

St Augustine's Catholic Primary and Nursery (VA) Academy

Park Avenue, Mapperley Road, Nottingham, NG3 4JS

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They reach standards in line with those nationally.
- Teachers check carefully what pupils already know and use this information to set pupils activities that support their learning well.
- Achievement in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is particularly good because small teaching groups provide learning activities which stretch each pupil appropriately.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate well. They behave well in lessons and around school. They are very polite and well mannered.
- Pupils are proud of their academy. They say that they feel safe and know who to ask for help if they need it.
- Pupils have great respect for people of all backgrounds and work together well in school.
- Pupils with complex needs or who speak English as a second language are supported extremely well.
- The headteacher's determination to improve achievement in school has ensured that staff and governors have made changes which have raised achievement significantly.
- Governors attend frequent training so that they can hold the school to account for the progress of all pupils. They check the school's work carefully and often.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in spelling, punctuation and grammar is not yet good in all year groups.
- Marking and feedback by teachers does not give enough information for pupils to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons, across all classes, and were joined by the headteacher for seven of these.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- School documents were examined, including the school's own evaluation of its work, its plan for improvement, information about pupils' progress, records of governing body meetings, and documents about safeguarding and attendance.
- Account was taken of the 31 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christopher Webb	Additional Inspector
Susan Tabberer	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It became an academy in September 2012 and belongs to the Diocesan Catholic Trust.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. An above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is higher than average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (funding allocated by the government to help those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority) is higher than average.
- The academy has links with a nurture provision, Hilltop Group at Thornley Wood Education base, which they use for pupils with exceptional needs.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching and raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that marking in all classes gives pupils a clear understanding of how to improve their work
 - giving greater attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar so that early success in developing phonics leads to more rapid progress in literacy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From low starting points, pupils make good progress to attain standards which are in line with national expectations, except in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Most children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities well below those typical for their age group. They develop positive attitudes to learning and make good progress in Nursery and Reception, particularly in phonics, so that they join Year 1 with standards closer to those nationally.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2013, pupils achieved levels above those nationally. Achievement in this area observed during the inspection was good, and sometimes outstanding.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue their good progress and, in 2013, reached standards close to those seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils develop great enjoyment of reading. They are very enthusiastic in explaining what they have been reading about and how the characters in the story come to life. They make good progress based upon their early achievement in phonics, and read confidently and fluently. As they move through Years 1 to 6, they are able to use their reading skills to help them to learn in other subjects.
- Pupils develop basic skills in mathematics which they use to a high level. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils worked together supporting and challenging each other in high-level mathematics dealing with negative numbers.
- Pupils who experience difficulties outside school and those who speak English as an additional language are making good progress because of the skilled support for their development. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and most make good progress. Many parents who spoke to inspectors felt that this was a particular strength of the academy.
- Pupils in Year 6 in 2013 achieved levels broadly in line with those nationally, except in spelling, punctuation and grammar where standards were lower. Many pupils join the school in the older age groups with very little English. While they make good progress overall, they have not always caught up with the technical complexities of this aspect of English.
- In 2013, pupils eligible for the pupil premium were about half a term ahead of their classmates in mathematics and reading, but two terms behind in writing. They made similar progress to their classmates in mathematics, more progress in reading, but less progress in writing. Pupils currently in school and eligible for support from the pupil premium funding are behind their classmates, but this is affected by the high proportion of pupils with complex learning needs. The funding is used to provide one-to-one tuition, small-group work, visits and equipment.
- The extra funding from the government for primary sport has meant that pupils have been able to take part in a wider range of sports activities, and this is contributing well to their attitudes to fitness and well-being.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved rapidly and is now consistently good, and sometimes outstanding. Evidence from pupils' books and in lessons during the inspection, along with information about pupils' progress, shows that better teaching is leading to improved achievement.
- Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is based upon an accurate understanding of the level of children's skills as they join the academy. Children are fully engaged in their learning. Teachers plan exciting activities to develop basic skills appropriately for each child. Teaching is particularly good in phonics and this helps children to develop early reading and writing skills.
- High-quality teaching of phonics continues into Years 1 and up to Year 6 for all those pupils who continue to need this support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have a great deal of individual support which helps them to make rapid progress in phonics.
- Reading, writing and mathematics develop rapidly because teachers check carefully what pupils can already do. They use this information to set lively activities that capture pupils' interest. Pupils in Year 2 were highly motivated to learn about bar charts because they were based on their favourite treats.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, particularly through their skilled work to support those who are at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils know their targets and use these to guide their work. Teachers' high-quality feedback during lessons gives pupils a clear idea of how to improve their learning. Marking in books does not give pupils enough guidance in which aspects of their work needs to improve so that they can focus on this. This includes spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Teachers offer a wide range of exciting topics to give opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills. For example, pupils enjoy reading to find out about the Second World War, and writing accounts of people's experiences.
- Staff use the reward systems well to encourage good behaviour and hard work in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils enjoy their learning, concentrate, work hard and help each other. Their good attitudes help them to make good progress.
- Pupils are courteous and show respect for pupils and staff of all backgrounds. The high level of respect and consideration leads to a happy atmosphere in the academy. In some lessons, pupils work together supporting and challenging each other's learning exceptionally well. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, pupils solved problems using percentages by arguing their case for a particular method of working.
- Pupils show concern for those who experience difficulties. They use 'friendship bridges' to make sure that everyone has friends and feels valued.
- Staff use exciting and imaginative ways to motivate pupils to make progress and so pupils are excited and enthusiastic about their learning. They behave well during lessons and move about the school sensibly, and play happily in the yard.

