

Saltley Academy

Belchers Lane, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B9 5RX

Inspection dates

13–14 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This improving school is well led and managed. Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and they are using this information to make further improvements.
- The highly effective headteacher, supported by other leaders, staff, pupils, parents, carers and those responsible for governance, has created an ambitious and positive climate for learning.
- The broad and balanced curriculum allows pupils to make strong progress across a range of subjects. It promotes personal development, fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Almost all move on to appropriate education or training when they leave the school.
- Pupils make faster progress than other pupils nationally in many subjects. They leave the school with an overall attainment similar to the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils make more rapid progress than other pupils nationally. From their starting points, their attainment is similar to that of other pupils.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is improving, but it is still slower than that of other pupils with similar starting points.
- There is some excellent teaching in the school. However, the quality of teaching varies within and between subject areas so that it is not consistently of the very highest standard.
- Middle leadership is developing. Some subject leaders are very effective but others have not had sufficient impact on the areas for which they are responsible.
- Leaders have introduced a range of systems and structures to improve the school. These are having a positive impact but some are not fully embedded. Staff do not apply some policies consistently.
- The multi-academy trust provides effective support, and those responsible for governance hold leaders to account in the appropriate way.
- Leaders support pupils' personal development and welfare very well. Pupils take on a range of responsibilities, and they are proud of their school.
- Attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average. However, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities continue to be absent more often than other pupils.
- Safeguarding is effective. There is a culture for keeping pupils safe in the school. Strong systems are in place to help to protect pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and standards of attainment by ensuring that:
 - teaching, learning and assessment are consistently strong within and across subject areas
 - all middle leaders take full responsibility for improving standards in the areas that they lead
 - staff use new procedures consistently to improve the quality of education provided
 - leaders and teachers help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to continue to improve their rates of progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is well led and managed. The highly effective headteacher, ably supported by the committed and united senior leadership team, staff, pupils, parents and those responsible for governance, has created a thriving school community.
- Senior leaders are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they are taking effective action to further improve the school. Leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. The aspirational nature of the school is reflected in the school's motto: 'Be outstanding'.
- Leaders have created a positive climate for learning. As a result of coaching and development opportunities in the school and beyond, staff are improving their practice. Leaders use performance management and staff training well to improve the quality of education provided by the school. However, some inconsistencies remain.
- Middle leadership is developing. Senior leaders challenge subject leaders to improve their practice and some areas, for example humanities, science, modern foreign languages, computing and the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, are well led. However, some middle leaders do not have a clear understanding of their wider responsibilities and do not fully evaluate the impact of their actions. This leads to variability within and across departments.
- Leaders have introduced a wide range of systems and structures to improve the school since it opened. Policies and practices to improve teaching, assessment and pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance are having a positive impact. However, some strategies are not fully embedded and others are not used consistently. This restricts their impact.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and allows pupils to make strong progress across a range of subjects. It promotes personal development very well. Leaders have embedded fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development deeply within the curriculum. It also contributes well to pupils' positive behaviour and physical, mental and personal well-being. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school supports learning in the classroom through a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils take part in Shakespeare plays in Stratford, they visit universities, participate in a range of sporting activities and they celebrate festivals from different religions. Pupils have a clear understanding of cultures that are different to their own. They learn about all the major religions, and they are tolerant and respectful of the beliefs of other people. Leaders and staff openly promote diversity and equality of opportunity.
- Additional funding is used well in the school. The pupil premium funds a range of activities that have helped disadvantaged pupils to make rapid progress and improve their attainment and attendance. The Year 7 catch-up premium has led to improved progress in English and mathematics for targeted pupils. Leaders are using additional money to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities far more effectively than they have done in the past in order to speed up pupils' progress.

