

Tudor Grange Primary Academy, St James

Halifax Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2BT

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, managers, governors and trustees have the highest aspirations for Tudor Grange pupils. The pupils are at the heart of all they do.
- Leaders' passion and determination to achieve the very best they can have driven the school on its journey to outstanding.
- The progress of pupils is tightly tracked so that no pupil is left behind. Leaders make very effective use of what they know about pupils to ensure the right support is given at the right time. This focus ensures that pupils are supported extremely well to make very good progress.
- The school and the trust are vigilant in their recruitment of staff. They invest heavily in the ongoing professional development of all staff to ensure a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers help pupils to secure their knowledge and understanding well by sharing clear learning intentions and demonstrating strong subject knowledge. The use of subject specialist staff in English and mathematics has had an impressive impact on the progress of pupils.
- Parents spoke highly of the school, using phrases such as, 'I am proud to send my children to this school' and 'we are grateful to have a place for our children at St James'.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride. They are immaculately turned out and their behaviour is exemplary.
- Pupils make very good progress across the curriculum so that by the end of key stage 2 outcomes are above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in early years make excellent progress from their starting points. The development of the outdoor area has further enhanced provision. Phonics is taught very well, resulting in high outcomes at the end of Year 1.
- The safeguarding of pupils and their health and well-being are priorities in the school. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure.
- Very occasionally, misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough and opportunities are lost to secure a greater depth of understanding.
- In early years, new concepts are not consistently reinforced in follow-up activities.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Address the minor inconsistencies in the way staff respond to misconceptions.
- Ensure that early years staff consistently reinforce new concepts in follow-up activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The shared vision of the head of school, the deputy headteacher and the trust's leadership team has ensured a continuous drive to improve provision and outcomes for pupils. Leaders are relentless in their commitment and ambition to achieve the very best. School leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well. They accurately identify areas for improvement and take swift action to address them.
- Leaders are 'always looking to develop staff at all levels'. They make effective use of expertise within the trust to train and support staff but equally look outwards to available expertise in other networks. Several staff are specialist leaders of education. The programme of professional development linked to rigorous performance management ensures that staff at all levels continually aspire to improve their practice. Training and guidance from subject leaders have improved the quality of teaching, particularly in English, mathematics, early years and science.
- Leaders' tracking of pupils' progress is exceptionally thorough. Gaps in learning are clearly identified and support is speedily provided. As a result, pupils achieve standards above national figures by the end of key stage 2.
- The new curriculum is bespoke and is designed to support the core values of the school. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well. This term, learning is focused on 'being, belonging and knowing'. Great thought has been given to the knowledge, skills and attributes that pupils will develop through a range of experiences in each subject area. The curriculum is enhanced by regular visits and visitors to school. For example, Year 6 recently visited Coventry Transport Museum as part of their history and mathematics curriculum, and Years 1 and 2 visited places of worship including the Gurdwara Sahib Sikh temple. Pupils also enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities such as choir, art and craft, dance, mathematics and literature club.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of life in modern Britain and fundamental British values. They are encouraged to make well-informed choices and show great tolerance and respect to each other.
- Leaders ensure that pupil premium expenditure is based securely on identified priorities. As a result, there is little discrepancy between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils in school or other pupils nationally. Resources have been used to provide additional support or extension where needed and to enable disadvantaged pupils to have instrumental lessons and access to school visits.
- The effective use of physical education (PE) and sports premium funding ensures that pupils have access to a wide range of clubs and events, resulting in higher levels of participation in sporting and healthy activities. The school's link to a sports partnership and employment of a PE specialist further broaden pupils' experiences and provide training for staff, lunchtime supervisors and playground leaders.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used well. Leaders carefully track the progress of pupils and plan interventions and support

to speedily meet their specific needs. As a result, most make very good progress and meet the targets set for them.

