

# Inspection of a good school: Great Baddow High School

Duffield Road, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9RZ

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2022

## Outcome

Great Baddow High School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Great Baddow High School. They feel happy and safe as tolerance and respect are the norm.

Pupils have confidence in members of staff to help them if they have a worry or concern. Strong, trusting relationships have been established across the school. Pupils particularly value the supportive relationships they have with their tutor, house and year team staff. Pupils are motivated and excited by house competitions and a variety of rewards events. These give them a sense of belonging and community.

Pupil behaviour is a notable, positive feature of the school. Bus drivers, for example, speak highly of pupils' self-regulated conduct on transport. This is typical of pupils' behaviour at school, and stems from the impressive culture that leaders have created. There is a strong team spirit which underpins the functioning of the school.

There are extensive opportunities for pupils to take their talents to the highest levels. For example, some perform in musicals such as "We Will Rock You", while others are part of elite performance pathways in sport, including the professional standard netball academy. Leaders work hard to ensure there is something for everyone.

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

Leaders have an ambitious vision for providing pupils with a high-quality education. They are mindful of staff wellbeing and consider workload. This ensures teachers have the time to be able to give their best to pupils. Leaders have ensured that teachers have received a programme of training and professional development that is well suited to need. As a result, teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and how to teach them. They use this knowledge well to work collaboratively to plan sequences of learning based around the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Because they know the subject content well, they are able to check effectively how well pupils have learned.

When planning the curriculum, teachers decided how pupils could secure and deepen their knowledge through a variety of enrichment experiences. For example, in geography pupils visit Walton-on-the-Naze twice in different year groups to build their fieldwork skills. In modern foreign languages (MFL), pupils study Seville and then go on a trip there.

Leaders work successfully to ensure pupils study a broad range of subjects. In the past, the uptake of the subjects which make up the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) was relatively low. Leaders have increased this through greater participation in MFL at Key Stage 4. The combination of leaders' and teachers' work has ensured that a high-quality curriculum is in place and pupils achieve well.

Leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in transition. Although pupils' needs are identified, leaders recognise that some SEND plans do not make clear the most effective strategies for staff to support pupils. Those pupils with higher levels of need, such as deaf pupils, do have their needs met. They are effectively supported by skilled professionals.

Leaders have adopted a range of approaches to support a love of reading. This is part of the "basics for excellence" programme. It includes teachers modelling reading during tutor time and many opportunities for pupils to read out loud in other lessons. Pupils experience a rich range of novels and genres of text as part of the English curriculum, which inspires many of them to read with enjoyment. Leaders have not been as successful in helping the very small number of pupils who arrive at the school still struggling to decode words. Leaders recognise the need to further develop specific strategies to support these learners.

Pupils behave in a calm and orderly way and are focussed on learning. They enjoy discussing learning in lessons. Pupils take pride in their presentation as they know teachers have high expectations of them. Leaders analyse any trends in behaviour so they can be alert to any possible decline in standards and take action before a problem arises.

Leaders ensure a wealth of extra-curricular provision and clubs are available for pupils. These are open to all and there is something to suit all talents and interests. Pupils value the programme of extra-curricular activities and attendance is high. A well-planned programme of "life skills" ensures pupils learn effectively about issues such as consent, relationships and respecting difference.

Provision in the sixth form is of the same high quality as the rest of the school. Students are helped to make sensible choices about which courses they follow. They are guided effectively through the process of choosing what to do next, either in further study or employment. The Baker Clause is met as pupils have received information about a range of external providers.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A culture of safeguarding is rooted in the school ethos.

Leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed. They commission audits to ensure that the single central record of pre-employment checks contains accurate and up-to-date information.

Leaders have created a culture of support where pupils and families are confident to disclose and talk about the issues they face. This is because pupils know staff will help. Leaders have established good relationships with external agencies to be able to secure extra help when required.

Staff know how to identify and report concerns and they receive regular training on risks.

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

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

- Strategies that need to be used to adapt provision to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND are not identified consistently well in plans. As a result, some staff find it difficult to know what the most effective strategies for adapting provision to meet the needs of those pupils are. Leaders need to ensure that staff have clear plans of the most effective strategies to support all pupils with SEND.
- A very small number of pupils at the early stages of reading are not receiving effective enough provision to support them to decode. As a result, barriers to them learning to read persist. Leaders need to ensure a programme is in place to support these pupils to decode and blend words.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 16 May 2013.

## 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>	136904
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211361
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1505
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair governing body</b>	Andrew Oades
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Farmer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gbhs.co.uk/">http://www.gbhs.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> February 2017

## Information about this school

- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum

leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum and visited lessons in modern foreign languages, geography and media studies.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers, the chair of governors and vice chair of governors.
- Inspectors explored the school's safeguarding culture through viewing safeguarding records and procedures, meeting with a range of pupils and staff and talking to safeguarding leaders.
- Inspectors considered the 214 responses and 137 free-text responses made by parents to the survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered that there were 0 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 0 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

James Chester, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kathryn Herlock

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Sutton

Ofsted Inspector

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