

All Saints' Academy

Blaisdon Way, Cheltenham, GL51 0WH

Inspection dates 11–12 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The academy is improving rapidly because of the outstanding leadership provided by the new Principal. He is supported well by other key senior and subject leaders and by governors.
- The extremely positive ethos in the academy leads to exceptionally good behaviour by students around the building and site.
- This ethos permeates the school and contributes to students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students achieve well in English because of good teaching and strong subject leadership.
- Students' achievement in mathematics is improving rapidly as a result of outstanding subject leadership.
- Students make good progress in many other subjects. Achievement in science has improved significantly.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students has improved markedly to be in line with other students.
- Much teaching is at least good and leads to good achievement.
- Many students enter the academy with very low levels of reading, writing and mathematics, and this significantly limits their progress. The academy is now dealing with this well through a curriculum in Years 7 and 8 that focuses on getting students ready for GCSE courses that start in Year 9.
- The academy has good arrangements for marking students' work and telling students what they need to do to improve.
- Students feel safe, are confident about reporting incidents and that they will be dealt with swiftly.
- The sixth form curriculum meets students' needs exceptionally well to prepare them for their next steps in education, training or employment. They are given excellent guidance to make sure that they are on the best course for them. Students' achievement in vocational subjects is outstanding. It has improved in academic subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement, which limits students' progress and sometimes leads to behaviour that does not meet the academy's very high expectations.
- Attendance is too low and persistent absence too high, including in the sixth form.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 44 lessons, 15 with senior leaders from the academy. Fourteen of these lessons were of sixth form classes. They also observed students' behaviour around the academy at the start and end of the day, during lesson changeovers and at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and other key staff in the academy. An inspector met with three members of the academy's governing body.
- These meetings included discussions about the academy's self-evaluation, policies and procedures, the analysis of data and documented information, and records provided by the academy, including those related to the monitoring of the quality of teaching and tracking students' progress. The academy's improvement plans were discussed in detail.
- Inspectors also met with four groups of students and talked to many others around the school, including some of those in the sixth form.
- Too few parents responded to Ofsted's on-line Parent View survey to analyse the results. However, inspectors took account of the academy's own surveys of students and parents, including for the sixth form; these had high rates of response.
- No staff questionnaires were completed.

Inspection team

James Sage, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Steven Colledge

Additional Inspector

Lesley Greenway

Additional Inspector

Mark Warren

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- All Saints' Academy is a joint sponsor-led church academy that opened in September 2011. The academy is sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Clifton and the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester. The academy is non-selective in an area where other schools select students by ability.
- The Principal joined the academy in September 2014.
- The academy is about the same size as other secondary schools nationally and has a large and growing sixth form for the size of the academy. Almost one third of students in the sixth form join from other schools.
- The large majority of students are from White British backgrounds.
- The number of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported by school action is above average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding), is over 40% and well above average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is low, but increasing.
- The academy uses no alternative provision. The academy runs its own on-site provision for those students who need specific behaviour or other support.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the tightly focused support and training for all teachers, and share the good practice in the academy, to ensure that all teaching is at least good, by:
 - making sure that all teachers use up-to-date and accurate information about each student's progress to plan and teach lessons that enable all students to achieve as well as they can
 - building on the best practice in marking to ensure that students are set clear and challenging targets to improve their work, that they respond as expected and that teachers check to make sure that the students' work improves as a result
 - making sure that all teachers build on the excellent gains in students' reading, writing and mathematical skills in Years 7 and 8 through their subject teaching, including in the sixth form.
- Increase students' attendance, including in the sixth form, so that their progress can be improved.
- In the sixth form, make sure that teachers make the best use of students' independent study time.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal provides outstanding leadership, which has led to rapid progress being made since he took up post in September 2014.
- The Principal, other senior leaders and governors set very high expectations for the academy. They have established an ethos that encourages and supports good behaviour, attitudes and learning. The academy promotes equality of opportunity and fosters good relations well. Incidents of discrimination are extremely rare and dealt with ruthlessly.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and there are very well-considered and ambitious plans for further improvement.
- The Principal is supported well by other senior leaders. Subject leadership is strong in English, mathematics and science, and in some other subjects. This has led to further improvement in students' achievement in English and rapid improvements in mathematics and science. Improvements in attendance have not been as marked. The achievement of those students who are disabled or who have special educational needs has improved markedly through excellent leadership.
- Good leadership of the sixth form, overseen by the Vice Principal, has led to a curriculum that meets students' needs exceptionally well and to significant improvements in their achievement, but not yet in sufficiently reducing students' absence. The curriculum in the sixth form is exceptional in its match to the needs of students; students make very well-informed choices based on high-quality careers guidance.
- The monitoring of students' progress and of the quality of teaching is closely interrelated. This monitoring is frequent, extremely rigorous and key to the rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievement across the academy.
- Senior leaders have a detailed and perceptive understanding of where teaching needs to improve further and have put in place comprehensive strategies to deal with this. The support and challenge for individual teachers are sharply focused on their specific needs. This approach is already having a positive impact.
- Additional funding has been used well to improve the achievement of disadvantaged students significantly.
- The academy has clear policies for developing students' skills in literacy and numeracy across all subjects. Recent changes to the curriculum mean that the academy is well placed to secure the further improvements in achievement required. In particular, the focus in Years 7 and 8 on dealing with students' very low levels in reading, writing and mathematics when students enter the academy is already having an impact so that students are much better prepared for GCSE courses beginning in Year 9.
- The attention given to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Students' views about many aspects of the academy are gathered systematically and valued highly, for example about how to deal with lapses in behaviour and improve attendance. Similarly, the views of parents are gathered regularly and valued equally highly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection. However, the pace of improvement in the academy was not rapid enough prior to the Principal taking up post in September to sustain this judgement. However, the Governing Body was instrumental in making the key appointments that have led to the rapid improvements in the academy from September 2014.
 - The governing body is well led and provides good support and challenge to academy leaders, particularly in working with the Principal on his many plans for the further rapid improvement of the academy. The governing body is fully involved in self-evaluation and improvement planning.
 - The governing body has good representation from both sponsors, who take a full part in monitoring, supporting, planning and providing challenge when necessary.
 - Governors regularly check on the effectiveness of the academy so that they have a view of what is working well. They understand the use of data and know how it compares with similar schools. They check the quality of teaching and look carefully at how well students are doing. They also closely monitor students' attendance and behaviour.
 - Individual governors take responsibility for specific aspects of the school, such as the quality of the provision for students with special educational needs, disadvantaged students or links to subject departments. They take these responsibilities seriously and the detailed feedback they provide ensures that the governing body is well informed.
 - Good management of finances means that the additional government funding is used to improve the learning of those students for whom it is intended. It is used very well to provide additional support and