Governance of the school

- Governors are determined for the school to do well. The local governing body is supported effectively by the multi-academy trust (MAT). The MAT is ambitious in its vision for the school and provides strong and strategic direction. It has invested substantial financial resources to create a warm and vibrant learning environment for pupils. For example, the early years outdoor area has been greatly enhanced to improve the range of learning experiences for children.
- The local governing body has substantial skills, particularly in finance, safeguarding and health and safety. This expertise ensures that roles and responsibilities can be carried out extremely well. The chair of the local governing body sits on the trust board, ensuring that the trust is well informed about the work of the school. Clear lines of accountability are in place and as a result, well-informed strategic decisions are made.
- Governors are aware of their strategic responsibilities and hold the headteacher to account. They keep a close eye on the spending of pupil premium.
- Governors have a well-planned calendar of visits and activities. They closely monitor the work of the school against clearly defined priorities. Governors carefully track the progress and attainment of pupils and ask challenging questions of school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have thorough systems in place for recruiting staff and recording concerns, which are regularly reviewed and audited. Leaders implement any recommendations promptly to ensure that practice is always at its best. Staff are trained well and receive regular updates. They know and use the procedures well and are tenacious in their approach, adopting a strong culture of vigilance to ensure that pupils are safe. Although the number of child protection referrals is low, records show that staff take notice of any concerns raised and log them diligently.
- Safeguarding is threaded throughout the curriculum. E-safety is firmly embedded and pupils learn about protective behaviours through their personal, social and health education programme. Workshops for parents on e-safety and child sexual exploitation ensure that parents are also well informed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and exhibit strong subject knowledge in their explanations and questioning. Teachers frequently model subject-related vocabulary and many pupils adopt the terms or expressions to show their understanding. For example, Year 3 pupils were asked for the meaning of 'time conjunctions'. Pupils responded in full sentences, giving clear explanations and correct examples.

- Teachers carefully plan lessons so that pupils gain and practise specific skills. Teachers continually assess pupils' knowledge through questioning and provide appropriately challenging responses to make pupils think more deeply. Teachers frequently develop pupils' understanding by asking, 'why', 'how' and 'show me'. Very occasionally, teachers do not address misconceptions quickly enough.
- Pupils make excellent progress in lessons because they know exactly what is expected of them and what they must do to succeed. They cover a suitable range of literacy and mathematical skills appropriate for their age. Daily tasks and activities systematically build on pupils' knowledge, deepen their understanding and provide opportunities to apply learned skills.
- In mathematics, pupils are challenged in their thinking and encouraged to articulate their learning. Much work has been done on improving the use of correct mathematical language. Work in books shows clear evidence of written explanations and reasoning using accurate mathematical terms. Teachers expect high standards of pupils' presentation in mathematics. They build in challenging extension activities for the most able pupils so that they consider concepts at greater depth. Pupils' books provide evidence of excellent subject coverage, showing secure knowledge of number, calculation and problem-solving.
- Relationships are strong between staff and pupils. Pupils are supported well and are given the confidence to try hard. As a result, pupils are resilient in their learning and learn from their errors as well as their successes. Teachers know where pupils are in their learning and plan appropriate activities to both challenge and support them so that they make excellent progress.
- Teachers capture pupils' interests and ensure their engagement in all subjects. Teachers challenge, inspire and expect the most as they deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils are given books to interest them and to challenge their thinking. For example, pupils in Year 5 were studying the book 'Animal Farm'. They were developing effective skills in reading and had gained a rich vocabulary, confidently explaining words such as 'cynical', 'vulnerable' and 'strategist'.
- Pupils read fluently and expressively. They often choose books which demand a high level of understanding and skill. They read widely and can speak confidently about the work of different authors.
- Pupils write and communicate with confidence and fluency appropriate for their age. Work is almost always well presented, legible and fluent. Pupils' books provide evidence of maturing vocabulary and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to write for different purposes. For example, Year 3 pupils were designing a poster to invite people to a country fair. One pupil explained that he was designing it for a child so that they would persuade their parents to take them. Pupils carefully considered their audience and use of persuasive language.
- Phonics is taught systematically so that skills are built methodically and incrementally. Adults model sounds clearly and accurately and expect the same from pupils. Pupils, regardless of their age, understand and use subject-related vocabulary to explain their understanding. For example, children in Reception spoke confidently about diagraphs, graphemes and phonemes.

