

# Inspection of Great Barford Church of England Primary Academy

Silver Street, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK44 3HZ

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

Pupils speak with pride about their school. They know that learning is important and live up to leaders' high expectations by working hard in lessons. Pupils are articulate and speak enthusiastically about what they are learning.

Pupils bring the best out of each other and, in line with the school's aim, 'grow together through learning, friendship and worship'. They work well together in lessons and help each other when they find something tricky to learn. They also care for each other's needs around the school. On the playground, pupils look for those on their own and invite them to play so that nobody feels lonely or without friends.

Pupils told us, and school records show, that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively by staff so that it stops. When pupils fall out with friends, adults help to find positive solutions and restore their relationship.

Pupils are determined to do well in school. They have high expectations for themselves and value their own and others' achievements. Older pupils have impressive plans for the future and speak confidently about starting secondary school.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have put in place an ambitious and well-designed curriculum. Leaders have organised the curriculum effectively to enable teachers to deliver, in a sensible order, what pupils need to learn. Teachers teach the curriculum content with carefully chosen learning activities. They know their pupils well. Teachers check that pupils remember what they need to know before taking the next steps to new learning. When pupils find elements of the curriculum difficult to learn, teachers and teaching assistants act swiftly to ensure pupils do not fall behind.

Leaders review the curriculum and its effectiveness regularly. They identify areas for development accurately and have appropriate plans underway to make any necessary changes. Improvement plans, for example, rightly include ensuring the curriculum in all subjects has sufficiently detailed guidance for teachers about the specific knowledge pupils must know by the end of a year.

Reading is a high priority at the school. Starting with the youngest children in Nursery, staff help pupils develop a love of reading. Pupils appreciate the school's extensive collection of books and recommend books to each other. Using leaders' chosen approach for the teaching of early reading, staff teach pupils how to read effectively. Teachers systematically teach pupils new vocabulary, and this helps pupils to understand sophisticated texts.

Leaders ensure that staff identify quickly when pupils show signs of difficulties with

learning. They work well with external experts to plan provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers usually follow leaders' detailed guidance about what these pupils need to learn effectively. However, at times, teachers do not support pupils in the precise way that leaders expect. As a result, some pupils with SEND occasionally struggle to learn aspects of the curriculum.

In the early years, children quickly learn leaders' expectations for good behaviour. Children sustain their concentration for long periods of time. They take pleasure in learning new things. Staff build upon the strong ethos developed in the early years so that as they progress through the school, pupils delight in learning and behave well.

The curriculum includes many opportunities for children in the early years and pupils in the rest of the school to learn about the diverse lifestyles and beliefs in contemporary society. Pupils show respect for others who are different. They also understand the importance of values such as democratic decision-making and the rule of law. Pupils take their positions of responsibility at the school seriously. They willingly and capably serve on the school council and support younger pupils on the playground as play leaders. One play leader showed their mature understanding of the role by saying that they are helping younger pupils 'learn how to be physically and socially healthy'.

Despite difficult times since the previous inspection, trustees and leaders have continued to make the necessary improvements, including to arrangements for communication with parents. Most parents and staff are confident in the school's leadership.

Staff told us that while leaders expect continuous improvements, they support staff to maintain reasonable workloads. Trustees hold leaders accountable for the quality of provision, including important elements of the curriculum. However, trustees do not pay sufficient attention to the quality of the curriculum beyond English and mathematics.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know the signs of when a pupil is at risk of potential harm. They respond quickly and effectively when concerns arise. Effective work with external agencies helps to secure the support that vulnerable pupils need.

The required background checks are made so leaders are confident that adults in school are appropriate to work with pupils.

Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know what to do if they are concerned about their well-being. They are confident that staff will help them if they need support.

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

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

- Teachers do not always provide the support that leaders expect for pupils with SEND. When this happens, some pupils with SEND do not learn as much as they could. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the necessary training to implement the guidance for supporting pupils with SEND effectively so that all pupils achieve well.
- When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, trustees do not pay sufficient attention to subjects other than English and mathematics. As a result, trustees do not know enough about the quality of the provision in those areas to enable them to hold leaders strictly to account. Trustees must ensure that they understand the quality of the whole curriculum at the school.

## 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>	143770
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241116
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jane Ferguson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Evans
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gbpa.org.uk">www.gbpa.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has a Nursery for children aged two years and nine months old.
- The school does not have any pupils in alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England school. The school has not yet had a section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character. The school's section 48 inspection has not yet been scheduled.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 discussions with the trustees, the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the school's improvement partner from the local authority, the

special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff, parents and pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in history, mathematics, physical education and reading. 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 also visited a sample of lessons, spoke to leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff. They looked at records about safeguarding, the school roll, the behaviour of pupils, the provision of pupils' personal development and leaders' approach to managing the workload of staff.
- Inspectors considered the 59 responses to Ofsted's online survey of parents, Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Craige Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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