

St Giles Academy

Address: Addison Drive, St Giles Academy, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN2 4LQ

Unique reference number (URN): 146561

Inspection report: 3 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	    
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders' work to create an inclusive school culture is recent. There are early signs that the impact of this work is making a positive difference for the most vulnerable pupils in school and that the gaps that have existed in their learning for too long are beginning to be addressed. Leaders ensure that they now meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders have established clear and comprehensive systems to identify pupils who have barriers to learning. Staff check on what pupils know and can do when they begin school in the Reception class, or when they join the school in other year groups. The school has designed a 'class on a page' document, which sets out the key information that staff need to know. Staff have recently received the training that they need to make suitable adaptations to their teaching for these vulnerable pupils. This is helping pupils with barriers to success learn more easily alongside their peers. Leaders check on the progress that these pupils make and amend the support when needed.

Some pupils receive a bespoke education to meet their needs. Leaders have established the 'Ladybird Room' within the school as a response to the increased support these pupils require. The school also seeks external advice to ensure that pupils receive the right support.

Leaders are using the pupil premium funding more effectively than in the past. This is helping disadvantaged pupils' wellbeing and learning.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils' attendance rates have been well below the national average. Currently, the attendance of some pupils remains stubbornly low. However, since the previous inspection, leaders have prioritised reducing pupils' absence. They make sure that parents and carers understand that pupils' attendance is not optional. As a result, overall attendance is showing some signs of improvement. Leaders have established clear systems to track and analyse attendance patterns carefully. They waste no time in contacting parents when pupils' attendance begins to dip. They work closely with families to help them get their children to school.

Leaders have worked with determination to improve pupils' behaviour. They have raised the bar of previously low expectations. They do not tolerate bullying or discrimination. Pupils know how they should behave and treat one another. Leaders have placed a high value on kindness and staff model this well. Pupils appreciate the care that staff show for them. Overall, the impact of this work is clear in lessons and at social times. Pupils get on well together. They work hard and listen carefully to their teachers. There are early signs that exclusions are reducing because staff use a range of effective strategies to prevent pupils from reaching a crisis point.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Since the last inspection, leaders have designed an appropriately ambitious, detailed and well-sequenced curriculum for all subjects. However, the delivery of this curriculum is not consistently effective. It is stronger in those subjects where leaders provide staff with clear guidance about the best ways to teach important knowledge. As a result, staff have greater expertise when teaching early reading and mathematics. They provide appropriate support so that disadvantaged pupils can access the curriculum. This approach is less successful in other subjects where teachers do not routinely explain new learning well. Sometimes, they do not provide tasks that support pupils to learn the intended knowledge. Teachers do not consistently use the checks that they make on the pupils' progress in key subjects such as English and mathematics. In other subjects, these checks do not happen systematically enough. As a result, pupils continue to have gaps in their knowledge or misconceptions about what they have learned.

Leaders' checks on teaching mean that they recognise that pupils are not gaining the key skills and knowledge they need quickly enough, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They have provided staff with considerable training to develop their professional skills and knowledge. Nevertheless, this has not shown a sustained improvement at this point in time.

Early years

Needs attention 

Over time, the provision in the early years has not enabled children to develop the important knowledge that they need to move to the next stage of their education. Additionally, there has been a significant gap between the outcomes for all children and disadvantaged children by the end of the Reception Year.

Recently, leaders have redesigned the curriculum that sets out the key knowledge that children will need for their transition into Year 1. There is a sharp focus on children's communication skills and their personal development. For example, staff 'check in' each morning with children to make sure that they are ready to learn. Staff provide children with purposeful learning activities so that they can practise what they have learned. Adults engage in conversations with children and model new language well. Children apply their knowledge of sounds to read simple words. They engage well in games that help them to get ready to write. Children talk confidently about early mathematical concepts such as odd and even numbers. Children learn together well in a happy and safe environment. However, much of this change is new and it is early days in making a sustained difference to children's achievement and readiness for Year 1.

Staff make sure that they have a well-rounded understanding of children's needs and make the right choices to help children overcome their barriers to learning. They work closely with parents, carers and external agencies to do this well.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Over time, pupils have not received the education they deserve. For many years, frequent changes in leadership have resulted in significant instability and a lack of strategic direction for the school.

Since the previous inspection, a new senior leadership team has been appointed. They know the school's context well. They are identifying well-considered priorities for school improvement. Pupils now behave well and can engage in their learning without disruption as a result of the poor behaviour of others. The school provides an inclusive learning environment. Pupils are safe in school and relationships between staff and adults are positive. Nevertheless, it is too early to measure the impact of these actions on pupils' achievement. It is clear that leaders are only at the start of their journey for some other aspects. There continues to be variability in teaching, some pupils do not attend school regularly and many pupils have significant gaps in their learning.

Governance has improved. The trust has established an additional layer of school governance. Alongside the trustees, this group of external experts hold leaders to account. They check that leaders take decisions with pupils' best interests in mind.

Leaders have built positive relationships with parents, carers and staff. Many parents have greater confidence in the school and trust staff to educate and care for their child. Staff appreciate leaders' concern for their workload and wellbeing. They are proud to work at the school. They value the increased opportunities to improve their teaching expertise.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

The school's personal development and wellbeing offer is not fully in place. The impact of the current offer is inconsistent. For example, pupils do not benefit from a wide range of opportunities that help them to develop their talents or find new interests.

