

St John's CE Primary Academy Academy Self Review

5th – 6th July 2017

Reviewers: Kerin Jones, Diocesan Improvement Adviser SCAT (Lead)
Joanna Austin, Head of School Performance SCAT

Agreed Overall Effectiveness

In agreement with the Principal, CECET reviewers consider the overall effectiveness of the academy to be **Good (2)**

Leadership and management	Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils	Good	2
Pupil outcomes	Good	2
Early years foundation stage	Good	2

The quality of education provided by this school is good.

- School leaders and governors are determined to provide the best education for every child. They have created a culture in which every child can succeed. They have an accurate and detailed knowledge of the strengths of the academy, and they strive to identify and act upon aspects of the school that can be improved
- Staff take good care of pupils and have good relationships with them. This motivates pupils and inspires them to learn
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress which is in line with or better than that of other pupils
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and they behave well in lessons and around the school
- Leaders successfully promote equality of opportunity and diversity which results in a positive school culture

- British values are well promoted and celebrated and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good
- The Christian values which are evident throughout the school are used well to support the learning and personal development of all pupils
- Governors are knowledgeable, reflective, evaluative and committed to ensuring that the school becomes highly effective in all aspects of its work
- There is a good curriculum which provides a range of opportunities and experiences which arouse pupils' curiosity and stimulates their imagination
- The arrangements the school makes for the professional development of teachers and support staff has had a positive impact and has supported improvements in the quality of teaching
- Pupils make good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics but they have too few opportunities to explain their thinking, both in writing and orally
- Children get off to a good start in the early years foundation stage. From low starting points they make good progress because teaching is good. The EYFS outdoor area is not yet used regularly to support all aspects of their learning
- The quality of teaching is good and high expectations ensure that pupils learn well, but pupils need more opportunities across the curriculum to extend their writing and improve it
- Teachers mark work regularly and thoroughly but they do not always make clear what pupils should do to improve and they do not always ensure that pupils act on their advice

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

Reviewers identify key areas for development as follows:

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Improve the quality of pupils' learning by:

- giving pupils more opportunities for extended writing and for editing, re-drafting and improving their writing in all years and across the curriculum
- ensuring that teachers' marking always makes clear what next steps pupils must take to improve their work and that pupils always respond to the teacher's marking, always act upon it and assess their own work
- providing opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking both orally and in writing, particularly in mathematics but also in other areas of the curriculum

Leadership and Management

Further improve the impact of governance by

- agreeing a long term vision and ethos for the academy which will articulate its strategic direction, guide its development and ensure that all stakeholders know what the academy is working towards and can support it well

Early Years Foundation Stage

Improve the quality of provision in the early years foundation stage by:

- using the outdoor learning environment more regularly to support children's learning in all areas of EYFS curriculum
- further develop the engagement of parents in their children's learning

Review outcomes

Overall effectiveness is GOOD (2)

Leadership and Management is GOOD (2)

The principal, her staff and governors have high expectations and these are evident in the way the academy is organised and run. The principal and her staff lead by example and they successfully create a culture in which every child can succeed and where there is mutual respect and tolerance of individual differences and needs

Leaders and governors are determined to ensure that all pupils learn well, regardless of their starting points and their actions ensure that disadvantaged pupils: those for whom pupil premium funding is provided, those for whom English is not their first language, and pupils with special educational needs or disabilities make progress in line with or better than that of other pupils in reading, in writing and mathematics

Leaders and governors have an accurate and detailed knowledge of the quality of education provided by the school. The school self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and is used well to identify where further improvement is needed. Governors are provided with sharply focused and detailed information about outcomes, the quality of teaching learning and assessment, pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare and the impact of leadership and management and this helps the school to plan, monitor and refine its actions to further improve the key aspects of its work

Performance management is used well to improve the impact of teaching and leaders at all level have developed good skills in evaluating the quality of teaching and its impact upon learning. As a result leaders have accurately identified where teaching is strong and they focus upon developing and improving teaching which is less effective