- The school is outward looking. Leaders and staff work well with other schools in the trust and beyond. They contribute to the Birmingham Education Partnership, local authority activities and the schools' forum. The headteacher is chair of the East Birmingham Network and staff from the school also work well with parents and the wider community.
- The school receives a wide range of effective support from the Washwood Heath Multi-Academy Trust, led by the chief executive. This includes training and development opportunities for staff at all levels, sharing of good practice, guidance and quality assurance, to which the school contributes.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body and the multi-academy trust provide effective governance. Those responsible for governance have a wide range of skills and experience that they use well to hold leaders to account and support further improvement.
- The chair of the local governing body is highly effective. He has ensured that other governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and that they can offer appropriate support and challenge.
- Those responsible for governance carry out their statutory duties efficiently. They ensure that resources are managed well, that additional funding is used appropriately and that safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. This aspect of the school's work is well led, and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and duties.
- Safeguarding is a priority for leaders and staff, and there is a strong culture for keeping pupils safe. All staff are well trained and kept up to date about safeguarding issues. Leaders and staff have a detailed understanding of the processes for reporting concerns, and use them well. Referrals are timely and staff take appropriate action when required. Leaders follow up concerns thoroughly.
- The school's single central record is compliant, and paper and electronic records are stored securely. Pupils, staff and parents correctly believe that pupils are safe in school. Procedures are in place to ensure that pupils who attend alternative provision are also safe.
- The site is secure, and pupils are taught to stay safe in an age-appropriate way. They learn about online safety, and they are taught about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Staff are competent and confident in encouraging open discussion with pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There is some very high quality teaching in the school that has led to good outcomes over time. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of practice between and within subject areas.
- Where teaching is most effective, it is carefully planned to provide challenge for pupils

with different starting points. Staff have high expectations and use questions and their subject knowledge well to deepen pupils' understanding. Activities are well resourced and interest pupils. This promotes pupils' engagement and speeds up the progress that they make.

- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff and work well together. For example, they discuss topics with enthusiasm and help each other develop their knowledge and understanding. However, this does not happen consistently well throughout the school.
- Where teaching is less effective, staff do not plan or resource activities that allow pupils to make strong progress from their different starting points. They do not routinely help them fill gaps in their knowledge or ensure that they catch up on work that they miss due to absence or interventions. Where aspirations are not high enough, pupils make slower progress.
- The quality of pupils' presentation is variable within and across subjects. Some staff use the school's relatively new marking and assessment policy very well to help pupils to improve their work. However, it is not used consistently to correct errors or to provide clear guidance.
- The quality of teaching in English is improving, and staff are taking opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy in a range of subjects. Pupils are encouraged to use literacy mats and dictionaries across the curriculum. Pupils also regularly write at length in subjects such as history. Staff develop mathematical skills well in other subjects, such as science.
- Leaders are aware that teachers do not use homework consistently to embed learning or develop new skills, knowledge or understanding. The school's homework policy is currently under review.
- There are some highly effective teaching assistants in the school and one-to-one and small-group interventions are helping pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make improved progress. However, not all teaching assistants are equally effective, and systems to ensure that pupils who are withdrawn from lessons are able to catch up on what they have missed are not robust.
- Assessment is accurate and most teachers use this information well to help their planning. Leaders are aware of those staff who need further training to use assessment information more effectively.
- The school gives parents clear information about how their child is progressing in relation to national expectations for their age and what they need to do to improve. Meetings with parents give them opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff in more depth.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are keen to learn, and the way that staff promote what they term 'outstanding learning qualities' helps pupils to understand how to be successful learners.
- Most pupils present their work well and respond positively to teachers' expectations.

They are proud of their school and they are keen to take on responsibilities for the benefit of others. Prefects, the head boy and head girl, mentors in violence prevention, the school council, and young well-being leaders act as role models to other pupils. There is a culture of mutual respect in the school. This is reflected in a pupil's comment, who described the school as 'outstanding, resilient and loving'.

