

# Inspection of a good school: Gayton Church of England Primary Academy

82 Springvale, Gayton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 1QZ

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

## **Outcome**

Gayton Church of England Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

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

Gayton Academy is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are happy and personify the school's three core principles: ready, respectful and safe. There are courteous interactions between pupils and with staff. Pupils learn from staff to be well mannered and kind.

Pupils behave well and are safe in school. They try their best to live up to the high expectations of staff. Well-trained adults support the few pupils, sometimes with complex needs, who need help to regulate their behaviour. Pupils understand bullying and recognise it happens rarely in school. Pupils trust staff to resolve issues.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They value the trips and visits that enhance their understanding, such as the trip to West Stow when they studied the Anglo-Saxons. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the school library, which is at the heart of the school. They like reading and appreciate the wide range of books they can choose from.

Pupils get lots of opportunities to take on positions of responsibility. 'Everyone's Listening Friends' (ELFs) help younger pupils resolve any disagreements. Science ambassadors lead after-school clubs and school councillors ensure pupils have their voice heard. Many pupils take part in the wide range of extra-curricular clubs on offer.

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

Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum that outlines the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to know and remember. Leaders have trained staff to teach this curriculum well. The curriculum is carefully sequenced from the early years to Year 6. For example, in history, understanding chronology begins in Reception. Events are placed on a timeline to help pupils to understand the difference between the past and present.

The trust has provided training for curriculum leaders in how to monitor their subjects effectively. The headteacher has ensured that curriculum leaders have sufficient time to

fulfil this aspect of their role. As a result, all leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the curriculum is helping pupils to know more as they move through school.

Leaders and teachers use assessment to regularly check what pupils know and remember. Teachers swiftly identify and address any misconceptions. They ensure pupils have extra practise at concepts they are finding difficult. As a result, pupils learn well.

Reading is a priority. Leaders ensure that all pupils read high-quality books. Staff deliver the school's chosen phonics programme very well. This starts with the youngest children in Reception. Staff are adept at identifying and supporting any pupils who are struggling. As a result, pupils are very well supported to learn to read quickly and fluently. Older pupils like reading and can name a wide range of favourite authors. They are well prepared for secondary school.

Leaders of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) provide staff with a good range of information and strategies about how best to help pupils. Adults support pupils with SEND effectively in the classroom to ensure these pupils experience success when learning alongside their peers. However, targets on pupils' learning plans are not always addressed consistently. This means some pupils do not get the specific support they need to meet these targets.

In the early years, children are busy and keen to learn in a well-resourced learning environment. They interact well with each other, share and take turns. They get opportunities to practise large and fine motor skills through their play, such as cutting out teddy bear parts to make a split pin puppet. However, some pupils do not have good enough pencil grip to support strong letter formation. Staff do not consistently correct this. As a result, a number of children are not forming letters correctly. This impacts on the fluency and legibility of their writing as they progress through school.

Leaders provide a well-designed, high-quality, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. This helps pupils to learn about healthy relationships and to respect difference. Pupils discuss topics such as keeping healthy, both physically and mentally. Pupils consider the world around them and their impact on it during times for reflection, such as in assembly. Personal development is a strength of this school because it encourages pupils to be kind and considerate of the needs of others.

Leaders, including trustees and governors, work closely together to improve the school. Staff feel part of a happy team and supported by leaders. Staff appreciate the support that leaders provide. They say that leaders and governors carefully consider their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff build supportive relationships with pupils. Pupils see staff as trusted adults. They follow the staff's advice about how to stay safe on and offline. Pupils confidently confide in staff when they feel worried. Calling upon their frequent training, staff report concerns

to leaders without delay. Leaders inform staff about follow-up actions in a timely manner, including liaising with external agencies. This creates a culture where leaders and staff remain vigilant to risks.

Governors meticulously monitor systems for safeguarding, including checks on staff.

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

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

- Some of the additional support for pupils with SEND is not consistently put in place as leaders intend. When this happens, these pupils achieve less well. Leaders should ensure that pupils get the help they need from adults and that systems are in place to check if this is working well or needs to be adjusted.
- Teachers do not always spot and correct difficulties with pencil control and letter formation. This means some pupils do not develop the skills to produce legible and fluent handwriting. Leaders need to ensure that pupils in the youngest years get enough opportunities to develop their fine motor control, so they develop correct pencil grip and letter formation before moving through the school.

## **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 predecessor school, Gayton Church of England Voluntary-Controlled School to be good in February 2017.

## **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>	146060
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255154
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Willie Crawshay
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachael Greenhalgh
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gaytonprimary.co.uk">www.gaytonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Gayton Church of England Primary Academy is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school is a member of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a designated religious character of Church of England. Its most recent Section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place on 15 May 2017 and graded the school as good. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history.
- For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, other leaders, staff, pupils, and those responsible for governance.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents, including the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and school policies.
- As part of the evaluation of the school's safeguarding processes, the inspector reviewed the school's single central record, met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed safeguarding records.
- The inspector reviewed the 12 responses that were submitted by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 12 free-text responses. The inspector considered the 21 responses received through the staff survey and 31 responses to the pupil survey.

## **Inspection team**

Jo Nutbeam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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