

St Anne's Church of England Academy

Hollins Lane, Middleton, Manchester M24 6XN

Inspection dates

17–18 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not achieve consistently well across the academy. Their progress in English, mathematics and humanities subjects, while improving, is below average.
- In the sixth form, too few of those aiming to improve their GCSE grade in English and/or mathematics are successful in achieving a grade C or above.
- Those with leadership responsibility for 16–19 study programmes are not sharp enough in identifying areas of weakness and acting on them.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Where teaching is not as strong, it fails to motivate pupils to do their very best. Some teaching does not provide sufficient challenge to pupils of different abilities, so that some find the work too easy and some find it too difficult. This has led to recent GCSE results where the most-able have not made as much progress as others in the academy.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils achieve well in science, art and vocational subjects.
- The Principal, senior leaders and governors have a track record of improving outcomes in targeted areas, including pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching. GCSE results in 2015 were notably higher than those in 2014. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved steadily and attendance levels have risen.
- As at the last inspection, the academy's care and support systems are very effective. As a result, pupils feel safe in the academy. The academy's positive ethos contributes strongly to pupils' good personal development and welfare.
- Strong relationships between pupils and staff contribute to the sense of harmony around the academy and the pupils' acceptance of different backgrounds and views. Pupils' behaviour is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress across the academy by consolidating recent improvements in English, mathematics and humanities.
- For 16–19 study programmes:
 - raise achievement, particularly for learners aiming to achieve GCSE grades A* to C in English and/or mathematics
 - strengthen leadership and management so that leaders are better able to recognise areas for improvement and address them.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teaching is interesting enough to engage pupils more consistently
 - ensuring that work challenges pupils of different abilities, including the most-able.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The Principal and the academy's senior leaders provide strong leadership, with a shared strategic vision. They are rightly proud of the academy's work in supporting the personal needs of pupils, including several whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Parents and teachers have positive opinions about the academy.
- Leaders have been successful in improving outcomes in key areas for the academy. Unvalidated results at GCSE rose in 2015 and inspectors saw evidence that standards are rising for current pupils. Attendance has risen and is now at least in line with the national average.
- The management of staff performance takes full account of pupils' outcomes and ensures that pay rises are recommended only when justified.
- While teaching is not yet consistently good, the academy's strategy for rapidly improving teaching, learning and assessment has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. The academy's leaders have a clear idea of where teaching is stronger and where it is weaker and have a track record of providing support and/or taking decisive action where appropriate. The academy regularly uses external consultants to validate its judgements on the quality of teaching. Where weaker aspects of teaching are identified, the academy's staff training programme is adjusted accordingly. Responses to the staff questionnaire and interviews with newly qualified teachers show that staff feel they are very well supported by the academy's leaders.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities for pupils to follow their interests and prepare for future education, training or employment. Leaders have adapted the curriculum at Key Stage 4 to provide more academic-based courses and, as part of the process, have taken account of pupils' views.
- The curriculum, including assemblies, offers regular opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many pupils demonstrate the impact of this in their extra-curricular contributions to community projects. Pupils learn about British values and speak about the atmosphere of tolerance in the academy. The curriculum design includes an appropriate focus on protecting pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Pupil premium funding has contributed to improving the attitudes and behaviour of disadvantaged pupils. For example, the attendance of these pupils has improved and the gap between their attendance and that of others in the school has narrowed notably. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.) Leaders' use of the funding has also helped to improve outcomes for the target group over time; their attainment has improved steadily in comparison with national figures. The academy has had some success in closing achievement gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the academy, although this is not consistently the case in all subject areas.
- The academy uses Year 7 catch-up funding appropriately to support the learning of pupils who enter the academy with attainment below that expected for their age. The academy's data demonstrate successes in raising standards in both reading and mathematics for the target group of pupils.
- Leaders and managers have identified appropriate areas for the academy to improve and have detailed plans for how these improvements can be made.
- The school's website provides a good range of information but, at the time of the inspection, was in need of some updating.
- Middle leaders take increasing responsibility for the provision and outcomes in particular areas of the academy's provision. The effectiveness of their work is beginning to be evident in the key areas of English, mathematics and humanities. Leadership of the 16–19 study programmes is not as strong as in other areas and improvements are less evident than in the main academy.
- The academy's leaders appreciate the support they can access from the local authority, particularly for human relations issues and for staff training.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are a committed team with a good range of experience and skills. They provide a strong level of support and challenge.
 - Governors have a clear idea of where outcomes are stronger and where they are weaker and how this relates to the quality of teaching. They monitor the academy's work in detail, including at departmental level.
 - The sponsors contribute fully to the work of the governing body, providing strong links with the local community as well as expertise in business and accounting.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and contribute to the safe culture observed in the academy.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. For example, teaching in English, mathematics and humanities, while improving rapidly, is not yet leading to consistently good progress for pupils.
