

Inspection of Bovington Academy

Holt Road, Bovington, Wareham Dorset BH20 6LE

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Sara White. This school is part of Aspirations 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, Stephen Kenning, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by James Pomeroy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Bovington Academy. They are happy and curious. Pupils describe their school with pride, especially the warmth and care they receive from staff. Pupils also care for and respect one another. They welcome everyone into their community. Many pupils join the school at different times of the year. They quickly settle into this inclusive school. The values of self-worth, engagement and purpose are understood by all. This is reflected in pupils' exemplary behaviour.

Pupils enjoy learning here. They are encouraged to ask questions and discuss their ideas. The school's curriculum is relevant to pupils. Pupils remember what they have learned. Learning is enriched by trips and visits. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these experiences.

Pastoral care is exceptional. Pupils here feel part of the 'Bovvy family'. Nearly all pupils take up the school's extensive extra-curricular offer. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and manage their feelings. Student leaders are excellent role models to younger pupils. Pupils who struggle with their learning or behaviour are very well supported. Bullying is extremely rare.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. In most subjects, the school has carefully identified the important knowledge it wants pupils to learn. Pupils review this knowledge regularly. Teachers check and deepen pupils' understanding using precise questioning. Therefore, pupils talk confidently about their work and use previous learning to help them. There is a sharp focus on learning vocabulary, including in the early years foundation stage.

In some subjects, the school has been less precise in its planning. The activities pupils complete, including in the early years, do not always ensure that they achieve what is intended. Older pupils do not always have a secure understanding of how to work within different subject disciplines.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. They learn to read as soon as they start school. Pupils read books that match precisely to the sounds they know. All pupils listen to adults read every day. They learn from high-quality texts. These are used successfully to 'hook' pupils into their learning of the wider curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to read widely. For example, many pupils take part in the school's reading challenge, the 'Bovington 100'. Reading is celebrated and valued by all.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified and supported. Information about how to support these pupils is shared effectively with teachers. This means that pupils with SEND are supported well to learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils all play their part in creating a safe and inclusive environment. For example, during social times, pupil leaders support younger pupils as part of the school's 'listening ear' initiative. Children in the early years interact kindly with each other. Staff model language effectively to help children overcome their differences. Their social and emotional development is prioritised.

Pupil leaders have an important role in rewarding other pupils for positive behaviour and kindness. As a result, all pupils, including those who have recently arrived at the school, feel welcomed and included. Pupils are nurtured, but they are also resilient. They proudly talk about how everyone can 'just be themselves'.

The school provides exceptional pastoral care. It works closely with its families and other agencies when needed. This means that pupils want to come to school. Transition into Reception is carefully planned, including for pupils with SEND. Children in the early years settle quickly into routines. The large number of pupils from military families quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. Pupils remember important messages about how to stay safe online. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The school has prioritised pupils' cultural development. All pupils have the opportunity to attend residential trips. The school ensures that pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, attend the wide range of clubs and activities on offer, including a range of sports clubs, a school choir and careers-related events. The school is at the heart of its community.

The school, with support from the trust, has improved significantly. Leaders have created a culture which celebrates their unique community and promotes professional development. They have created clear and effective systems. Published outcomes have improved. Staff feel valued and supported. They are united in their purpose to do the very best for the children in their care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not sufficiently planned the disciplinary knowledge that pupils need in some subjects. Activities in lessons are therefore not always ensuring that pupils achieve the intended outcome. This means that the use of assessment is not always assuring leaders that pupils are able to do more over time. The school must ensure that curriculum planning and implementation in these subjects supports pupils to achieve well in all areas of the curriculum.

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	147264
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10288242
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Pomeroy
CEO of the trust	Stephen Kenning
Principal	Sara White
Website	www.bovington-aspirations.org
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy on 1 July 2019, when it joined Aspirations Academy Trust.
- The majority of pupils who attend the school are from military families. The school has high levels of pupil mobility.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, maths, history and early reading. 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 looked at pupils' work in geography and science.
- The lead inspector analysed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors also considered the views of pupils and staff in Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils, as well as talking to them in lessons and during social times.
- 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.
- An inspector also met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and discussed how pupils with SEND are identified and supported.
- Inspectors met with staff who oversee the personal development and behaviour of pupils.
- Inspectors met with school and trust leaders, including the National Director of Education and Standards and the Regional Chief Executive. The lead inspector also met with a member of the board of trustees.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

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