All teachers say that the school provides well for their professional development. There is a desire amongst all staff to continue to improve and develop further and this is evident in the desire of support assistants to receive feedback on the impact of their contribution to pupils' learning following classroom observations during the review. The quality of teaching has been improved since the last review as a result of well targeted training for all staff alongside bespoke training to address the particular needs of individual teachers. The positive impact of this effective training is the modelling of good reading lessons by the leaders of literacy and key stage 2. As a result the quality of the way in which reading is taught across the academy has improved and pupils' reading has consequently improved

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a variety of learning experiences and as a result they learn well and behave well because they enjoy the learning. There is a broad range of after school clubs, trips and special activities which enrich pupils' learning and the principal plans to develop this further still through a creative curriculum

Leaders have tackled the issues identified at the last inspection and the in the previous review with vigour and enthusiasm. The principal has successfully developed an ethos in which embraces evaluation and improvement Although the work and materials on display around the school create a stimulating and pleasant learning environment the principal has correctly identified the need to increase the impact of display work through interactive displays which will engage pupils and routinely support their learning

The school has recently been awarded the values based education quality mark as a result of outstanding practice as a values based school and in recognition of the school's commitment to high aspirations and its culture of continuous improvement.

British values are prominently celebrated and promoted and contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result pupils understand and can articulate their opinions and beliefs and they demonstrate Christian and British values in the ways they conduct themselves in their learning and at other times. In creating a positive and caring culture leaders successfully promote equality of opportunity so that all pupils feel fully included within the school community. One pupil said "I am Muslim and I enjoy learning about the Christian stories. We are all one family here"

Safeguarding is effective because there are robust systems for ensuring the safety and well-being of every child and a culture of vigilance in which any concerns are reported pursued and investigated

The governance of the school

The governance of the school is good

Governors provide challenge and support for the principal and other leaders and they hold them to account for all the key aspects of the work of the school. Their determination to ensure that all pupils succeed is seen in the impact of additional funding on the positive progress made by all groups of pupils.

Governors take regular opportunities to sample the work of the school and to keep informed through learning walks, scrutiny of written work, discussions with pupils and discussions with leaders. In these strategies they receive good support and guidance from leaders and as a result they have a good understanding of the school strengths and weaknesses and of the key issues for improvement

In line with other leaders, governors express a desire for continued evaluation of and improvement in the discharge of their functions. They reflect on the impact of what they do and they welcome opportunities to seek independent validation of their work

Governors consult parents, pupils and staff well. Although the school works hard to engage with and involve parents in their children's education governors would like to see greater parental involvement. They support the principal's plans to develop a more creative curriculum and they have identified this as a strategy for encouraging more parents to interact with the school and with their child's learning

Governors oversee the management of school finances very carefully and they take seriously their responsibility to ensure that money is well spent. In so doing they are prepared to make difficult decisions about staffing and resources and they discharge these functions with diligence and sensitivity

Governors are ambitious and are keen to support the school in striving to perform as well as it can, but although they can identify issues for improvement and development and can describe their priorities they have not yet collectively established a clarity of vision and ethos to guide their strategic direction for the school

The Single Central Record is fully in place and all appropriate checks are made and recorded.

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment is GOOD (2)

Since the last St Chad's review a year ago, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved further. Teachers have high expectations for their pupils, and set work which builds effectively on what they can already do. Pupils are enthusiastic and willing to work hard. Pupils told reviewers that they enjoy the challenge provided in lessons.

Teachers plan carefully to make sure that the work set is pitched at the right level. A useful table plan for reading, writing and mathematics provides an overview of outcomes and progress. Occasionally, work set is not challenging enough, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, and explain new ideas clearly, using the correct subject-specific terms. They model work effectively and pupils are able to practice and apply their new skills. Teachers and teaching assistants check pupils' progress effectively during lessons and move on pupils who have understood the work, and challenge any misconceptions. They encourage pupils to reflect on their work, learn from their mistakes and improve, although this is not always consistent in every class.

Learning is characterized by strong relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom. Pupils work well together and are very willing to help each other learn. Staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively, including that of a small number of pupils with significant additional needs.

