

# Inspection of Great Ponton Church of England School

Mill Lane, Great Ponton, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 5DT

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils like being at school. They like to learn. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being. Pupils work and play happily with each other. They told inspectors that they feel safe. Pupils know that there is always a member of staff they can speak to if they are worried.

The quality of education is not consistently good enough. Expectations are not always high enough. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. In some subjects, including in mathematics, the curriculum is not taught consistently well throughout the school. This means that pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills they should over time.

Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school site. They are polite and caring towards each other. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They know what is expected of them. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is not tolerated. They are good at listening to the views of others. One pupil, typical of many, said: 'This is a happy school. It's easy to make friends.'

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. They appreciate the support their children receive. They like that staff put the pupils' well-being at the heart of the school. Some parents would like more information about what their children are learning.

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

Following some significant staff turnover, leaders have begun to act quickly to bring about improvement. Curriculum plans are being reviewed. Some subjects are at a more advanced stage of planning than others. Some subject leaders are not always clear about how to improve the curriculum in their subject. Leaders have developed a strong curriculum for physical education, phonics and early reading. However, in the wider curriculum, subjects, including music, history and geography, are at an early stage of development. In these subjects, the important knowledge that pupils need to learn, from Reception to the end of key stage 2, is not fully planned.

Reading is a priority in the school. The daily phonics sessions are well structured. Pupils learn to read in a systematic way from the moment they start at the school. Books are matched to the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils use their decoding skills well to sound out unfamiliar words. When pupils fall behind, staff are quick to provide support. Pupils enjoy reading and talking about the books they have read.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. However, there is inconsistency in how mathematics is taught across the different classes. Leaders have not agreed how mathematics should be taught at the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is sometimes not strong enough. This means that the subject content is not always presented clearly. Teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding,

particularly if they fall behind. On occasions, pupils are moved on to new concepts before they are ready. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to revisit and practise what they have learned. For example, when working with fractions, pupils confused numerators and denominators. Pupils told inspectors that they would like more opportunities to strengthen their confidence in this subject. Pupils do not routinely take pride in their work in mathematics because expectations are not high enough.

Plans for what children will learn are at an early stage of development in many subjects in early years. Leaders have not set out how learning in early years connects with learning that pupils will encounter as they move through the school. Planning is stronger for phonics and early reading. Staff ensure that there is a strong focus on children's vocabulary and the language and comprehension necessary to read.

Leaders do not routinely ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the full curriculum. Sometimes, staff provide high-quality support. However, not all staff successfully adapt the curriculum well enough for pupils with SEND.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. They create a positive and respectful culture. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Pupils know how to eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle. Pupils understand British values such as democracy and the rule of law. They are good at listening to the ideas of others and respect different points of view. However, some pupils' understanding of different faiths is weak.

Leaders are aware of disadvantaged pupils' needs. They provide resources to support the well-being of these pupils. However, leaders do not have a sharp enough grasp of disadvantaged pupils' achievement. They do not routinely track the impact of their work to support disadvantaged pupils.

Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school. They understand their statutory duties. Leaders engage well with staff. They take account of staff workload and well-being. Staff morale is positive. They are optimistic about the leadership of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide strong support to vulnerable pupils and their families. They act quickly when they have a safeguarding concern. Leaders work closely with external agencies so that pupils receive the support they need. They maintain detailed records of pupils for whom they have safeguarding concerns.

Staff are appropriately trained. Leaders check that staff know how to spot pupils at risk of harm. Staff pass any concerns on quickly. Pupils have a strong awareness of

how to stay safe online. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum is not implemented well enough in mathematics. Some teachers' own subject knowledge is not strong enough. Not all teachers ensure that pupils have the knowledge they need to complete complex tasks. Teachers do not routinely check pupils' knowledge before introducing new content. This can limit how well pupils build their learning over time. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the necessary subject knowledge and know how to check pupils' understanding effectively, so that pupils develop their knowledge and skills in this subject.
- The curriculum is not well planned in some subjects, including in early years. In these subjects, plans do not clearly identify what important knowledge pupils need to learn and when, from early years to Year 6. As a result, pupils across all year groups do not achieve as highly as they should. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is planned precisely in each subject. Leaders should identify what pupils will learn and when, so that they are able to build their knowledge over time.
- Subject leaders have not all acquired the expertise they need to lead their subjects. This limits their ability to bring about improvements to the curriculum and pupils' achievement. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the necessary knowledge and skills to lead their subject areas successfully.
- Not all staff successfully adapt the curriculum well enough for pupils with SEND. Leaders have not established rigorous systems to assess and meet these pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always receive a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that all pupils with SEND receive the support they need, so that they achieve as highly as they should.
- Leaders do not routinely check on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they do not have a sharp enough understanding of how well these pupils achieve. Leaders should ensure that their oversight of disadvantaged pupils' achievement is precise, to enable them to identify when further support is necessary so that these pupils achieve as highly as they should.

## **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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

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

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120602
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200287
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Simmonds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Keith Leader
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.greatpontonprimaryschool.co.uk">www.greatpontonprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The chair of governors took up his post in September 2021.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, the early years leader and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders,

looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rob Gooding

Ofsted Inspector

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