

George Grenville Academy

Chandos Road, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire MK18 1AP

Inspection dates

17–18 January 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
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership has enabled the school to improve rapidly. Leaders demonstrate determination to achieve the highest standards in education for all.
- Governors have an accurate view of what the school does well, and what could be even better. They use this accurate information to challenge and support leaders effectively.
- Leaders have high aspirations for disadvantaged pupils. They put the pupil premium grant to good use and have improved outcomes for this group of pupils. They know, however, that more needs to be achieved.
- Teaching is strong throughout the school and learning is of a good quality. Consequently, pupils are achieving well.
- The early years is outstanding. Children make exceptionally strong progress because learning is planned meticulously to meet their individual needs.
- The school's values are a strength of the school. Staff use them effectively to support pupils' behaviour, and enrich their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils leave school ready for life in modern Britain.
- The sports premium is used well. The majority of pupils participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities, including sport and dance.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They respond particularly well to the high expectations that staff set. Pupils carry out additional responsibilities enthusiastically and contribute very well to school life.
- Vulnerable pupils are supported effectively. Leaders and staff are adept at managing these pupils' needs with a high level of care.
- There is a strong ethos of safeguarding throughout the school. Robust systems keep children safe.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Learning is enriched with a variety of additional academic, sporting and creative activities and clubs.
- The attendance of some disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is not yet good enough.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress in a range of subjects.
- Leaders are rightly focused on developing pupils' achievements in writing. Currently, there is not a consistent approach to ensure that pupils write at length throughout the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes by:
 - ensuring that the achievements of disadvantaged pupils rise further
 - ensuring that throughout the school pupils write more effectively, and at greater length.
- Raise further the rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils, and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides strong, determined leadership. She is supported ably by her deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. Leaders' actions, based upon their accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness, have led to a rapid rise in standards of education at George Grenville.
- The trust provides highly effective support to the school. The chief executive officer lends purposeful assistance and challenge to senior leaders in equal measure. This ensures that leaders remain constantly motivated in their pursuit of excellence.
- Leaders have embedded successfully the school's values, and pupils know them well. As they progress through the school pupils are supported to develop a deepening appreciation of how 'perseverance, confidence, aspiration, teamwork, respect and integrity' help them become better learners and caring citizens. These values are at the heart of the work of the school.
- Middle leaders show clear commitment to leading the curriculum well. They have good subject knowledge which they use to further develop teaching throughout the school. Their focused efforts continue to improve outcomes for all pupils by ensuring that learning is interesting and enjoyable.
- The pupil premium grant is improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders put this additional funding to good use to improve disadvantaged pupils' academic achievements, and to provide for their wider social and emotional needs. For example, additional teaching and the provision of extra-curriculum clubs and activities ensure that this group of pupils are beginning to achieve much better.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive strong support to make good progress from their starting points. Leaders know these pupils' needs very well. They plan carefully to ensure that these pupils are supported appropriately in class, and when needed given extra help with their learning. The progress and achievements of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are monitored closely, and provision is adapted if they begin to fall behind.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils achieve well because learning provides a rich variety of academic, creative and sporting activities to develop their skills and knowledge. For example, there is an emphasis on developing pupils' musical abilities. Pupils have regular opportunities to sing, perform, and to learn a musical instrument.
- Leaders provide a wide range of sporting activities using the sports premium. Pupils take full advantage of this extra provision, and levels of engagement in clubs such as football, cricket and dance are high. Pupils talk enthusiastically about representing the school in competitive matches and are rightly proud of their many sporting achievements.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. In Year 3, pupils have been learning about the positive impact fair trade has on developing countries. Pupils learn about the links between their own school values and wider fundamental British values. Their considerate attitudes ensure that they are well

placed to contribute effectively to life in modern Britain.

- Parents and carers are supportive of the school. Many commented that it is a friendly and nurturing environment. Several parents also commented that the school has improved considerably in recent years. One comment, typical of many, stated: 'It's a lovely, welcoming school that my children are happy and proud to attend. I love how there is as much emphasis on arts and sports as there is on academic learning. Leaders have an infectious energy!'