Teaching assistants work effectively in class with individual pupils and small groups, breaking down the learning into smaller steps and refocusing teachers' questions. They lead well-planned sessions for small groups of pupils at risk of falling behind. Pupils told reviewers that homework makes a valuable contribution to their learning.

Right from the early years, phonic knowledge is developed well because adults introduce letters and sounds in a structured sequence. A variety of different techniques are used to enable pupils to read and to record the sounds in writing. Teachers give older pupils a range of comprehension strategies to help them understand what they read, and link reading texts effectively to the topics pupils are studying. The school makes sure that those pupils who read little at home frequently read aloud to adults during the day.

Pupils who spoke with reviewers enjoy reading and say that staff ensure that the books they read for pleasure are well matched to their abilities. Weaker readers catch up quickly because they know how to use their phonic knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words and because the school promotes reading effectively.

The academy ensures that from an early age, pupils pay close attention to handwriting, punctuation and spelling. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a more mature written style by including particular features in their writing, such as a number of adjectives or a particular type of sentence. In some classes pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length. The academy has already identified this through monitoring and has put in place a plan to ensure that writing is evidenced more regularly, identifying robust next steps.

Teaching in mathematics is focused on building up pupils' knowledge, reasoning and calculation skills, and ensure that they understand the straightforward practical application of the skills they have learned. Teaching is strongest in years 5 and 6 and this has contributed to significant improvements in mathematics in 2017. High expectations, robust tracking and intensive interventions have led to pupils making significant progress from their key stage 1 outcomes. Staff mark pupils' work during the lesson and this helps pupils because they know immediately if they are on track. A scrutiny of pupils workbooks in mathematics across the academy showed inconsistencies in some classes where pupils had fewer opportunities to reason mathematically. It would benefit pupils if they were able to explain their thinking, particularly in mathematics.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare is GOOD (2)

Personal development and welfare

Pupils' personal development and welfare are good

Pupils are proud of their school, they take pride in their work and their appearance and they are confident and self-assured because throughout the academy staff provide encouragement and build their confidence self-esteem. Their consistently positive attitudes to their learning have a good impact on the progress they make and they are keen to explain to visitors about the work they are doing. In lessons they listen attentively and are respectful of the views ideas expressed by others. They respond promptly to instructions and requests from staff and disruption to learning is rare

There is a clear and consistent understanding amongst all members of the school community about the values and culture that they are working to promote and this promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Pupils learn how to stay safe when out of school, including the use of the internet, and they enjoy learning about how to keep themselves fit and healthy

Pupils enjoy their learning and their attendance has improved significantly over a three year period (currently 96.2% compared with 95.3% last year) and is now above the national average and this is due a range of robust systems and strategies, such as the one hundred percent club, that have been implemented.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well met and they are well prepared to develop as responsible and thoughtful citizens. The school has recently been awarded the Values based Education quality mark, recognizing its commitment to high aspirations and outstanding practice as a values based school

Behaviour is good

Pupils behave well because the school has established effective strategies to promote high standards of behaviour and a consistently supportive and caring culture in which relationships between all members of the community are caring and supportive

The school is a calm and peaceful environment and pupils conduct themselves well at all times including break and lunch times when they are well supervised and expectations are clear. The school's efforts to further improve behaviour have impacted positively on the number of seclusions from lessons for poor behaviour (reducing from 15 in the autumn term to zero so far in the summer term). The number of pupils attaining 'green' has increased steadily from 129 in October to 214 in May as a result of the school's efforts to model expectations and promote good behaviour

Parents are universally positive about behaviour and all staff say that behaviour is good in the school. Pupils agree and can explain to show that they understand why it is important to behave well. All adults provide good role models for pupils and they are quick to challenge inappropriate language or stereotyping.

Pupils say there is no bullying in the school and they are confident that adults act promptly and decisively to deal with any concerns they may have

There are very few fixed term or permanent exclusions and during the past year the small number of exclusions related to one pupil

Pupil Outcomes are GOOD (2)

Pupils make good progress in their learning across the school and in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.