- Some teaching does not take sufficient account of the different abilities within the class. For example, the most-able pupils sometimes 'mark time' rather than moving rapidly on to more challenging work. The academy's leaders have identified that not all teaching does enough to challenge the most-able pupils. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- Teachers do not always do enough to ensure that all pupils engage fully with their learning. In these cases, teachers' expectations are not high enough and as a result, pupils' progress slows.
- The quality of marking and assessment varies. Inspectors saw examples of excellent marking that followed the academy's expectations and made a clear contribution to pupils' learning but this was not evident consistently across the academy. While some teaching gives a strong emphasis to broadening pupils' vocabulary, the academy's drive to improve pupils' literacy is not always evident in teachers' marking.
- Teaching is good in science, art and vocational subjects; as a result, pupils enjoy these subjects and achieve well. GCSE performance compares favourably with national figures and other inspection evidence suggests that current pupils continue to progress well in these areas.
- Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of their specialist subject, which they use to good effect to question and probe pupils' understanding. In the best practice, teachers anticipate likely errors or areas of difficulty and pupils learn how to overcome any misconceptions. Teachers' use of past examination papers in Key Stage 4 helps pupils to focus on where they may need additional support.
- Teachers form productive relationships with pupils. These relationships contribute to the sense of harmony around the academy and the pupils' acceptance of different backgrounds and views.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote the personal development and welfare of its pupils, including those who spend part of the week in alternative provision, is good.
- The academy works well with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need. For example, pupils in the care of the local authority respond well to the support they receive and, in consequence, none is persistently absent or has been excluded for poor behaviour.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Pupils' views, supported by those of parents, are that they feel safe in school.
- Attendance is broadly average. The academy's leaders, supported by a specialist team and form tutors, are increasingly successful in getting across to pupils the importance of attending regularly.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take. They are able to identify, for example, cyber-bullying through social media and recognise its potential for making someone unhappy. Pupils say that, on the few occasions when bullying occurs, staff are quick to sort it out. Pupils in the academy are accepting of people's differences and demonstrate tolerance in their dealings with others. Pupils show respect for the views of others and use language that is respectful. Inspectors came across no examples of derogatory language.
- The academy's positive ethos in a Christian context contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is raising pupils' aspirations effectively. Through their involvement in decision-making, pupils learn about democracy and making a positive contribution. All undergo training in first-aid and this helps to prepare them to become responsible citizens.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils, including the small number attending alternative provision, is good. This view is endorsed by pupils, parents and staff, including non-teaching staff.
- Behaviour around the academy is orderly. Pupils behave calmly at breaks and lunchtimes and respond quickly to requests from staff.
- Pupils look smart and look after the building where they work.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally good and low-level disruption is rare. However, when teaching is uninspiring or mundane, a small number of pupils are slow to engage with their work.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- As a result of the variable quality of teaching, pupils' progress is not consistently good across the academy, including in the sixth form. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs achieve in line with other groups in the academy.
- Unvalidated GCSE results for 2015 show that, from their various starting points, fewer pupils make or exceed the expected progress in English and mathematics than is the case nationally. This was particularly evident for the most-able pupils. The academy's leaders have recognised the need to boost the performance of the most-able and have included it as a focus for staff development in the current year.
- Disadvantaged pupils do less well than other pupils in the school. For example, in 2014 their results were approximately a grade below other pupils in both English and mathematics. When compared with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, the gap was a grade and a half in English and two grades in mathematics.
- Leaders have identified that fewer pupils make good progress in humanities subjects than elsewhere in the academy, and this concurs with inspection evidence. Achievement in science is a strength of the academy.
- The academy's data show that pupils' achievement is rising across a range of subjects and that pupils' achievement in 2016 and beyond will compare more favourably with national figures than has been the case in the past. Leaders' confidence in these data is based on the fact that predictions in 2015 were accurate in most subjects.
- Some underachievement remains among pupils in Key Stage 4. Leaders recognise the need to compensate for previously weaker teaching.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- Learners' achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Progress on academic courses at A and AS level is below average. Too many current learners in Year 12 are not on track to achieve their targets.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because it does not always address learners' needs, particularly in GCSE English and mathematics. An above-average proportion of learners enter the sixth form without having previously gained a grade C or above in GCSE English and/or mathematics. While the academy provides teaching at a suitable level for these learners, too few are successful in crossing this key threshold. Teaching approaches are too similar to those that have led to learners' lack of success in the past.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form require improvement. Self-evaluation is not sharp enough to identify weaker areas of provision. Information collected about the destination of learners after they leave is too vague to inform future planning.
- Good teaching and work-related learning on vocational courses are leading to good progress in several of these subjects. Learners' progress on vocational courses is typically in line with national figures.
- Disadvantaged learners do as well as their peers on vocational courses. Numbers are too small for meaningful comparisons of progress for individual subjects.
- The curriculum covers the requirements of the study programme, including work experience. It offers a broad range of pathways, including Advanced Level GCEs, BTEC Level 3 diplomas, and other courses at Levels 1 and 2. Learners also benefit from a taught programme that includes how to keep safe, including from radicalisation, together with understanding British values and what it means to be an active member of society.