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They visit often, and scrutinise carefully pupils' progress. Importantly, they use a range of information, including reports from the school's improvement partner, to fully understand how successful leaders' actions are in further improving education standards. Governors use their accurate knowledge to challenge and support school leaders, demonstrating their high expectations of pupils' outcomes and their wider achievements.
- Governors provide strong oversight of the school's financial management. For example, their close monitoring of the support provided by the family support worker, and the positive impact the breakfast club provides for disadvantaged pupils, assures them the pupil premium grant is spent well. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong ethos for keeping children safe at George Grenville. All staff know the importance of safeguarding children and, importantly, have the skills and knowledge to achieve this to a high standard. Child-protection training is kept up to date, and consequently staff are acutely aware of what actions to take to protect children from harm.
- Leaders' systems for keeping children safe are robust. The school's single central record of checks on staff is detailed and accurate. When recruiting new staff or volunteers, stringent checks are made to ensure their suitability to work with children. All safeguarding systems meet the latest government guidelines.
- Leaders work closely with other professionals to safeguard children. For instance, strong links with the school nurse service, and social services, help staff plan and provide additional care for vulnerable pupils. A strong culture of nurture and support emanates throughout the school, and staff demonstrate the highest standards in protecting children.
- Pupils learn effectively about keeping themselves safe. They know, for example, the dangers presented by social media and the internet, and how to access both safely and responsibly. Younger pupils demonstrated ably how to keep themselves safe when out and about, and when crossing and walking near roads.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve, and work diligently to ensure that learning is carefully planned for the needs of each pupil. As a result, pupils are achieving well across the curriculum.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Learning is carefully organised to ensure that pupils work at an appropriate level and are able to build upon their growing reading skills. Pupils achieve well because they are encouraged frequently to consolidate their learning and practise new sounds and words.
- Teachers are skilful in assessing what pupils do, and do not, know. In the best lessons, teachers use careful questioning and incisive feedback to help pupils understand their next steps in learning. In these instances, pupils respond well and are able to edit and improve their work successfully.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use to enrich pupils' learning. For example, in a key stage 2 art lesson, the class teacher's careful explanations of different artistic techniques enabled pupils to broaden their skills in the creative use of pastels. Pupils worked together to create a dramatic frieze of galaxies, stars and planets.
- The support from teaching assistants helps pupils make good progress. For example, one teaching assistant was seen helping expertly two pupils enrich their writing. She struck the right balance between supporting learning and challenging pupils to achieve for themselves. This good-quality support from teaching assistants is typical at George Grenville.
- Learning is typically well planned. For instance, the teaching of mathematics provides a range of learning across all areas of study, and takes into account pupils' differing abilities. Lessons are suitably challenging and enable pupils, including those who are most able, to achieve well.
- Teaching is enriched effectively across the wider curriculum. In science, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' investigating skills. Teachers planned an exciting two-day science event to 'get 2018 off with a bang!' Pupils participated in a wide range of interesting and informative experiments, including 'fizzy-bottle rockets' that challenged successfully their scientific knowledge and thinking.
- Teaching of modern foreign languages is a strength of the school. The specialist languages teacher provides good-quality lessons that enable pupils to learn new Spanish words and practise their pronunciation accurately. Pupils enjoy these vibrant lessons and show an enthusiasm for learning a new language.
- Teaching is rightly focusing on developing pupils' writing skills. There is currently some strong teaching practice in the school. For example, in Year 6, pupils were writing love letters from Macbeth to Lady Macbeth. One pupil, demonstrating an excellent grasp of the effective features of writing, wrote, 'From the moment I looked into your puppy-dog eyes I was captivated, caught by your beauty.' However, not all pupils are learning to write at length as effectively, and leaders know more needs to be achieved to raise writing standards across the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders, with effective support from the family support worker, provide high-quality care for vulnerable pupils. They work closely with families to understand the needs of these pupils, and seek advice from other professionals, including the school nurse service, to adapt provision accordingly for pupils' specific needs. This determination to provide tailored care helps these pupils achieve highly.
- Pupils relish the wider responsibilities they are entrusted with at George Grenville. They rise to the challenge of different roles, including monitors, play-leaders and lunchtime 'play supervisors'. These positions of trust help pupils develop a deeper understanding of the school's values, and a firm appreciation of the importance of trustworthiness and conscientiousness.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. Leaders have high expectations that all pupils should attend regularly. They work hard to help parents ensure that their children miss school less often. That said, some disadvantaged pupils, and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, currently have too high a rate of absence. Leaders know that they need to do more to ensure that the attendance of these groups of pupils continues to rise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave impeccably throughout the school, from the early years up. This is because staff have the highest expectations and accept only the very best conduct from pupils. In turn, pupils have risen admirably to this challenge, and now show exemplary standards of behaviour, respect and tolerance.
- Pupils enjoy participating in learning, and contribute very well in all their lessons. They are keen to express their ideas and views, and listen carefully to those of their peers and teachers. For instance, during a whole-school assembly, pupils of all ages enjoyed sharing their own interpretations of the school's values.
- Lessons are typically calm and purposeful. Pupils participate keenly in activities and strive to produce work of a high standard. Their excellent attitudes are now impacting positively on their rates of achievement.
- Incidents of low-level disruption and bullying are extremely rare. The acting deputy headteacher works to assist pupils in reflecting upon their occasional misconduct. They grow to understand how these instances do not uphold the school's values and it supports them to behave better. Pupils and parents stated that the school's work to keep everyone safe is highly effective.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enter key stage 1 having made outstanding progress in the early years. Those who join in the Nursery, many of whom have lower-than-typical starting points, get off to a flying start. Strong learning continues throughout the Reception Year, and the vast majority of pupils are well placed for the next stage of their education.
- Current pupils are making rapid progress in phonics. This is because strong, effective teaching ably supports pupils to sound out new words.
- Last year, there was a significant rise in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. Current pupils are achieving similarly well, although making the strongest progress in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' good progress and outcomes continue in key stage 2. School information, and work in current pupils' exercise books, demonstrates they are making good progress in a range of subjects.
- Pupils read fluently. The strong emphasis leaders place on reading at home, reading for pleasure, and enriching topic work with high-quality texts ensures that current pupils are achieving well.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress in a range of subjects. This is because teachers tailor learning appropriately for their needs, and provide the extra support they need to learn effectively.
- Historically, pupils have not achieved as well as they should in writing. Current pupils are achieving much better; however, opportunities to write at length throughout the school are not consistent. This is limiting the progress some pupils make.
- In recent years, disadvantaged pupils at George Grenville have been making much better progress from their starting points. However, some are not yet achieving as well as non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in a range of subjects. Despite these diminishing differences in rates of progress and attainment, the impact of leaders' work is not yet securing the highest outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The strong collaboration between Nursery and Reception Year staff is very effective in developing high-quality provision for children. The staff plan meticulously for children's development and provide stimulating learning environments that captivate and enthuse children's natural curiosity. As a result of this excellence, children's achievements in the early years are outstanding.
- Early years staff use accurate assessments to understand the individual needs of children. They monitor and track children's progress exceptionally well and use this information to plan systematic next steps in learning. Importantly, this information is planned with all staff, so everyone is aware of what needs to be achieved for all children to excel.
- Teaching is outstanding in the early years. Staff are acutely aware of the best ways to stimulate children's desire to learn. For instance, teachers balance expertly