- The school develops physical and emotional well-being very well. Fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are firmly embedded within the ethos of the school. Rights and responsibilities are a core part of the school's culture. The school's work in this area has been externally recognised by UNICEF UK's 'Rights Respecting School' award.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that staff will deal quickly and effectively with any incidents should they happen. A visible staff presence makes pupils feel safe in school and when they leave school at the end of the day.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe when using the internet, and they learn about how to stay safe in a range of situations. For example, they are taught about how to protect themselves from the dangers of radicalisation, substance misuse and child sexual exploitation.
- The very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are well supported to promote their personal development and well-being. School leaders work effectively with the provider to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils usually behave well in lessons and around the school. Learning is very rarely disrupted but a few pupils become disengaged from their studies when they do not find the teaching interesting.
- Pupils respond positively to high expectations of behaviour. They have a clear understanding of how to behave well and understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. However, the behaviour management system is not applied consistently by staff.
- The few pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are effectively supported to behave very well. Permanent exclusions are rare and the rate of fixed-term exclusion is similar to the national average. However, leaders are aware that recorded instances of inappropriate behaviour have increased recently.
- Pupils are punctual and attendance is now similar to the national average. Attendance has improved over time and most pupils are rarely absent. However, although improving, the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is still below that of others.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most groups of pupils make rapid progress across a range of subjects, including those that contribute to the English Baccalaureate. Consequently, overall progress by the end of key stage 4 was well above the national average in 2016 and 2017.
- Over time, low and middle prior attaining pupils in the school have made faster

progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. The most able pupils who left the school in 2016 had made similar progress to other high prior attaining pupils but, as a result of action taken by school leaders, the most able Year 11 pupils had made much faster progress than the national average in 2017.

- Disadvantaged pupils make faster progress than other pupils nationally and attain similar outcomes to other pupils with comparable starting points. However, their overall attainment still does not match that of other pupils, because many start at the school a long way behind their peers.
- Pupils from different minority ethnic groups make similar progress to each other but girls make faster progress than boys. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making improved progress but their progress is still slower than that of other pupils with similar starting points.
- Progress in science, mathematics, history and Urdu has been strong over time. Progress in English improved in 2017 but middle-ability pupils continued to make slower progress than others in this subject.
- Current pupils are making improved progress in English and most other subject areas. However, leaders are aware that the progress that pupils make elsewhere is not matched in geography and drama.
- In 2017, overall attainment was similar to the national average and low prior attaining pupils attained better grades than other pupils with similar starting points. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher grades in both English and mathematics was below the national average.
- Pupils understand the importance of reading. Opportunities to read every day in school particularly benefit weaker readers and those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils can use the sounds that letters represent to decipher words and many pupils read fluently and with expression. However, leaders are aware that reading time for the most able pupils could be used more productively and plans are in place to address this.
- As a result of the progress that pupils make during their time in the school, they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. Pupils benefit from good-quality impartial careers guidance. This helps almost all of them to move on to suitable and sustained places in colleges, sixth forms or with apprenticeship providers.

School details

Unique reference number	141668
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10042845

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 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,032
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Peter Anstey
Headteacher	Peter Weir
Telephone number	0121 566 6555
Website	www.saltleyacademy.co.uk
Email address	enquiry@saltley.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Saltley Academy opened in March 2015. It is part of the Washwood Heath Multi-Academy Trust. Governance is provided by the trust and a local governing body. The trust also provides a range of support to all aspects of the school's work.
- The school is an expanding average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average. An average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities but do not have an education, health and care plan.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site alternative provision at the East Birmingham Network Academy on a full-time basis.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made short visits to 68 lessons, 31 of which were with senior leaders. An inspector also visited the alternative provision setting with one of the school's deputy headteachers. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, and observed behaviour in lessons and during social time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, other leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the local governing body, the chair of the board of directors, the chief executive officer of the trust, and a trustee.
- Inspectors considered 279 responses to the school's parental questionnaire and one free-text comment on Parent View. Seventy-two responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and inspectors looked at published information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Lois Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Badyal	Ofsted Inspector
Antony Edkins	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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