

Inspection of Winter Gardens Academy

Hilton Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9QA

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Winter Gardens Academy is a welcoming school where all pupils are valued and nurtured. Pupils enjoy attending. Pupils enter the gates with smiles on their faces, eager to get to their class, where they receive a warm welcome.

Pupils feel safe and are safe. They trust staff and feel confident to talk to them should they have a problem. Relationships between pupils are positive. Pupils play energetically together, but show consideration for one another. Disagreements and incidents of bullying are rare.

Children in early years get off to a flying start. The needs of the children are the driving force behind interesting learning activities. As a result, children find learning exciting and achieve well. They are very well prepared for starting Year 1.

The school is calm and orderly. From Nursery, children are taught how to behave and to work cooperatively with their peers and adults. Pupils learn strategies that help them to cope with emotional challenges that may affect their behaviour. Pupils are polite and considerate of others. They volunteer to help others without prompting.

Pupils' individual circumstances are understood. The strong links between school and home ensure that staff meet pupils' needs.

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

Trustees and leaders have very high expectations for all pupils. They know the needs of the pupils and the community exceptionally well. Leaders have used this knowledge to systematically make improvements to the school and the quality of education that all pupils receive. This is especially seen in early years.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. They have provided high-quality training to develop staff to fulfil their role effectively in teaching pupils to read. The reading journey for children starts in Nursery. Children are exposed to a variety of books, stories and rhymes. The methods for teaching reading are highly consistent. Staff are well trained and skilled at quickly getting pupils reading. Teachers are quick to spot pupils who find reading challenging. Adults provide targeted support that is beneficial, so pupils catch up quickly. Books are accurately matched to the sounds that pupils know. Most pupils read fluently and accurately.

Children in early years get off to an excellent start. Adults know children exceptionally well. They ensure that all children achieve well, no matter what their starting points are. Leaders have designed the curriculum to progress children's academic and personal development. Children develop skills such as problem-solving, sharing, and working together. Children are prepared effectively for key stage 1.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is focused on providing pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve academically and socially. They have identified the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to know in each subject. Leaders have carefully chosen the ordering of the information that pupils will learn from Nursery through to Year 6. Pupils can remember their learning because they are given plenty of opportunities to practise their knowledge and understanding.

Teachers are quick to identify where pupils need extra help and they provide the additional support required so that pupils do not fall behind in their learning. Teachers use assessment information well to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils receive tailored support to help them catch up. In a few subjects, teachers do not choose effective activities to allow pupils to practise and deepen their learning as well as they could. This is especially seen in writing. Older pupils do not show what they know and can do in their written work.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve their full potential. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. Adults know the needs of pupils precisely and ensure that there is high-quality support in class. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff consistently apply classroom routines. Lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils who find managing their behaviour a challenge receive effective, individualised support in the 'learning zone' or 'the nest'.

Pupils have a variety of opportunities to develop their interests. A high proportion of pupils participate in clubs and activities. Parents and carers are positive about the activities provided. They are also positive about the care and support for personal and mental health that the school provides for pupils and families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. It is central to the work of the school. Staff are well trained to identify any pupil who may be at risk. Staff do not hesitate to use the well-established procedures for reporting concerns. When issues are identified, leaders ensure that appropriate support is provided in a timely way. They involve different agencies when required to provide further expertise.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online, in school and in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers are not providing the opportunity for pupils to apply their learning. This is particularly the case when pupils are showing what they know in activities where they are required to write. Leaders need to ensure that teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to apply their learning and demonstrate what they know and can remember in all subjects.

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	142000
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10227306
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	427
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julie Mulbahy
Headteacher	Catherine Stalham
Website	www.wintergardensacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Winter Gardens Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There is a breakfast club for children who attend the school.
- The school runs an after-school club.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- Trustees have recently formed an academy committee. This is a group of parents who have been trained in governance. They are supporting the work of the trustees.

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 leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history, science, geography and computing. They considered curriculum documentation, met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with the chief executive officer of the trust, trustees and members of the academy committee. They spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with a representative of the local authority and staff from the alternative provision.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records, behaviour records, attendance records and reports from trustees. They spoke with leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered 108 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of 53 members of staff in Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors spoke with a number of parents to gather their views.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally during breaktimes and observed pupils playing.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Nina Kemp	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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