opportunities for children to discover things for themselves with adult-led play which deepens their knowledge and skills.

- Staff professional development strengthens further the teaching in early years. For example, there is a firm emphasis on developing children's language and communication skills. Ongoing training ensures that staff are well-skilled to address this need. The commitment of the early years staff to improving their own practice impacts very positively on children's achievements.
- Children's behaviour in the early years setting is of a high standard. This is because staff develop an understanding of the school's values at the earliest possible stage in children's learning. High expectations, clear routines, and strong policies and procedures keep children safe. All statutory safeguarding, and health and safety procedures in the early years are upheld to the highest standards.
- Parents engage effectively in their children's education. For example, parents' views and opinions are taken into consideration by staff when assessing children on entry to the early years. Additionally, there are a wealth of opportunities for parents to visit the setting and participate in their children's learning. The positive role parents are encouraged to play in their children's education contributes well to the overall effectiveness of the early years setting.

School details

Unique reference number	140368
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10040901

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Stephen Townsend
Acting Headteacher	Emma Killick
Telephone number	01280 813273
Website	www.georgegrenville.co.uk
Email address	office@grenville.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The majority of pupils are White British. Others come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is slightly below average.
- George Grenville Academy is part of the Bourton Meadow Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school, spoke to pupils and looked at work in their books. Some observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, groups of pupils, the chair of the local governing board and two other governors, the substantive headteacher, and the chief executive officer of the Bourton Meadow Education Trust. The lead inspector also met with the school's improvement partner, who represented the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the day and took into account 84 responses, including written comments to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- A range of documents was reviewed, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation document; information about pupils' achievement, attendance, safeguarding, behaviour and safety; governing body reports, and local authority reports.

Inspection team

Dom Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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