

Inspection of Germander Park School

1 Germander Place, Conniburrow, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK14 7DU

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for at this school. Adults know the pupils very well and relationships across the school are warm and respectful. Pupils feel safe and behave well. They enjoy social times, such as playtimes, and they chat together happily at lunchtime. Pupils are kind and considerate of others. They say that bullying rarely happens because staff 'teach us well not to bully'. If bullying does happen, staff make sure that it is dealt with quickly.

Leaders ensure that the school's four values of 'respect, responsibility, resilience and reflection' are known well. All at the school refer to these often. Pupils at the school come from many different backgrounds and all are welcome. They share cultural experiences together, such as celebrating Muslim and Christian festivals. Pupils are tolerant, interested and respectful of the beliefs of others.

There are many opportunities on offer inside and outside the classroom. Pupils enjoy theatre trips, author visits, and keenly attend the many sports clubs. There are a range of activities to develop their different talents and interests.

Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and this view is shared by all at the school.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about what the pupils will learn and in what order. For example, children in early years learn to draw maps of their playground and apply this knowledge to mapping a walk when in Year 1.

Leaders prioritise reading. In Reception, children learn phonics straight away. They learn rhymes and songs and enjoy listening to stories. They begin their day quietly sharing a book with friends. Each class has a box of story books, which families share together. Pupils take these home alongside their reading book. Pupils learn phonics using a well-structured programme. This sets clear expectations for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should learn. Any pupil at risk of falling behind with their reading, receives the support they need to catch up quickly. In early years, children use phonic games to help them remember their sounds.

In many subjects, teachers ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding well. For example, in science, teachers use carefully designed tasks to develop pupils' scientific thinking. Furthermore, in mathematics, teachers encourage pupils to use a range of resources to help them with their work. Teachers have carefully planned the vocabulary that pupils need to know in each subject.

In reading, teachers check pupils' understanding routinely. They use this information to plan what pupils need to learn next. However, in some subjects other than reading, teachers do not check consistently how well pupils are learning. As a result, teachers do not always know what each pupil has remembered and can do before they move on.

The required support for pupils with SEND is identified quickly by leaders. Appropriate provision is put in place promptly. With the help of leaders, teachers expertly adapt lessons, so that learning is presented in smaller, achievable steps. This enables all pupils to succeed.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Occasionally, they become overly excited. However, this is rapidly addressed by staff. In early years, children learn the routines which prepare them for their next stage of learning. They learn to tidy up, sit quietly on the carpet and line up sensibly. Despite leaders' efforts, not all pupils attend school regularly enough. This leads to some pupils missing important learning, which means that they develop gaps in knowledge and, therefore, do not achieve as well as they could.

This is a truly inclusive school. Families receive excellent pastoral support. Leaders provide an exceptional range of opportunities for pupils, which extends beyond the taught curriculum. Pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from high-quality sporting, creative and cultural activities. They have visited the theatre, a zoo and listened to a visiting author. Pupils learn to take care of themselves by eating healthily, exercising and getting enough sleep. Staff care for pupils and pupils care for each other. There are no barriers to pupils taking part in any activity. Everyone is encouraged.

Leaders have worked tirelessly to make improvements to the school. Governors share their ambitions. Staff feel well supported. Leaders have carefully considered staff well-being and workload. They are fully focused on ensuring pupils receive a high-quality education. Along with school leaders, governors are determined that all pupils will achieve highly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe at school. Leaders have ensured that all staff know the procedures they need to follow if they believe a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders know their community very well. They have ensured that all staff have the appropriate training and work well with outside agencies to support pupils' safety and well-being.

Record-keeping is precise and up to date. Leaders carry out the required checks to ensure that adults in school are safe to work with pupils. Pupils know how to identify risk and keep themselves safe in the community and when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment sufficiently well to check pupils' understanding before moving their learning on. As a result, pupils develop gaps in knowledge and do not always remember their learning securely enough. Leaders should continue their work to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively to support all pupils to learn well across the curriculum.
- Not all pupils attend school regularly enough. As a result, some pupils are not developing their curriculum knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders should continue their efforts to ensure high attendance for all pupils in 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

Unique reference number	110375
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10256276
Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	Paul Nolan
Headteacher	Kate Mathews
Website	www.germanderpark.com
Date of previous inspection	2 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision
- The school is part the local Boulevard Primary Partnership

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, governor minutes, local authority reports and relevant school policies.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and two governors, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. Inspectors spoke to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. The lead inspector heard pupils read to an adult from the school. The lead inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in geography and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record, reviewed safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector also discussed safeguarding with those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors met with leaders and staff to discuss the wider development of pupils, behaviour, well-being and workload.
- The lead inspector took account of parent responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. She also considered responses to the staff online survey. The views of pupils were considered through conversations with them during the inspection.

Inspection team

Fiona Henderson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Scott Reece

His Majesty's Inspector

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