the importance of exercise, healthy eating, sleep and looking after their wellbeing. Pupils also learn how to stay safe, both online and offline. They speak confidently about seeking support from trusted adults when they have worries or concerns.

An inclusive approach ensures that every pupil benefits fully from what the school offers. Staff quickly identify when pupils need additional support and provide help that meets their individual needs. This means that disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those facing challenges in their lives can participate fully and enjoy the same opportunities as their peers.

Life beyond the classroom is rich and varied. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, sporting activities, educational visits and cultural experiences that broaden their horizons and help them discover new interests and talents. They take part in charity work, contribute to school decisions through the school council and serve as worship leaders.

Respect, kindness and inclusion are at the heart of school life. Pupils celebrate differences, value people from all backgrounds and apply the fundamental British values in their daily lives. As a result, pupils leave the school as confident, respectful and thoughtful young people who are very well prepared for the future.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, pupils achieve well and are prepared effectively for the next steps in learning. Over time, they develop strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics, helping them become confident, independent learners. Reading is a particular strength. Pupils enjoy books, discuss their learning thoughtfully and use a wide range of vocabulary across subjects.

Pupils build knowledge and skills successfully and apply what they know in different situations. They take pride in their work and write with increasing accuracy and confidence. Generally, pupils are making secure progress across the curriculum.

Leaders are committed to helping every pupil succeed. Disadvantaged pupils achieve increasingly well because they receive targeted support to overcome barriers and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also achieve well. This is because staff identify needs quickly and provide effective support. Most pupils leave school with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for the next stage of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders work closely with families to help pupils attend school regularly. They monitor attendance carefully, identify concerns early and provide support to overcome any difficulties. Leaders understand the challenges that can affect attendance and respond with practical help and advice. This caring approach helps many pupils improve their attendance over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from tailored support and thoughtful adjustments that help them attend regularly. Disadvantaged pupils also receive targeted support to overcome barriers. Overall attendance is close to national figures. Leaders continue to work determinedly to reduce persistent absence.

Behaviour is a significant strength of the school. Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. They behave well in lessons and around the school, helping to create a calm, happy and orderly environment where everyone can learn successfully. Pupils work hard and take pride in their achievements. They respond well to the high expectations set by staff.

Bullying is rare. Pupils trust adults to deal with any concerns quickly and effectively. Leaders respond promptly to any unkind behaviour, whether in person or online. Staff help pupils reflect on their actions, understand the impact and make positive choices. Supportive relationships between staff, pupils and families help create the excellent behaviour and attitudes seen throughout the school. As a result, pupils feel safe and valued.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of education across the school. They use this knowledge effectively to bring about improvements. Leaders regularly review learning, identify priorities and provide support where it is needed most. This has helped strengthen learning in key areas, particularly reading, writing and mathematics.

The curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils build their knowledge step by step and make links with previous learning. Leaders ensure that pupils receive the support they need to become confident and fluent readers. Staff identify gaps in learning quickly and provide effective, additional help when needed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in school life through thoughtful support and careful adjustments. This means they make good progress from their starting points.

Teaching is typically effective and engaging. This means that most pupils learn well across the curriculum. Generally, teachers check understanding and help pupils build on what they already know. Pupils enjoy learning and speak confidently about what they have been taught. However, learning is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs. This means that some do not build and remember important knowledge as securely as their

peers. Nevertheless, most pupils develop strong foundations and are well prepared for future learning.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils thrive at St James'. It is a warm, welcoming and inclusive school where pupils feel safe, valued and proud to belong. Positive relationships with staff help pupils feel listened to and supported. They know there is always a trusted adult to turn to if they need help. Pupils fully understand the school's LOVED ethos – Learning, Owning, Valuing, Empathising and Doing it the St James' Way. These values shape the positive attitudes, kindness and respect seen throughout the school. Pupils behave very well, enjoy learning and contribute to the calm, happy atmosphere. They say that bullying is rare and are confident that adults would deal with any concerns quickly and effectively.

Learning is engaging and purposeful. Pupils enjoy reading, write with increasing confidence and accuracy and are developing the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of their education. They speak confidently, use ambitious vocabulary and take pride in their work. Staff quickly identify when pupils need extra help. This means they receive the right support at the right time. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who face challenges in their lives are fully included and achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs, visits, leadership opportunities and community activities beyond the classroom. They enjoy representing the school, raising money for charities and helping shape school life by taking on responsibilities. These experiences help pupils build confidence, resilience and independence.

Attendance is improving because leaders work closely with families to remove barriers. As a result, most pupils come to school ready to learn. They embrace new opportunities enthusiastically and make a positive contribution. This means pupils leave St James' as confident, respectful and well-rounded young people who are well prepared for the future.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that learning is consistently well matched to pupils' needs so that they remember key knowledge more securely and make progress in line with their peers.

About this inspection

This school is part of The Diocese of Coventry Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Michael Cowland, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Barry Cockcroft.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They also spoke with representatives of the trust, including the CEO, the chair of the trust board, a trustee, the academy improvement partner, the chief education improvement officer and representatives of the academy governance committee during the inspection, including the chair.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character.

The school uses no alternative provision.

Jane Cook: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Su Plant, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Roulla Gabriel, Ofsted Inspector

Matthew Seex, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 15 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

209

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

240

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

23.92%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.87%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

27.27%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	53%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	55%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	78%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	82%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	33%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	72%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	81%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	73%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	69%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	68%	-24 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	69%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	33%	67%	-34 pp
2022/23 (final)	25%	66%	-41 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	72%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25 (final)	81%	81%	0 pp
2023/24 (final)	73%	80%	-6 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	56%	78%	-21 pp
2024/25 (final)	69%	78%	-10 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	78%	-38 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	63%	77%	-15 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	80%	-10 pp
2024/25 (final)	75%	81%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	67%	79%	-13 pp
2022/23 (final)	63%	79%	-17 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	6.3%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	14.5%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	15.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.3%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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