

Inspection of St Giles Academy

Addison Drive, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 4LQ

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The principal of this school is Victoria Warburton. The school is part of Harbour Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Richard Briggs, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Chris Cherry.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not have a good experience of education at this school. The school does not have high enough expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. The curriculum is poorly structured. The quality of teaching is weak. Pupils' outcomes are well below national averages. Many pupils finish key stage 2 without acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills that they need in reading, writing and mathematics. They are not fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding are well developed. It takes appropriate action when pupils are at risk of harm. However, some pupils do not feel safe sometimes. This is because of unruly behaviour. Pupils describe the playground as 'troublesome'. Fights and intimidating behaviour frighten some pupils. Some lack confidence in how the school deals with bullying. Behaviour in lessons is poor, particularly in the older year groups. Classrooms are disorderly. Disruption to learning is common. Some pupils are openly defiant. Staff do not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively.

There is a range of clubs, trips, roles and responsibilities for pupils to enjoy. There are nutritious breakfasts available to all pupils at the start of each day. The school encourages a love of reading through its 'starbooks' rewards.

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

The curriculum in many subjects is unambitious and poorly sequenced. The school has not given enough thought to what pupils need to know and do. Pupils have limited knowledge in many subjects. The quality of their work, particularly their written work, is low. Few checks take place on pupils' learning. Staff do not identify and correct pupils' errors. Pupils repeatedly make the same mistakes. Gaps in their learning go unresolved.

The school has focused on improving its phonics provision. Staff teach phonics well. Most pupils can recall the letter sounds they have learned. The school provides support for pupils who fall behind in phonics. However, the school has not implemented a sequenced curriculum for reading beyond phonics, despite pupils' low outcomes. The reading curriculum in key stage 2 is weak. It does not enable pupils to achieve the aims of the national curriculum.

The early years curriculum is stronger than in the rest of the school. Early years staff provide additional support for children's reading, writing and mathematics. Most children know the order and value of numbers up to 10. However, the early years provision does not meet children's development needs as well as it could. Activities for physical development, building children's understanding of the world and encouraging their artistic abilities are limited.

The school is failing to support its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) adequately. Staff identify pupils with SEND. However, they do not make suitable adaptations to learning so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and succeed. Support for these pupils lacks precision and it is not reviewed regularly. The school is not

meeting the needs of disadvantaged pupils. The school does not address gaps in their learning. The achievement of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils is weak.

The school does not have an effective approach to managing and supporting pupils in their behaviour. Staff often ignore misbehaviour. The school does not evaluate the reasons for pupils' poor behaviour or the effectiveness of its behaviour management strategies, preventing improvement. Some pupils do not get the support they need to regulate their behaviour, causing them to miss lots of learning.

Absence and persistent absence rates are both stubbornly high. The school does not apply its own policy consistently and effectively. It does not investigate and resolve the causes of pupils' frequent absences.

Some aspects of the personal development programme are effective. For example, the school teaches pupils how to look after their physical and mental health. It aims to build pupils' character through its 'DANCE' values. However, the school's personal development provision is not preparing pupils well enough for life in modern Britain. Pupils have limited understanding of fundamental British values and the diversity of people, including different religions and belief systems.

There has been significant turbulence in leadership since the last inspection. During this time, leaders at the school and the trust, including those responsible for governance, have not taken effective action to bring about the widespread improvements that are needed. Many of the school's weaknesses were identified by inspectors two years ago. In some areas, little has happened to make things better and some aspects of the school have declined further. The exception is provision for phonics. Leaders have acted too slowly and have had little effect on the quality of education provided and the standards of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They have not demonstrated the capacity needed to improve the school.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported with their workload.

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's curriculum is poorly designed. In most subjects, it has little structure. The school has not identified what pupils need to learn and when they need to learn it. As a result, pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills they need, leading to weak achievement. The school must ensure that there are well-sequenced curriculums in all subjects. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must oversee the

implementation of the curriculum to ensure its effectiveness and stronger outcomes for pupils.

- The school does not ensure that pupils' learning is assessed effectively in most subjects. It does not check that pupils have a secure understanding of the essential knowledge or address pupils' errors. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their learning. They struggle to recall important curriculum content securely. Pupils repeat fundamental errors in their work. The school must ensure that staff check closely on pupils' learning and progress, resolving any misconceptions swiftly, so that pupils have a secure understanding of the curriculum and are well prepared for their next steps.
- The school's provision for pupils with SEND is weak. Expectations of pupils with SEND are set too low. Staff do not provide the necessary support for pupils with SEND, resulting in weak attainment and progress. The school must ensure that the individual support for pupils with SEND is well matched to their needs and checked on closely. It must ensure that staff adapt learning according to pupils' needs so that pupils with SEND achieve well.
- The school is not taking effective steps to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils do not receive the support they require to close gaps in their learning. Their attainment at the end of key stage 2 is low and shows no signs of improvement. The school should ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive the support they need to attain as highly as possible in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's expectations of pupils' behaviour are too low. The school's approach and systems are not adequate to secure good behaviour from pupils. The school does not support staff well enough in managing behaviour. Consequently, too many pupils behave poorly, which disrupts learning and prevents others from having positive experiences of school. The school must implement an effective approach to managing behaviour that all staff apply consistently and that leads to pupils acquiring positive and respectful attitudes towards learning and each other.
- The school does not follow its own attendance policy consistently. It does not identify and resolve the reasons for pupils' poor attendance well enough. Too many pupils miss significant learning time. Absence and persistent absence remain high. The school should implement effective procedures to reduce absence rates, ensuring that pupils attend regularly.
- The school's strategic planning does not address the school's weaknesses sufficiently. Over time, the trust has not resolved the extensive problems in the quality of education or pupils' behaviour and attitudes with the necessary rigour. Therefore, essential improvements have not taken place and many efforts to bring about change have yielded little progress. The school must put a suitable improvement strategy in place that addresses all the key issues for development. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must check closely on the implementation and impact of this plan so that weaknesses are resolved swiftly.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

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	146561
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10397811
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Cherry
CEO of the trust	Richard Briggs
Principal	Victoria Warburton
Website	sga.harbourlearningtrust.com
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 May 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Harbour Learning Trust.
- The principal took up their role in February 2025.
- There have been several changes in leadership at the school since the last inspection.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

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.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in English, music, art and design, design and technology, and personal, social and health education.
- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors also met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, the early years, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- 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 examined a range of school documents relating to behaviour, attendance and governance, as well as the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read with familiar adults. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from different year groups.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of Harbour Learning Trust.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local academy council.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the results of Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

CT Atwal

Ofsted Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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