

# Inspection of a good school: Orchard Academy

Springfield Boulevard, Springfield, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 3HW

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

## 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. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Orchard Academy is a welcoming and friendly school. Staff care for the pupils and know them well. Warm relationships exist between pupils and staff. As a result, pupils know they can ask any adult for help or support. Older pupils can be playground buddies and support playtimes with the younger pupils. Instances of bullying are rare and are dealt with quickly by adults.

Most pupils know how to behave and what is expected of them. There are, however, some pupils who find it harder to behave appropriately. Because of this, learning can be interrupted, causing pupils to be off task. Sometimes, pupils' play can also be too boisterous.

There is a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities for pupils to take part in. Pupils enjoy school trips and visits, especially the residentials. These enhance the curriculum learning opportunities for the pupils. Within school, pupils have the chance to take on leadership roles, including by acting as school councillors. Pupils know the school creed and show respect and celebrate difference. They say everyone is welcome at their school.

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

Leaders have planned the curriculum in detail. Their planning shows that knowledge, skills and vocabulary are clearly mapped out. The curriculum is as broad as the national curriculum. However, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Teaching approaches do not enable pupils to build their knowledge consistently well across all of their subjects. As a result, pupils cannot always recall key information. Misconceptions are not always picked up in a timely manner. In contrast, where teaching is more effective, staff break down the intended learning into small steps and follow the sequence of planning well.

While leaders are clear about how the curriculum could be delivered more consistently, their work to achieve this is in the early stages of development.

Reading is a priority at this school. Books are everywhere. There is a structured approach to the teaching of reading. Leaders ensure that pupils who are new to the school in Year 3 have a secure knowledge of phonics and work quickly to close any gaps that may exist. As a result, pupils catch up quickly. Pupils love reading, enjoying many opportunities to read throughout the day. Leaders are working to develop pupils' wider knowledge of authors and genres, helping pupils, for example, to discover more about the books they can choose to read. Pupils relish the opportunity to use the library or win a book from the vending machine in a prize raffle.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life. Leaders know these pupils well and work hard to meet their needs. At times, work in class is not broken down into small enough steps for these pupils, and they disengage from their learning. Leaders and staff are developing teaching approaches to give pupils with SEND the tools they need to be successful in the classroom.

Pupils report that their learning can be interrupted by poor behaviour from some pupils. Leaders' recent work has raised and clarified expectations for how all pupils behave. At this early stage of implementation, these expectations are not currently being applied or met consistently around the school during lessons.

Pupils know their school values well. They have a strong understanding of British values, especially the values of respect and tolerance. Pupils embrace difference and celebrate the wide range of faiths and diversity at the school. They have a good understanding of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils value celebration assemblies and recognition of the work they do in the classroom.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority for leaders and staff at this school. Leaders complete all necessary checks on staff and keep detailed records. Staff receive useful and ongoing training to develop their knowledge of their safeguarding role. As a result, staff know how to report concerns and the signs they need to be aware of. Trustees assure themselves that safeguarding arrangements are robust at this school.

Pupils feel safe in school and know who they can talk to if they have a concern or worry. Through their personal, social, and health education lessons, pupils gain a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when online.

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

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

- Expectations for pupils' behaviour are not enforced or enacted consistently. As a result, pupils do not always behave as well as they should in lessons and around the school. Leaders should ensure that recently introduced behaviour rules and routines are followed consistently.
- The planned curriculum is not implemented consistently well. Work in lessons is not always matched to pupils' needs, including those with SEND. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should across the curriculum, and they sometimes disengage from their learning. Leaders should ensure that activities in lessons match the intended learning precisely and enable pupils to engage proactively with their learning.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2014.

## 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>	138605
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269082
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	355
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Kevin Crompton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Callum Brown
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.orchard.emat.uk">www.orchard.emat.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the East Midlands Academy Trust.

## 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. 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 reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and subject leaders.

- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents provided by the school.
- The inspector met with representatives from the trust and the local advisory board.
- The inspector met with pupils, parents and staff and considered the feedback from Ofsted's questionnaires.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.

### **Inspection team**

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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