There are some aspects of the existing programme that are successfully preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They can explain that democracy is important so that everyone can have their say. They know that respect for difference makes the world a better place. They discuss similarities and differences between major world religions.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is suitable and well embedded. Leaders use their knowledge of the school's context to further adapt aspects of this curriculum. Pupils learn about the dangers of anti-social behaviour and how to recognise a healthy relationship. They learn about road safety, how to report concerns and how to be responsible when online.

Leaders take the opportunity to develop pupils' character and have identified the key values they want pupils to develop. These include integrity, trust and aspiration. Pupils know the

difference between right and wrong. They learn that their future lives are full of potential. Younger pupils name police officers and teachers as hopes for their future careers. There are some opportunities for older pupils to take on positions of responsibility, such as school council, sports leaders and helping the lunchtime staff to look after younger pupils. These roles help pupils to develop confidence and a sense of personal pride.

The school provides additional pastoral support for those who need it, including disadvantaged pupils. They make sensible adjustments so that these pupils can increasingly experience all aspects of school life.

Urgent improvement ●

Achievement

Urgent improvement ●

In the past, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have not been well enough prepared for the next stage in their education. For too long, pupils have left the school in Year 6 without the key skills, knowledge and personal attributes they need to experience success in secondary school.

The legacy of a poor curriculum offer and unskilled teaching means that many pupils across the school continue to have significant gaps in their learning. This means that many pupils are not able to read fluently and accurately. They also struggle to organise and communicate their ideas clearly in writing. Many pupils have not developed the confidence and self-motivation they need to be successful learners. In contrast, there have been some improvements in the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check.

Recent improvements to inclusion systems means that the needs of vulnerable pupils are identified and met. As a result, some groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are beginning to reduce the deficits in their learning. However, this is not the case for other pupils. This means that they are not ready for their next stage of learning.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils do not receive the quality of education that they should. The delivery of the curriculum is too varied. As a result of many years of weak teaching, pupils have significant gaps in their learning. They have left the school unprepared for the next stage of their education. They have not been fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

A recent change in leadership has brought about some positive changes for the school. Much of this work is at an early stage and the impact of these changes has not been fully realised. However, one notable success is pupils' improved behaviour. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' conduct. There is a clear system for rewards and consequences that pupils understand and say is fair. Pupils are keen to earn a 'golden ticket' when they work hard and show kindness and respect for others. Pupils who find it difficult to behave well get

the extra help they need. As a result, the school day is typically calm. Pupils are able to concentrate in lessons. Social times are safe. Bullying is not a problem for pupils. If it happens, pupils say they are confident that the adults in school will make it stop.

Pupils agree say that their 'new school' is so much better, and they are happy to come to school. They feel welcomed and are proud to be part of an improving school community. More pupils are attending school regularly. The school is inclusive and pupils' needs are identified and known. Disadvantaged pupils are receiving the help they need to engage in their education. Barriers to learning are starting to reduce.

Largely, the improved curriculum is engaging pupils successfully in their learning. For example, in history, older pupils discuss the reasons why wars may start and children in early years use their phonics knowledge to write notes to each other and their families. Nevertheless, across the school, pupils have not gained the skills and knowledge that they need to experience success.

Next steps

- Leaders should establish an agreed approach to the delivery of the curriculum across all subjects and ensure that staff have the expertise they need to implement the curriculum consistently well so that pupils' achievement improves.
 - Leaders should ensure that there are appropriate assessment systems in place so that staff check pupils' learning more effectively and use this information to close pupils' knowledge gaps, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
 - Leaders should build on the recent improvements to promote regular attendance so that persistent absence reduces and pupils attend school more regularly.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and find new interests.
 - Leaders should build on the positive changes to the provision in the early years so that children are better prepared for Year 1.
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About this inspection

This 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.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing

significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke to the principal, vice-principal and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector also held a meeting with the CEO, members of the trust and members of the interim executive board. Inspectors also met with two groups of staff and spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection a new senior leadership team has been appointed. The principal also leads another school in the trust.

Leaders do not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Principal: Emma Emson

Lead inspector:

Caroline Poole, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jeremy Spencer, Ofsted Inspector

Halil Tamgumus Tamgumus, Ofsted Inspector

Stuart Edmonds, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 3 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

392

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

420

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

62.24%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.83%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

19.39%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	33%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	41%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	22%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	35%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	54%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	49%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	47%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	48%	72%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	47%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	37%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	71%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	58%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	56%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	55%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	24%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	34%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	13%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	24%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	50%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	43%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	38%	60%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	41%	59%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	44%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	27%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	48%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	47%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	47%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	24%	68%	-44 pp
2024/25 (revised)	34%	69%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	13%	67%	-54 pp
2022/23 (final)	24%	66%	-43 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	80%	-36 pp
2024/25 (revised)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	43%	80%	-36 pp
2022/23 (final)	38%	78%	-40 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	41%	78%	-37 pp
2024/25 (revised)	44%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	27%	78%	-51 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	50%	77%	-27 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	48%	80%	-32 pp
2024/25 (revised)	47%	81%	-34 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	79%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	8.7%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.7%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.8%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	28.6%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	29.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	30.1%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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