

Inspection of Studham Village CofE Academy

Church Road, Studham, Bedfordshire LU6 2QD

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Sarah MacKenzie-Skea. This school is part of Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Anna Rogers, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jenny Jenkins.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Studham Village Church of England Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Studham Church of England Village School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Studham Village Church of England Academy as a result of conversion to academy status. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Smiles, warmth and respect are in abundance in school. From oldest to youngest, pupils get on well with one another and delight in each other's company. Older pupils keep a watchful eye out for children in Reception. They act as positive role models for these children to look up to.

Adults have high expectations of pupils, both in their learning and how they behave. Pupils meet these expectations each and every day. They behave extremely well and work hard in lessons. They think hard when tackling tricky work and show great pride when they succeed. Pupils learn very well.

Pupils love being a 'Studham Star', and readily take on roles of responsibility in school. Whether a house captain, prefect or collective worship monitor, pupils carry out these roles with diligence.

Many and varied opportunities are on offer for pupils to broaden their horizons. They learn about, and celebrate, differences between themselves and others. Pupils take well-calculated risks in the forest school area. Many are involved in growing vegetables in the school allotment or harvesting apples to make fresh apple juice for others. This rich offer ensures pupils leave the school as kind and compassionate young people.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has carefully designed the curriculum to provide pupils with the important knowledge they need to succeed. They remember much of the curriculum they are taught. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress. These pupils receive well-tailored support. Adults know where pupils with SEND have difficulties and put in place strategies to help pupils learn well.

Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to apply and recap their new learning. In mathematics, for example, pupils develop a detailed knowledge of calculation strategies by the time they reach Year 4. Pupils build their new knowledge on what they already know. This is because teachers have strong subject knowledge in the subjects they teach. They explain new ideas and concepts clearly, so pupils understand and have plenty of opportunities to apply and recap their new learning.

Adults are skilled at teaching reading. Pupils crack the phonics code and go on to become fluent and confident readers. The few who find reading tricky receive effective support to help them to catch up – which they do. Pupils develop a love of reading and relish choosing new books to take home. The Nursery provision immerses children in stories, rhymes and poems to help them learn and use new words. Skilled adults help children in Nursery and Reception build their vocabulary.

While pupils have strong phonics knowledge when they read, some cannot successfully apply this knowledge to their spelling when they are writing. Some younger pupils do not spell words correctly when they are writing independently. This means their writing is not as accurate as it could be.

Children in Nursery and Reception learn in a caring and nurturing environment. Adults working with the youngest children are highly skilled. They know children extremely well. This means they provide activities to help children develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need for the next step in their journey through school. Children in Reception become increasingly independent and resilient. The youngest children with SEND have their needs accurately identified. This means adults swiftly put in place any additional support needed.

Pupils benefit enormously from the well-considered personal development programme. They try new things, persevere and play an important role in the school community. Opportunities such as the annual 'camp out', musical performances and leadership opportunities help pupils to develop their character and independence. A culture of mutual respect runs through the school.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They listen carefully to adults and one another, valuing the views of others. The 'Studham Stride' ensures pupils move around the school with a purpose, meaning they do not disturb others in their learning. Attendance is very high. Pupils miss very few days. The school keeps a close eye on attendance and acts swiftly if, on the odd occasion, a pupil's attendance starts to drop.

Trustees and members of the local governing body operate strategically to keep a careful eye on how the school is doing. They hold an accurate view of the school. Over the past few years, leaders have acted with determination to bring about improvements. They have a sharp eye on what needs further refinement to continue to improve pupils' education. Staff take great pride in the jobs they do. Regular high-quality training from leaders or through the trust, help them keep their practice sharp. Senior leaders take great care in ensuring staff workload is well-managed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not provide enough opportunity and support for some younger pupils to accurately apply their well-developed phonic knowledge to their spelling. As a result, pupils do not always spell words accurately when they write independently. The school should ensure it continues to implement the planned training to provide support for all

staff so that pupils apply their phonic knowledge consistently and accurately when writing.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148234
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10345535
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jenny Jenkins
CEO of the trust	Anna Rogers
Headteacher	Sarah MacKenzie-Skea
Website	www.studhamschools.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust in October 2020.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2021, with the deputy headteacher joining in April 2024.
- The school has a nursery which also has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection of its religious character took place in February 2020. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a range of other school staff, including the special educational needs coordinators. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and held a separate meeting with trustees and members of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, attendance records, pupil records, records of trustee meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View survey, and Ofsted's online staff survey. The pupil survey was not used in this inspection. Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils both formally and informally during the inspection.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michele Geddes

Ofsted Inspector

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