

Inspection of Greys Education Centre

Manor Drive, Kempston, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK42 7AB

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Clare Breare. The school is part of the Bedford Inclusive Learning and Training Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Catherine Assink, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kevin Green.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value their time at Greys. Many have experienced difficulties in the past with their education. Pupils appreciate how staff listen to, and understands, them. The small group setting meets their needs. This helps to build pupils' self-esteem. They become more hopeful about their future and what they want to achieve. The success they enjoy means pupils settle quickly and are happy.

Respect is two-way between pupils and staff. This is because staff know the pupils well. Adults' calm and patient approach builds pupils' trust, including primary pupils who attend 'The Hive'. It means pupils understand what staff expect of them. Pupils try their best and achieve well. Any difficult behaviours are well-managed. There is little disruption. This ensures that pupils complete their tasks.

Pupils have many opportunities for personal development. They learn new skills such as canoeing or archery. Pupils visit places of interest. These are often linked to their work in class. Pupils have an active voice in the school through the school council. They suggest different rewards they could earn in the 'pom-pom' shop or from the 'e-praise' scheme.

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

The school has acted swiftly to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. It now achieves its core aim to be a 'turn around' school for pupils. Staff ensure that pupils re-engage fully into learning. They use their expertise to support pupils' academic or social needs. Staff quickly identify what motivates pupils to learn and provide bespoke approaches. Consequently, most pupils successfully re-integrate into mainstream schools or special school placements. Other pupils are well-prepared for their next steps in education.

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. Curriculum plans align with those of placing schools. Consequently, most pupils can return to and access mainstream education. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are rapidly identified and filled. In a few subjects, plans do not include precise steps of knowledge. This means staff do not have clear guidance how to teach these well. Leaders have recognised this issue and have already made a start to address it.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. For example, those who attend 'The Hive' get the help they need for their social and emotional development. If pupils have undiagnosed needs, the school identifies these well. Staff expertly adapt learning activities where appropriate. Those pupils who attend the hospital provision are well supported to continue with their education. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve the aims of the school's ambitious curriculum.

Staff use questioning well to check pupils' knowledge. They use this information to revisit concepts to secure pupils' understanding. Some of the school's chosen assessment approaches are not fully established in every subject. This hinders staff's knowledge of the effectiveness of their curriculum plans.

The school places a high priority on pupils' reading. Staff understand how to teach phonics well. There is a step-by-step approach that is skilfully tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils. Regular practice and sharing of stories promote pupils' enjoyment of reading. For older pupils, chosen texts spark their interests. It helps them understand the value of reading to access the curriculum.

Established routines promote a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils enjoy the company of others and get along well together. They attend regularly because of the support and care they receive.

Pupils' personal development threads through the school's provision. Life skills link to pupils' curriculum experiences. In cooking, pupils learn valuable lessons about self-help skills. Pupils are active through boxing and gym work. Musical and art activities nurture pupils' creative skills. In careers, pupils develop an understanding of the world of work. They receive information to help them make informed choices about apprenticeships and college placements. These experiences foster pupils' resilience and confidence. They are well prepared for their next steps once they leave the school.

Staff welcome the benefits of working in a team. Everyone buys into the school's vision. The trust recognises the need to 'grow our own' staff. They provide opportunities for professional development and place a priority on well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few aspects of curriculum planning, the information about the knowledge and skills to be taught is not as precise as it needs to be. This means that plans do not provide an effective guide for all staff who teach subjects that ensures pupils' knowledge is built step by step. Leaders should continue to make further refinements and strengthen curriculum in order to support pupils to make the strongest progress.
- Some aspects of assessment are not fully embedded into the practices of the school. This means there is not a full and deep understanding of how the planned curriculum is working for all pupils. Leaders should ensure their assessment approaches are well-established and used effectively. This will provide clarity about the strengths and next steps as the school further develops 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	139320
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10295058
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kevin Green
Headteacher	Clare Breare
Website	www.greys.beds.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed to the substantive post in September 2022 following an interim period serving as the acting head of school.
- The school make use of four unregistered alternative providers.

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 into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees, including the chair, members of the local governing board and the chief executive of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and English, science, personal, social, health and economic education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at a range of children's work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through their responses to the online survey, Parent View and parents' free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey and the pupil's survey.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Webb

Ofsted Inspector

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