They enter the school with attainment below or well below the national average and by the end of year 6 their attainment is above the national average in reading (83% v 71%) and in spelling, punctuation and grammar (87% v 77%). It is well above the national average (97% v 70%) in mathematics. In year 6 the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined is above the national average (73% v 61%). The proportion who achieve age related expectations in writing is below but close to the national average (73% v 76% NA)

Early years

From well below average starting points when they enter the early years foundation stage over three quarters of all pupils (76%) achieve a good level of development. This provides a strong foundation for entry to key stage 1.

Key stage 1

In key stage 1 this good progress continues in reading and mathematics (where 77% of pupils reach the expected standard) and in science (80%). Progress in writing is less strong where 63% of pupils achieve the expected standard. The proportion of pupils reaching age related expectations in reading, in writing and in mathematics declined by 10% in each of those areas of learning from the previous year.

A very large majority (87%) of pupils in year 1 achieve the expected standard in the national phonics check

Key stage 2

In key stage 2 pupils' attainment has improved significantly since last year in mathematics (+45%) and reading (+49%). In writing there was a small improvement in pupils' attainment (+4%)

Key stage 2 average scaled score has improved significantly (108.8 v 98 last year)

Progress

Pupils make better than expected progress (5 points over the year) in all year groups in reading (average 5.8), in writing (5.7) and in mathematics (5.6). In year 6 pupils make exceptional progress in writing (7 points)

Pupils for whom pupil premium funding is provided (PP) make progress which is in line with that of all pupils in (5.8 points average) and better than other pupils in writing (6.0) and mathematics (6.0)

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) make on average better progress than all pupils in reading (6.0), writing (6.2) and mathematics (6.1)

Pupils for whom English is not their first language make progress which is similar to that of all pupils (5.6 points) in mathematics but better than that of other pupils in reading (6.0 points) and in writing (5.9)

Progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 has improved significantly since last year: reading +9.25 points average progress (last year -2.6); writing +4.29 (0.1); mathematics +11.1 (-1.4)

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They show determination, concentration and resilience and they can work collaboratively with others and also take responsibility for their own learning when given the opportunity to make choices and work independently.

Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and this has successfully nurtured a love of reading across the academy. The introduction of a new reading comprehension initiative is starting to have a positive impact upon pupils' reading ability in all classes

Effectiveness of Early Years Provision is GOOD (2)

Provision in Early Years is GOOD

Children get off to a good start at St John's. Children enter the Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age, often significantly weak in communication, language and number, and many aspects of personal development

Children make good progress as they move through Nursery and Reception because teaching and learning is good and adults track children's progress carefully. Literacy and maths progress is well monitored and children are identified if they are underachieving

The Foundation Stage Profile outcomes show improvements in 2017. Three quarters of Reception children have achieved expected standard in ELGs in writing, reading and maths. Evidence in children's workbooks, lesson observations and tracking data confirm this. The percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development is slightly above national average. This means that a higher proportion of children are well prepared for Year 1

Leadership of the early years provision is effective. The leader has provided effective support for the Early Years team and regularly checks the progress that children are making. Concentrated effort has been made to develop a team approach to planning, delivery and evaluation of practice. This has been effective and contributes to the progress made by the children. The leader benefits from attending St Chad's Quality Learning Circle sessions, which provide a useful network with other St Chad's academies. The EYFS lead ensures that children's needs are identified early. For example, a high proportion of children enter the academy with little or no English. The academy provides them with appropriate personalised support so that they can develop strong foundations of language

Routines are embedded and these support children's understanding of how to stay safe. The arrangements to ensure children's safeguarding and welfare needs are effective and meet statutory requirements. Children are very well cared for in both Nursery and Reception classes so they feel very safe, secure, quickly gain confidence and are ready to learn. Clear routines and procedures are in place and children respond to adults and each other in a kind and positive way. For example, one child who was writing was having difficulty in reading a word was offered helpful advice from a friend "cut up the word into little words - 'up-set' that's how you do it"