- Teachers consistently provide challenging tasks to ensure that pupils knowledgeably apply their skills. As a result, pupils make excellent progress, and in later years pupils refer to their phonic knowledge to attempt unfamiliar words or correct their spelling.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' well-being is a high priority in school. Careful thought has been given to a new personal, social and health education programme to develop pupils' positive outlook and self-respect. Overwhelmingly, parents say their children are settled and happy.
- In classrooms, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are hardworking and willing to share their learning with confidence. They demonstrate resilience when learning is challenging. They know how to help themselves by taking responsibility for their learning and use available resources to secure their understanding or help them to improve their work.
- Policies and displays reflect clear expectations of adults and pupils. The school demonstrates a strong commitment for pupils to do the best they can. The Christian ethos permeates the fabric of the school. The cross and candle, highly visible in assembly times, reinforce respectfulness, contemplation and reflection. Pupils' responses to questions in assembly showed high levels of empathy for the emotions of others.
- Pupils appreciate the world around them. In Year 4, pupils wrote thank you notes to their god. One pupil wrote, 'Thank you for all the natural creatures and creepy crawlies.' Pupils have written 'prayers to your god' and they hang on the prayer tree in the school entrance. Pupils are considerate to each other. For example, a pupil wrote, 'Please help us to treat others nicely and let no one get upset.'
- Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths and religions. They accurately describe the beliefs and customs of other faiths.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying and were emphatic that there was no bullying in school. They believe that there might be occasional name-calling but adults step in quickly. Pupils are confident in their knowledge of e-safety and they can describe simple rules for using websites, online games and mobile phones.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to consider democracy at a national level and within school, for example when voting for a class councillor. They watch 'Newsround' to help them discuss national elections and Brexit issues. Pupils have a keen understanding for right and wrong and are determined to follow school rules.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They demonstrate respect for adults and for each other. They frequently say 'good morning' and hold doors open. Pupils have high

standards of self-discipline. Pupils of all ages conduct themselves well around school. They take responsibility for returning plates and cups at lunchtimes, set up equipment for assembly and organise the library.

- Pupils leave assembly and playtimes calmly and orderly. At playtimes, they sit or walk together, socialise and snack on fresh fruit. Others make up simple games together. Pupils are well supervised and minor accidents are addressed quickly. If pupils are on their own it is never for very long. Pupils demonstrate sensible, mature attitudes and are confident to find friends to play with.
- At lunchtimes, pupils are given a range of resources so that they can play games in small groups or with a friend. The planned activities vary each day and ensure that pupils are purposefully and healthily engaged.
- All staff, including teaching assistants, thoughtfully manage individual pupils who experience behaviour difficulties. They show appropriate understanding for pupils' individual needs and sensitively correct inappropriate behaviour.
- Staff have high expectations of behaviour. Behaviour policies explain an appropriate range of rewards and sanctions. All adults promote in pupils a sense of pride in their achievements together with respect for themselves and others.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently above the national average and robust systems are in place to follow up isolated cases of poor attendance. Leaders provide extra support for families who may need it. For example, access to breakfast club or after-school care. Attendance and punctuality are monitored on a regular basis.
- Pupils believe this is a safe school because everyone knows how to behave. Pupils are proud of how people treat each other. Pupils support each other to behave well. They know that if they are upset for any reason, they can rely on friends and staff to support them.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Leaders and governors are passionate about achieving the very best outcomes for pupils. This is evident in the very close tracking of pupils' progress and the focus on high-quality teaching and learning.
- As a result, standards have continued to improve since the last inspection so that pupils consistently achieve above national figures in reading, writing and mathematics at both the expected and higher standard. Pupils are therefore well prepared for their secondary education.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching a higher standard in writing and mathematics improved further from the 2016 outcomes. In grammar, punctuation and spelling, outcomes are now above the national average at the expected standard. Leaders are already working hard to improve outcomes at a higher standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling as these were below national figures in 2017.
- Changes in the demographics of the school account for some variation in outcomes. In 2015 and 2016, the percentage of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception was above the national figure, but it dipped in 2017. However,

leaders are well aware of the reasons for the reduced proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2017. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and difficulties of the current Reception cohort and they have lost no time in sharing their ambition to accelerate children's progress. Interventions are under way and an appropriate curriculum is planned in Year 1. Staff have high expectations of the current cohort in Reception.