- resources so that disadvantaged students' achievements have improved markedly.
- Governors rigorously ensure that the best teachers and staff are rewarded and they understand the process of setting targets for teachers well.
 - Governors ensure that all statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students respond very well to the extremely positive ethos in the academy, so that their behaviour around the academy is often exemplary. They take pride in themselves and in the academy and show respect for each other, for adults and for the environment. This is a significant achievement for the academy and is testament to the culture established by senior leaders, sponsors and governors.
- Students move to lessons with a sense of purpose and there is a calmness and good sense of order in the academy. They are punctual to, and prepared well for, their lessons. Inspectors did not hear any bad or inappropriate language or see any inappropriate behaviour around the academy.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always good, although there is some low-level disruption in a few lessons when the teacher does not effectively involve all students in the work.
- Although the very large majority of students complete the work set in lessons and do what is expected of them, they do not always show any great enthusiasm for the work. The extremely positive attitudes they show elsewhere in the academy do not always transfer to their work in lessons.
- The academy's internal referral unit is successful in supporting students whose behaviour needs to improve and in ensuring that they can move back into their usual classes quickly.
- Attendance is improving, but was still low at the end of the last academy year. Current attendance shows further improvement, but is still not good enough. The proportion of students who are persistently absent, including a group in the sixth form, is too high and limits the progress these students make.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- The academy takes its responsibilities for safeguarding very seriously and all statutory requirements are met. There is regular and effective training for all staff; they have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the academy's thorough procedures.
- Students feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in the academy, although less so in the wider community.
- Incidents of bullying of any type are rare, but when they do occur they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and have confidence that they can report any incidents and that these will be dealt with. All incidents are recorded and analysed to enable senior leaders to reflect and learn from them. Students are fully involved in this.
- The academy makes referrals to external agencies when necessary. The academy works closely with these agencies to support families and students who are vulnerable. The case studies looked at during the inspection show that the outcomes for these students are very positive.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching across a wide range of subjects is mostly good and some is outstanding. As a result, the progress of all groups of students is at least good. Teaching in the sixth form is consistently good or better across the full range of courses.
- The teaching of classes that contain significant numbers of students with special educational needs is good and focused well on the individual support they need to ensure that they make at least good progress. Teaching assistants are used well in these lessons.
- Some weaknesses in teaching in, for example, science and mathematics are being tackled robustly, but the impact of the support being provided is not yet fully evident.
- The large majority of teachers set and maintain high expectations for students' progress and behaviour. They establish an excellent climate for learning and students mostly respond well. However, not all teachers capture the very positive attitudes most students have about the academy to give their lessons pace and energy.
- In the very small minority of cases where teaching is weaker, the behaviour of a small number of students

does not meet the academy's very high expectations.