Behaviour is good and children tackle tasks enthusiastically. Children in both Nursery and Reception classes work well together and they are given many exciting opportunities to work together during child initiated activities thereby supporting the development of social skills. For example, two children working together in the investigation area are having a mature conversation about the three little pigs and 'if you blow hard enough you will blow the house down because they are not bricks.' There followed a lengthy exchange of reasons why bricks are better than straw

Teaching is good and children are engaged in their learning. Teaching assistant support is strong and enhances children's good progress with astute questioning that encourages children to think hard. The learning environment is well organised and appropriately resourced. Adults plan lots of learning that is fun and stimulating. For example, nursery children find cvc words in foam, children dig up and identify vegetables that grow underground, nursery children patiently write letters in chalk outdoors. Adults provide a focus on phonics, opportunities for writing and maths, all wrapped up with teaching methods that are stimulating and exciting. For example, children are outdoors and enjoy exploring a variety of physical activities relating to improving their phonics. This daily focus is supporting the improvements in children's writing skills and to improve these further the school should ensure that daily opportunities for writing are followed up with appropriate phonic intervention

Each child in the Reception class has a learning journey book which indicates each child's stage of learning, a book for literacy and mathematics that details their learning. Staff across early years monitor children's work and record progress. The 'C4S' Assessment grid, at the start of every entry in their workbook, identifies the learning intention, age and stage, long term goals characteristics of learning and self-assessment. Adults use the information to plan appropriate activities that reinforce and extend children's skills and to provide extra help where needed. The academy holds informal 'children's progress reviews' and reviewers recommend that the EYFS leader's plans to ensure these are more regular and focused, to enable each child to know how to improve their work, and that this is reflected in their workbooks are realised

Safeguarding is effective and children are well cared for. All adults take children's safety very seriously and make it a priority in all that they do

Effective relationships have been built with parents who are strongly encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. The academy provides Open the Door Literacy and Numeracy each half term that are well attended as are INSPIRE workshops. There are regular opportunities for communication

Parents report that their children are happy. They say that they are able to talk with staff if there are any issues and that staff help them to deal with issues that are not school related. Parents also say that the family support worker provided by the academy is very helpful and provides them with useful advice, which they appreciate greatly

Kerin Jones,

Diocesan Improvement Adviser

July 2017

APPENDIX

During the review evidence was gathered from the following sources:

- Reviewers observed parts of lessons in all classes; some of these were joint observations with school leaders
- Scrutiny of pupils' written work
- Learning walks
- Discussions with pupils
- Discussions with parents
- Discussions with staff leaders and other staff
- Questionnaire to all staff
- Discussions with four governors
- Schools own performance data analysis
- Raise online
- Inspection dashboard
- Attendance data
- Observations of behaviour in lessons and at break times
- Policy documents
- Governing Body Minutes
- Safeguarding policy
- Observations of two other St Chad's Academy Trust nominees who shadowed the review

Information about this academy

The school became an academy in December 2014

Number on roll	208	Smaller than average
% free school meal eligibility (including ever 6 information)	42.2%	Much higher than average (25.2%)
% pupils from ethnic minority groups	59.1%	Much higher than average (31.6%)
% pupils with first language not English	48.9%	Much higher than average (20.1%)
% pupils with SEN support (28 pupils)	13.1%	Higher than average (12.1%)
% pupils who have either a Statement or the new EHC	0.0%	Well below average (1.3%)
Deprivation Factor (IDACI)	0.28	Higher than average (NA 0.21)

Questionnaire for school staff - results

		Agree	Disagree
1	I am proud to be a member of staff at this school.	100%	
2	Children are safe at this school.	100%	
3	Behaviour is good in this school.	100%	
4	The behaviour of pupils is consistently well managed.	100%	
5	The school deals with any cases of bullying effectively (bullying includes persistent name-calling, cyber, racist and homophobic bullying).	100%	
6	Leaders do all they can to improve teaching.	100%	
7	The school makes appropriate provision for my professional development.	93%	7% (1 return)
8	The school successfully meets the differing needs of individual pupils.	100%	
9	I know what we are trying to achieve as a school.	100%	
10	All staff consistently apply school policies.	100%	
11	The school is well led and managed.	100%	

There were 15 returns.

There were no additional comments submitted