

# Inspection of a good school: Gilbert Inglefield Academy

Vandyke Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 3FU

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

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

Pupils are made to feel welcome. Staff get to know pupils so they can meet their needs. Pupils who feel anxious about joining the school are quickly made to feel comfortable.

Some pupils worry about the behaviour of a small minority of pupils, including the comments they make. Pupils feel positive about the changes leaders are making to improve behaviour. They feel that actions such as lining up have already made their start to the day more settled.

Pupils know that teachers will listen to their worries and do their best to resolve them. Any bullying issues are followed up. There are lots of staff around at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This makes pupils feel happy and safe.

Pupils value the range of clubs and activities on offer. They study a wide range of subjects, which they generally enjoy. In some subjects, what pupils learn does not always build on what they have learned before. Leaders continue to work to develop the curriculum.

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

Pupils are taught a broad range of different subjects. Teachers provide clear explanations and use questioning to check what pupils know. This helps pupils to feel supported in lessons.

There are some areas of the curriculum that have strength. In science, Year 5 pupils conduct experiments and practical learning which help them to quickly acquire scientific knowledge. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), a well-planned curriculum is

in place. This builds pupils' knowledge of British values such as democracy, tolerance and respect over time.

However, the curriculum is not of a consistently high quality. In some subjects, pupils do not build enough on previous knowledge or acquire the depth of subject knowledge they need. This is because the knowledge leaders intend pupils to learn is not carefully enough planned to build over time. For example, in physical education (PE), opportunities for pupils to develop their technique and improve their performance are not carefully mapped out for the sports they play. Instead, there is a more general focus on broader generic competencies, such as their ability to communicate. This means that what pupils need to do to get better at a sport is not effectively assessed.

Pupils are encouraged to read widely. Every pupil has a book and time to read during the school day. However, the identification of barriers to reading, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is not clear enough, such as when pupils struggle to decode words.

Pupils generally behave in a calm and orderly way. A small minority of pupils continually cause disruptions. Leaders are working with these pupils and their families to address this.

There are a variety of trips and experiences that extend the curriculum, including residential trips, such as to Spain. Assemblies and form time activities are coordinated with the PSHE programme. As a result, pupils get lots of opportunities to learn about current affairs and British values.

Leaders make effective use of education, health and care (EHC) plans to identify and support pupils with higher levels of SEND. Staff are knowledgeable about supporting pupils with SEND and have equal ambition for them as for other pupils. Pupils with SEND who do not have an EHC plan do not always have clear strategies identified to support their needs. This means that parents and teachers do not always have precise enough information about a pupil's learning needs. Leaders have commissioned specialist SEND support to address this.

Leaders recognise the areas for improvement identified across the course of the inspection and have plans in place to address them. They have a sense of urgency to address the improvements that are required, while being mindful of staff's workload and well-being. They have already made some necessary and positive changes to improving behaviour.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Staff are appropriately trained, so are well placed to identify need.

Pupils feel confident to share any worries or concerns and feel that they will be listened to. There is a well-planned programme of PSHE to support pupils' awareness of risk.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies to secure the support families need.

Appropriate safer recruitment checks are carried out. Some minor administrative issues regarding the single central record of these checks were identified and addressed during inspection. The process for conducting welfare checks on pupils is not as clear as it should be about the action taken at each stage. While this needs to be rectified, it does not undermine the effective safeguarding work of the school.

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

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

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not identify precisely enough the subject-specific knowledge pupils need to know or how this builds over time. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge or do not build their knowledge effectively enough over time. Leaders need to ensure that the planned curriculum precisely identifies the knowledge pupils need to know and the sequence in which this builds over time and that teachers check carefully what pupils have learned.
- There is a small minority of pupils who consistently do not meet the school's behaviour expectations. As a result, some pupils worry about the comments these pupils make and the impact of their behaviour on their learning. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils show respect for one another and behave in accordance with the school's values.
- Some pupils with SEND do not have specific enough strategies and targets identified to support their needs. As a result, teachers and parents do not always have the key information they need about pupils' needs. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils with SEND have clearly identified strategies and targets that are communicated with parents and teachers and that the assess, plan, do, review cycle is followed.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

## 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.

## 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>	138003
<b>Local authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10193975
<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	641
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Hassall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Winter
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gilbertinglefield.com">www.gilbertinglefield.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher is new in post from the start of the academic year.
- The school has experienced significant growth in numbers over the last few years. This has included the need for new buildings.
- The school uses no alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- 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, history and PE. 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 conducted meetings with members of the local governing body and leaders of provision for PSHE, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding and personal development. Inspectors also observed breaktimes and lunchtimes and spoke to

parents before and after school. Inspectors visited form time, assembly and science lessons.

- 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 75 responses and 52 free-text responses made by parents to the Ofsted Parent View survey. Inspectors also considered 45 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 56 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Shapland

Ofsted Inspector

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