- Teachers plan their lessons, and sequences of lessons, with a clear view of the learning expected and use a range of well-considered strategies, including careful questioning, to achieve this. In the best examples, it is clear how teaching is matched closely to a precise understanding of each student's current progress. This good practice is not yet apparent in all lessons to ensure that all students, including the most able, make as much progress as they can.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly using the academy's good marking policy. The feedback to students is clear and they are often set challenging targets for further improvement, including in the sixth form. However, there is some inconsistency in how well this feedback ensures that students know what to do to improve their work, in their response to it, and in how well teachers check the impact of the feedback on later work.
- All teachers check students' spelling, punctuation and grammar and set literacy targets appropriate to the subject whenever they mark students' work. However, not all plan carefully how to develop students' reading, writing, speaking and mathematical skills through their subject teaching.
- In some subjects in the sixth form, too much work is covered in lessons that students could complete in their independent study time.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Many students join the academy in Year 7 with very weak skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Very few students enter the academy with high attainment at the end of Key Stage 2; most of those that do only just meet the level expected for the most able students in English and mathematics.
- Students make excellent progress from these low starting points in English, including disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. The small number of most able students is now making much better progress to achieve well and do better than this group nationally.
- Students' achievement in mathematics is not as good as it is in English. However, it is improving rapidly for almost all groups of students, including disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, so that their achievement is on track to be at least as good as the national average. The progress of the most able students in mathematics is also improving rapidly. Although the proportion of these students making good progress is not quite in line with the national average, this shows strong progress given their comparatively low starting points.
- There is an intense focus on raising students' standards in basic literacy and numeracy in Years 7 and 8; the impact of this on raising achievement is already clear.
- The academy has significantly raised its expectations for the most able students. The gains now made by these students in Years 7 and 8, to prepare them well for their GCSE courses that start in Year 9, is marked. A small number of students in Year 11 are entered early for some examinations. This does not limit their achievement.
- Students' progress across the full range of subjects is good. Progress in science has improved significantly for all groups. The gaps in achievement between disadvantaged students and others in the school and nationally have almost closed; there are no significant differences in their progress or attainment.
- The very high levels of achievement for students taking vocational courses in the sixth form have been sustained. There are clear improvements in the progress made by students in academic subjects to bring these in line with the national average. Improvements have also been made in the progress made by the significant numbers of students who enter the sixth form without at least a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics, although it is not yet good enough in mathematics.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The sixth form provides four routes that cater exceptionally well for students from the academy and for those that join from other schools. High quality careers guidance and individual support mean that students are on the most appropriate route for them, and almost all complete their programme successfully. Students show extremely positive attitudes to their work.
- The transition route, for those with low prior attainment and without at least a GCSE grade C in English and mathematics, is extremely well matched to these students' needs. These students make at least good progress, including those who had been identified as having special educational needs when they were in the lower school.
- Vocational, mixed and academic routes ensure that all students can build on their prior attainment and are

prepared well for their next steps in education, training or employment. The proportion of students from the academy who are not involved in education, training or employment is very low.

- More than two thirds of examination entries are in vocational subjects. Students on these courses make outstanding progress, so that their achievement is well above the national average. Teaching is matched well to individual students' needs. These students also undertake relevant work experience and/or teachers bring external speakers and other work-related activities into the lessons to ensure that the vocational elements are strong. The range of work placements for those following the health and social care course demonstrates excellent practice.
- Students' achievement in academic subjects has improved to be in line with national averages. This is a result of improved teaching, as seen for example in sociology, psychology and science subjects, because of more frequent and robust monitoring. Closer monitoring of students' progress means that interventions to support individual students at risk of falling behind are swift and effective.
- There are a higher proportion of disadvantaged students in the sixth form compared with most school sixth forms. These students make good progress and achieve as well as others.
- The progress made by those students without at least a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics has improved, but not sufficiently in mathematics. Almost one third of these students do not improve by at least one grade in mathematics. The academy has addressed this well. The transition group has extensive timetabled teaching in both subjects. In all other sixth form option groups, there is timetabled teaching in both subjects. Careful consideration has been given to allocating the best teachers to these groups.
- In addition to the vocational courses, many other students are involved in work-related activity, community work, supporting younger students in the academy, voluntary work and part-time jobs. The system for recognising students' personal, social and employability skills does not reward them sufficiently or track progress well enough.
- Given the comparatively low level of reading, writing, speaking and mathematical skills of many students, not just those without a grade C GCSE, some teachers do not do enough to develop these skills through their subject teaching. In the best cases, feedback to students on their work includes literacy targets, but these are often at too low a level.
- In Year 12 all students are expected to be in the academy throughout the day and have some timetabled independent study time to help them develop the skills they need; this is working well. This is also expected of Year 13 students, unless they demonstrate that they have the skills and aptitude to work where they choose. The academy is well equipped with spaces and resources for students to work. However, in too many lessons, students are still expected to undertake independent work that could have been done as preparation for the lesson.
- Students' attendance in the sixth form is not yet good enough, and there is a significant group that is persistently absent; this impedes the progress and achievement of some students. While students have a good understanding of potential risks to their health and well-being, sixth form leaders and mentors do not always know what these students are doing if they are not in the academy.

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	136016
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	452696

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	976
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony McClaran
Principal	Dermot McNiffe
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2013
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