

# Inspection of Great Heath Academy

Girton Close, Mildenhall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 7PT

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The principal of the school is Naomi Brown. The school is part of the Academy Transformation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Nick Weller, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Beanland.

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

Pupils at Great Heath Academy are proud of their school. They talk enthusiastically about their learning. They are articulate, confident, happy and safe. Pupils know and understand the Great Heath Way. This establishes clear routines and expectations such as 'wonderful walking' and 'super sitting'. Pupils appreciate these consistent routines and expectations. They live up to them.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils behave well. Children starting in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly settle because of the support they receive. Older pupils appreciate the responsibilities and roles they can apply for. They develop confidence and resilience.

Pupils enjoy studying a broad curriculum. Teachers are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. This helps pupils make sound progress over their time in the school.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their interests and passions. They take part in a wide range of clubs, both sporting and non-sporting. All pupils in Year 5 learn to play a musical instrument. They can choose to continue to learn and develop this skill when they move into Year 6. This is a school where 'great hopes' are being achieved. Pupils are aspirational and ambitious for their future.

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

The school, with the support of the trust, has made several changes to the curriculum. A new phonics programme was introduced this year. A progressive and well-planned curriculum, including a new mathematics scheme, is now in its second year of implementation. Staff have had the training and support needed to implement these changes. This is having a positive impact on current pupils' achievement.

The school's curriculum is ambitious and engaging. It sets out knowledge and skills that pupils will learn from year to year. There is a focus on developing pupils' communication, writing and language skills. Pupils develop appropriate subject specific vocabulary. Teachers check what pupils know. They identify and target support for pupils who fall behind.

Reading is central to the curriculum. Adults encourage a love of reading from the moment children start school. Children in the nursery are eager for adults to share books with them. The school has designed a 'reading route' of core books. This means that pupils read a rich menu of age-appropriate, classic and modern texts by the time they leave school. As a result, pupils enjoy reading. Pupils at the early stages of reading read books matched to the sounds they are learning. This means they experience early success and gain confidence. Staff have had appropriate training to support pupils with reading. Pupils who fall behind have the support they need to catch up.

The school has rigorously reviewed and monitored the implementation of the English and mathematics curriculum. However, this is still developing in some foundation subjects. As a result, there are variations in the quality of pupils' work between subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) participate in all aspects of school life. They have appropriate support and adaptations to ensure they can access the curriculum successfully. Pupils with SEND make strong progress.

Pupils respond positively to staff's high expectations of behaviour. These routines are well established and implemented consistently. Pupils know and understand what is expected of them. They wear their uniform with pride. They are eager to come to school. As a result, attendance is improving. Pupils say that most pupils behave well, and adults will listen to them if there is a problem.

The school's personal development programme is planned carefully to meet pupils' needs. The school has considered how to broaden pupils' experiences beyond their local community. A range of trips and visitors enhance the curriculum. This includes a trip to the Tower of London and a visit to the beach. Roles such as being a school buddy or member of the eco champions broaden and enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.

In the early years, children get off to a great start. Children learn to negotiate and compromise. Staff are well trained. They ensure children have the knowledge and skills they need so that they are ready for learning in Year 1.

Leaders and trustees share an ambitious vision for the pupils at Great Heath Academy. Trust leaders offer effective support and challenge. The trust institute ensures all staff have access to training and support. This means staff have the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Leaders and staff work with schools across the trust to share ideas and develop their expertise.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some foundation subjects the implementation of the new curriculum is not yet consistent across classes and within year groups. These means some pupils do not achieve the ambitions of the intended curriculum. The school needs to ensure that staff have opportunities to review and agree expected outcomes in these subjects so that the standards and quality of work achieved by pupils are consistently high across all classes and subjects.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 142027   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Suffolk  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10287129   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy sponsor-led  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 521  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust body</b>                 | Patricia Beanland  |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Naomi Brown  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.greatheathacademy.atrust.org.uk">www.greatheathacademy.atrust.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 24 and 25 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                              |

## Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the school was not making use of alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

## 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 impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that onto their account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with school leaders, the chief executive officer, the deputy chief executive officer, the director of primary education and members of the trust board and local governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at pupils work in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- The lead inspector considered the 52 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, including the 51 free-text responses. The lead inspector also considered the 40 responses to Ofsted's survey for school staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils. Inspectors gathered the views of pupils during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Oriana Dalton, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Craig Avieson                 | Ofsted Inspector |
| Nichola Pickford              | Ofsted Inspector |

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