- Pupils are proud of their work and achievements, and their academy. They talk excitedly about their learning, class visits and the range of sports and clubs outside lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements to ensure everyone's safety.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take, including those which involve mobile phones and the internet. They say that bullying in the academy is rare and that staff deal with it quickly if it happens. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Those parents who met with inspectors said that behaviour is good. They praised the care given by the academy. Staff and pupils agreed that behaviour is good.
- Attendance is above average and the school checks and challenges absence to maintain this standard.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders check pupils' progress carefully and regularly, and they set ambitious targets for pupils' progress. They make judgements about staff performance, and decisions about pay increases and career progression based upon how well pupils do.
- Highly developed systems for tracking the progress pupils make give leaders a clear understanding of areas which need to be improved. These are followed up through staff training and to decisions on how best to spend the academy's budget.
- Leaders and teachers have the opportunity to work with teachers from other schools so that they can constantly improve their skills and confirm the accuracy of their assessments of how well pupils are doing.
- All leaders share in monitoring the work of staff and in supporting the development of teachers' and teaching assistants' skills.
- Decisions about pupil groupings are made on the basis of their achievements. Very small teaching groups in phonics sessions give every pupil, including those who speak English as an additional language, or who have exceptional difficulties, the opportunity to develop confidence and make good progress.
- Pupils talk excitedly about the wide range of subjects and topics they study. They enjoy art and music topics, and those which link reading, writing and mathematical skills, as in their work on the Second World War.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through all aspects of the work of the school. They enjoy learning about other faiths and the lives of other groups of people within and beyond Britain. They talk with enthusiasm about learning about life in Sri Lanka.
- Staff make many opportunities available to welcome parents to share in pupils' learning. Parents said that they greatly appreciate this, and find staff and leaders extremely helpful and supportive.

- The school uses partnerships within the trust effectively and this has established systems to help pupils make faster progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors undertake training to equip them to check the work of the school for themselves and to hold leaders to account. They analyse information about pupils' achievement and join leaders in monitoring visits to classes to gain a good understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body sets ambitious targets for staff, and judgements about staff performance, through appraisal, are based on pupils' achievement. These judgements are used to make decisions about staff pay increases and career progression, and to set priority areas to improve. Governors measure the academy's success accurately and their work has been effective in improving achievement. Finances are well managed, including the use of pupil premium and primary sports funding.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138508
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	424940

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Father Andrew Cole
Headteacher	Caroline Caille
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0115 9156995
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