

Inspection of Great Ouse Primary Academy

Seaforth Gardens, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK40 4TJ

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Great Ouse is a friendly and welcoming school. Pupils attend from many different backgrounds. They arrive each day with happy faces and greet staff politely at the school gate. Pupils are proud of their school. They appreciate the opportunities learning in a diverse community brings. As one pupil said, 'We are a multicultural team showing kindness to each other.'

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff. This helps them to understand what adults expect of them. Pupils are highly respectful of one another. They are attentive in class and work hard in their lessons.

Pupils say that behaviour is good. They consider that bullying rarely occurs. If it did, pupils would always discuss any concerns with adults who would be able to resolve any issues. Pupils follow the school routines. This makes for a calm and orderly environment.

Many pupils take part in activities such as sport, singing and art. This helps to develop their interests and talents. There are more opportunities for pupils to participate in excursions and visits. Older pupils look forward to their residential trip to Dorset.

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

Great Ouse is a newly opened school. Leaders have ensured the development of the curriculum as it has grown. There is an ambitious curriculum in place for all year groups from the early years to Year 6.

Leaders have carefully considered the important things that pupils need to know and remember. Curriculum plans identify ambitious end points that pupils need to reach. There are key concepts that run through separate subjects. This allows pupils to make connections, so they learn and remember more. Pupils use their knowledge well to further build their ideas and understanding. In most subjects, leaders have checked that their plans are working well. This is not the case across all subjects, especially where leaders are new to their roles. A few leaders have not had the opportunity to check how well their subject is being taught.

Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils in their work. In science, for example, pupils enjoy designing, making, and testing out electrical circuits. Across most of the curriculum, teachers have strong subject knowledge. They skilfully check and question pupils' understanding. Mostly, teachers use this information effectively to address any misunderstandings.

Where teachers' subject knowledge is weaker, they do not routinely pick up where pupils have misunderstandings. In pupils' workbooks, the quality of presentation is

not consistent. Some work is not recorded as well or accurately as possible and this goes unchallenged.

Children in the pre-school and Reception classes quickly learn the sounds they need to help them to read. They get off to a good start. Pupils in key stage 1 practise their phonics to help them to become fluent readers. When pupils find reading difficult, adults support them to keep up. Adults make sure that the books pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they know. This means that pupils become confident readers. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they have read and authors they know.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Pupils' needs are accurately identified at an early stage. Teachers adapt learning effectively so lessons are suitable to meet these pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND access the same learning as their peers and achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils develop their sense of teamwork and community through their different roles and responsibilities. Pupils who represent 'pupil voice' discuss how they raise funds for charities. The eco warriors recognise the importance of protecting the environment and saving the planet. Pupils are well prepared for their life outside of school. They understand the importance of tolerance and respect for all. As one pupil explained, 'Everyone is different, but we treat everyone the same.'

The school has recently become part of a new trust. Along with school governors, the trust is at an early stage of finding out about how it can best challenge and support school leaders. Leaders have established a strong collaborative ethos. Staff are highly positive about how well leaders manage their workload and work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding runs through every aspect of daily life. Adults have been well trained. They understand their role in keeping pupils safe and are alert to any signs of abuse. Leaders recognise the importance of working with parents to provide help and support when needed. Leaders act immediately by reporting concerns to the appropriate authorities to ensure families receive the right support and guidance.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils find out about giving first aid, how to be cautious online and how to share any anxieties.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders, who are new to their positions, have not monitored and evaluated how well their curriculum plans are working. These leaders are not

clear how well pupils are building their knowledge and understanding and if their subject is taught well. Leaders should ensure that all subjects leaders have opportunities to monitor their areas of responsibility and to evaluate how effectively their subject plans are working.

- A few teachers do not have the strong subject knowledge they need to deliver all areas of the curriculum effectively. They do not readily address pupils' misconceptions in their learning. Leaders should provide all teachers with the appropriate training needed.
- Not all teachers insist upon leaders' expectations for how work is recorded and presented. This leads to pupils making regular errors in written work, which stops them from showing what they know and can do. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers understand what leaders expect, so that pupils' work across the curriculum is presented to the highest standard.

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

Unique reference number	144746
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10212046
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Jamieson
Principal	Paul Ives
Website	www.greatouse.beds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Great Ouse Primary Academy is a free academy and was first opened in September 2017.
- Great Ouse Primary Academy is part of the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust and joined in September 2021.
- The school has classes from pre-school to Year 6. The Year 6 class was opened from the start of this academic year.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school care club that is managed by an external provider.

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 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 principal, deputy principal, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and the pupil and family support worker. Inspectors also had discussions with the trust, including the chief executive officer, and members of school governance known as the academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documentation, including school self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and minutes from the meeting of the academy council. Inspectors reviewed documents relating to safeguarding, including a check of the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered 56 comments from Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 49 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 29 responses made on the staff online survey. There were no responses on the pupil survey. Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class and on the playground about their experiences of school.

Inspection team

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