

Inspection of Greyfriars Academy

London Road, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 5PY

Inspection dates: 24 May to 26 May and 8 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils experience a curriculum that is not well designed or delivered. The curriculum on offer does not enable pupils to achieve well.

Pupils are polite to visitors and enjoy talking to them. Pupils understand the different needs of pupils and usually show tolerance towards them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in school life but do not have support specific enough to do well.

Most pupils are happy at school, but some feel unsafe due to the behaviour of other pupils. Lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. There are instances of bullying and name calling. These are usually followed up by staff but not well enough for it to stop. However, while this is the case, pupils have adults in school they can talk to if they are worried, and they trust adults will sort things out for them.

Pupils enjoy going on school trips and attending after-school clubs. The young leaders group take on extra responsibilities. This contributes successfully towards pupils' personal development.

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

In most subjects, leaders have not checked the curriculum thoroughly enough or made enough necessary changes to provide a well-considered curriculum for Greyfriars Academy pupils.

In subjects where leaders and staff have had curriculum training and support, they are clearer about what is to be taught and when. In these curriculum areas, for example, mathematics, pupils successfully build upon what they have learned and achieve better. However, pupils are offered a series of activities that do not intentionally build towards clear outcomes. Curriculum leaders have not checked what is being taught, or if pupils are retaining what they have learned. Consequently, pupils do not build upon prior knowledge and, therefore, do not achieve well in most areas of the curriculum.

Too many pupils are not able to read fluently by the end of key stage 1. Leaders have not planned or delivered a systematic approach to teaching reading. Pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge do not receive appropriate support to help them improve.

The teaching of phonics is not consistent. The quality of the curriculum in reading in key stage 2 has started to improve. Staff are using a newly implemented scheme. There is too much inconsistency in teaching reading skills within year groups for pupils to learn to read confidently. This impacts upon their achievement in other areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are not being well enough prepared for the next stages of their education.

In the main, children in the early years have positive relationships with each other and their teachers. Children learn routines and generally follow adult instruction. Leaders have started to review the early years curriculum, including the learning environment, but currently the curriculum does not offer appropriate learning experiences across the areas of learning. Children have limited opportunities to practise and rehearse their learning. This means a significant proportion of children are not ready for the Year 1 curriculum.

Although most pupils are polite and get on well together, there are too many pupils throughout the school, including in early years, whose negative behaviour disrupts learning and impacts on the well-being of others. The approach to sanctions and rewards is not used consistently. Pupils do not understand the behaviour system in place. Pupils believe the systems are not fair. Leaders have not checked if the additional support pupils are receiving to help improve their behaviour is working. As a result, pupils' behaviour is not improving quickly enough to ensure learning is not disrupted.

Leaders have not provided staff with the knowledge they require to accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. The support in place lacks precision and, therefore, does not help pupils access the curriculum successfully. The support is not meeting pupils' needs, so a significant proportion of pupils with SEND do not receive a quality of education that ensures they can achieve well. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) has started to address these weaknesses, but this work is in its infancy.

A reviewed personal, social and health education curriculum has recently been introduced. This includes opportunities for pupils to explore and learn more about protected characteristics and discrimination. It also supports pupils to learn about different cultures and faiths.

Since the school transferred to Unity Education Trust in June 2021, there has been significant leadership and staff changes. This has contributed towards it being an unsettled time for leaders and staff. Added to this, leaders have also managed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and considerable staff absence. During this time, the trust has continued to make significant financial, governance and curriculum decisions, which are introducing new ways of working. While this is the case, these have not had time to make the differences needed to ensure pupils receive a high-quality education and achieve well.

The trust and school leaders know the extent of the work that needs to be done and have identified appropriate priorities. For example, where urgent work has been carried out on the mathematics curriculum, improvements are evident.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff know pupils well and are quick to record concerns. However, these concerns are not routinely followed up with appropriate actions in a timely way.

Leaders do not have effective systems in place for checking all pupils are receiving the correct support. Information is not well shared with the relevant people to ensure pupils are safe from harm.

Leaders' checks on safeguarding have not been regular or rigorous enough to check policies to keep pupils safe are in place and being followed.

The school's single central register shows all checks on adults are in place.

The curriculum content ensures pupils understand how to stay safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are serious weaknesses in the recording and following up of actions when pupils are at risk from harm. As a result, not all safeguarding concerns are followed up with appropriate and timely support. Leaders must ensure there are clear systems in place and staff understand these and are fully trained to clearly understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Most areas of the curriculum, including in the early years, have not been well thought out. Pupils do not know and remember more over time. Leaders must review the curriculum to ensure it clearly sets out what pupils need to know and how and when this should be taught. Leaders must also ensure all staff are trained to implement the curriculum as leaders intend.
- The teaching of reading is inconsistent, and staff are not well trained. As a result, there are too many key stage 1 pupils who are unable to read well enough. Leaders must decide how they will teach early reading and ensure all staff are trained to deliver it across the school. Leaders must ensure the teaching of the reading curriculum is then monitored to check that where pupils have gaps in their knowledge the programme is being used appropriately for pupils to catch up quickly.
- A significant proportion of pupils with SEND have not been accurately identified or been given targets that are specific enough. Leaders must ensure staff are able to set appropriate targets, identify and plan appropriate and specific activities that enable pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as others and achieve well.

- Over time, learning is being disrupted by a significant number of pupils' poor behaviour. There are too many occasions when adults do not manage behaviour well and this also impacts upon pupils' well-being. Leaders must ensure staff are trained and supported with strategies and systems to implement a consistent behaviour management approach in the school. Leaders must then monitor these systems to ensure they are effective in improving behaviour in the school.
- While the trust has focused on monitoring and improving the current leadership in the school, and more recently the quality of education, this has not led to urgent improvement being made. School leaders need support and guidance to ensure they can fulfil their roles effectively and have the skills and knowledge to rapidly improve the quality of education and the behaviour of pupils.

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	145535
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10227562
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	281
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alison Randall
Headteacher	Beverly Barrett
Website	www.greyfriarsacademy.uk
Date of previous inspection	19-20 November 2014

Information about this school

- Greyfriars Academy, previously known as Greyfriars Primary School, converted to an academy, part of the KWEST academy trust in 2018. This trust merged with the Unity Education Trust in June 2021.
- The newly structured School Improvement Board has been in place since November 2021.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- This inspection was paused on 26 May 2022 and completed on 8 June 2022.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the SENCO, the pastoral support assistant, subject leaders, staff, and pupils.
- They also met with the multi-academy trust’s director of education, head of school effectiveness for primary, the link trustee and the chief executive officer.
- Deep dives were carried out in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive inspectors met with the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, talked to pupils about their learning, looked at pupils work and spoke to teaching staff.
- As part of looking at the quality of education inspectors talked to the religious education leader, spoke to pupils and looked at pupils’ work.
- As part of the evaluation of the school’s safeguarding processes, inspectors reviewed the school’s single central register, met with the safeguarding leads, spoke to pupils and staff and looked at case files.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of documentation, including behaviour logs, minutes of school improvement board meetings, trust visit notes, school and trust improvement plans and school policies.
- There were four responses to the Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View that were considered by inspectors alongside three free-text responses. The inspectors also reviewed 12 responses to the staff survey and 26 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Isabel Davis, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Short	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bozena Laraway	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Fielding	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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