- Outcomes in phonics for the past two years have been above national averages, with a very large majority of pupils meeting the expected standard in 2017. The effective teaching of phonics and a daily focus on promoting early reading skills have led to excellent outcomes. The first set of key stage 1 outcomes was available in 2017. Standards were above the national figures in both reading and mathematics, but just below in writing.
- Books show that current pupils are making at least good progress in all subjects. For example, very good progress was evident during the autumn term in Year 2. Pupils were writing simple sentences in September but can now write explanatory and descriptive sentences. Skills are learned systematically and develop in complexity over time. The school's information about current progress shows that pupils in most year groups are making more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case in the past.
- The most able pupils are challenged appropriately and all pupils are given opportunities to apply the skills they have learned across the curriculum. For example, mathematical skills are well developed in science lessons. Quite rightly, leaders identified challenge for the most able as a school priority.
- Staff identify the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities exceptionally well to ensure that the right provision is in place. Starting points, progress and future needs are carefully tracked. Pupils receive appropriate support from highly effective teaching assistants in lessons or in small groups outside of the classroom. As a result, they often make rapid gains and most meet the targets set for them.
- The number of pupils who are disadvantaged fluctuates in each year group but most make good progress and attain standards in line with other pupils nationally. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils in the school. Where specific support is needed, school leaders work with external agencies and as a result, pupils make rapid progress to catch up.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leadership of early years is outstanding. The early years leader embodies the principles of early years education and she is the early years lead for the trust. She has very high expectations of staff and children and is determined to secure ongoing improvements. She has a clear vision and a clear plan. She sets ambitious but realistic targets to ensure that children make rapid progress in readiness for their transition to Year 1.
- Children usually begin Nursery or Reception with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. Last year, a high proportion of children showed considerable weaknesses in literacy and writing. In addition, a third of the children entering Reception did not previously attend the Nursery. Although the children made good progress from their

starting points, just over a half met the standard. In 2015 and 2016, a higher-than-national proportion of children achieved a good level of development.

- Teachers quickly introduced new approaches to ensure the current Reception children achieve the ambitious but realistic targets set for them. New topics have been introduced to engage boys' interest and provide opportunities for more writing in a range of areas for learning. Leaders have provided phonic workshops for parents and keep close contact through home and school diaries.
- Current children in Nursery and Reception are making very good progress in forming letters correctly and writing recognisable words, and in Reception, constructing simple sentences. Children recognise numbers, count accurately and can name two-dimensional shapes. Teachers have clear expectations of children's learning. However, new concepts are not consistently reinforced in follow-up activities.
- Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide stimulating opportunities for learning. Activities are well organised with appropriate resources. A cosy library area invites children's interests in books. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the outdoor environment. Recently purchased outdoor resources and facilities enhance pupils' experience of learning, enabling ample choices for children to climb, balance, ride, investigate and explore.
- Phonics is taught effectively and skills are well developed. Children use their phonic knowledge to write and spell simple words accurately.
- In both Nursery and Reception, routines are well embedded. Children are confident, respond well to instructions and have excellent relationships with all adults. Children participate in activities with enthusiasm and manage themselves effectively. They show an awareness of each other, take turns and share. Children with additional needs are given the right support to enable them to take part.
- Safeguarding is effective. All adults are vigilant in ensuring that children stay safe.

School details

Unique reference number	139007
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10037150

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Graham Pearce
Head of school	Sarah Deakin
Telephone number	0121 744 7897
Website	www.stjames.tgacademy.org.uk
Email address	office@stjames.tgacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The school is sponsored by Tudor Grange Academy Trust, Solihull and the Anglican Diocese of Birmingham.
- The number on roll has almost doubled since the last inspection. The reputation of the school has grown and it is held in high regard by the community. The school now has a complete key stage 1 and the first set of key stage 1 outcomes were published in 2017.
- Since the last inspection the demographic of the school has changed considerably. Although most pupils are White British, almost half are from a wide range of minority

ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who are from a minority ethnic background is now above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased recently but is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding has declined and is now well below the national average. However, the school deprivation indicator remains in the bottom 40% of schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club which is managed by the governing body.
- The school is a designated national support school and has four specialist leaders in education. The school is a hub for school-centred initial teacher training.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes, spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books. Most observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour on the playground, in before- and after-school clubs and during assembly. Inspectors talked to a group of pupils about their views of the school and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the executive principal and leaders responsible for English, mathematics, early years and special educational needs.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust board and spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the day and took account of 34 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 34 free-text responses. Five staff questionnaires were also considered.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, the school improvement plan, information on pupils' progress and attainment, records of behaviour and attendance, minutes of governing body meetings, trust reports and external reports, information relating to the performance management of staff and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deana Holdaway

Her Majesty's Inspector

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