- Typically, learners enter the sixth form with qualifications that are well below those seen in other sixth forms and colleges elsewhere. Effective careers advice and guidance are helping a growing proportion of learners completing Year 13 go on to university, several of whom are the first in their family to do so.
- The academy's work to promote learners' personal development, behaviour and welfare is good. Learners are polite and courteous. The academy's strong welfare and support systems are put to good effect, as in the rest of the academy. During their time in the sixth form, a significant number of learners develop skills of resilience and independence in learning that help them to progress to the next stage in employment, education or training.
- Attendance has improved substantially over the last three years and is now closer to that in the main academy.

School details

Unique reference number	135313
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10005527

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	698
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Smeeton
Principal	Caroline Preece
Telephone number	0161 643 2643
Website	www.stannesacademy.org.uk
Email address	admin@stannesacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2013

Information about this school

- St Anne’s Church of England Academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The academy’s pupils include more girls than boys.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is high at over twice the national average.
- About 90% of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Several other backgrounds are represented in small numbers.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is above average.
- In 2014, the academy did not meet the government’s floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress.
- The academy is sponsored jointly by the Diocese of Manchester and Crosslands.
- At the time of the inspection, three pupils were attending alternative provision for part of the week. Providers are Rainbows End Private Day Nursery, Status4All and the Prince’s Trust.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, inspectors observed teaching across the academy, including six part-lessons that were observed jointly with senior staff at the academy. They looked at pupils' written work and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They spoke informally to several groups of pupils at break- and lunchtime.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the academy's data about pupils' achievement, behaviour and safety. They also looked at management information such as minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, responses to the academy's own survey of parents' views, and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire. They were too few responses to the pupils' questionnaire for it to provide meaningful information; however, inspectors noted that none of the responses raised any concerns about safety in the school.
- One inspector had telephone conversations with representatives of the alternative provision currently accessed by pupils at the academy.

Inspection team

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Stephen Caldecott	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
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