

Inspection of The Little Gonerby Church of England Primary Academy, Grantham

Sandon Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 9AZ

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Joe Hawkins. This school is part of Infinity Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gavin Booth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sean Westaway. There is also a trust education director, Kate Rouse, who has a responsibility for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and proud of their school. Pupils enjoy taking on roles of responsibility. For example, pupil leaders led a fundraising campaign to 'save the Lincolnshire Wolds'.

There is an ambition at this school that pupils will achieve well. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), build their knowledge over time. They learn about the wider world as well as their local community. Pupils understand they live in a town. They study the local rivers, the Witham and the Trent.

Pupils are respectful to others. Staff build positive relationships with pupils. This fosters a calm and orderly environment. Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They understand what bullying is and say that it rarely happens. Any concerns are quickly resolved. The school trains staff to understand how to help pupils regulate their behaviour and focus on their learning.

Parents and carers are supportive of the school. They speak highly of the wider opportunities the school provides for pupils to learn, such as visiting Belvoir Castle and its estate. One parent said, 'This is a fantastic school where my children have thrived.'

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

The school, working with the multi-academy trust, has created a broad and ambitious curriculum. It is carefully sequenced from the early years through to key stage 2. It sets out what pupils will learn through to Year 6 once the school reaches full primary capacity. Carefully thought-out links between subjects strengthen pupils' knowledge. The school's approach to sequencing the curriculum ensures that pupils have many opportunities to revisit key concepts.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to deliver the curriculum. They use questions well to check what pupils know and provide support to resolve any misconceptions.

The school supports pupils with SEND well. Through precise and regular checks on their learning, the school makes sure that these pupils reach their full potential. Staff adapt how they teach so that pupils with SEND build their knowledge. The school works effectively with parents and external agencies to support these pupils.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn the knowledge they need to read well. Staff complete regular phonics training. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. They practise their reading and grow in confidence. Staff identify pupils who fall behind and support them to catch up quickly.

Pupils develop a love of reading. The school invests time in supporting the youngest children to enjoy stories. High-quality texts are the focus of the curriculum, including in the early years. Displays, including those about famous authors and their books, help pupils to love books and engage in reading.

Children make a very strong and secure start in the early years. The curriculum is well sequenced. Staff make use of a 'concept cat' to help pupils develop their oracy and vocabulary. Children also recall number facts with increasing fluency. They manage their feelings and behaviour well. They play purposefully in a new outdoor area. Children are prepared exceptionally well for Year 1.

The school has not yet ensured that all pupils attend as well as they could. Some pupils are regularly absent and miss out on the education and wider opportunities that the school provides.

There are a wide range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. Pupils have visits from people of different faiths, including Judaism and Islam. The pupil leaders also have many opportunities to lead on fundraising and have fostered strong relations with a local supermarket to support the community. Pupils learn to be respectful of difference and are passionate that all children have a right to education. Extra-curricular opportunities available to all pupils include new age curling and boccia.

There is a strong sense of togetherness among the staff. They feel valued and share the ambition to make the school the best it can be. Staff appreciate the high-quality training they receive. They enjoy working at the school and feel supported.

The trust provides effective support for the school. The trustees fulfil their statutory duties and have an in-depth knowledge of safeguarding. In some subjects, the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning is not always thoroughly checked. Improvements to the curriculum are not always identified as promptly as they could be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school well. Some are regularly absent. As a result, these pupils do not benefit fully from the good quality of education and wider experiences that the school provides. The school should ensure those pupils who require it receive the support they need so that they attend regularly.
- Leadership at all levels has recently gone through a period of change. In some subjects, the impact of the curriculum is not always thoroughly checked. As a

result, aspects of the curriculum that could be better are not promptly identified. The school should ensure that there is a clear understanding of which aspects of individual subjects' curriculums need further development so that the necessary improvements are brought about.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138816
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10298489
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean Westaway
CEO of the trust	Gavin Booth
Headteacher	Joe Hawkins
Website	www.little-gonerby.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up his post in September 2023.
- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The school has undergone an age-range change from being an infant school to being a primary school that will serve pupils up to and including Year 6.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Little Gonerby is a Church of England school with a Christian ethos. It received its last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools inspection in May 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the director of education, the special education needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, and representatives from the academy monitoring committee and the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in history.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils and took into account the views of parents through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Toon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jackie Thornalley

Ofsted Inspector

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