

Inspection of Goldington Green Academy

Goldington Green, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 0DP

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 January 2025
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 headteacher of this school is Caroline Skingsley. This school is part of the Goldington Green Academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees (referred to by the school as 'the governing body'), chaired by Mark Bridle.

What is it like to attend this school?

Values are at the heart of this large, happy school. Pupils strive to show the current monthly value, such as hope. They enjoy the sense of pride they feel when their efforts are recognised. A system of rewards, including hot chocolate at playtime for 'pupil of the week', motivates them to do their best.

Pupils are friendly and polite. The youngest pupils show remarkable self-control in lessons and when moving around the school. The playground is a harmonious place. There are many activities for pupils to enjoy. These include a reading café and a writing shed for those who are not feeling energetic. Warm relationships and positive attitudes permeate the school.

The school has high expectations. The curriculum is ambitious. Increasing numbers of pupils achieve the expected standard in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities they receive to develop personally as well as academically. Pupil ambassadors from Year 1 to Year 6 have a say in school improvement. Extra-curricular clubs enable pupils to discover new interests, such as crochet and gardening. Residential trips develop pupils' independence and push them outside their comfort zone, such as when climbing or raft-building.

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

The curriculum is well sequenced and coherent, including in the early years. It is carefully planned to prepare pupils for their next steps at each stage. For example, in early years, number songs and counting games help children to learn the foundational knowledge they will need for more complex mathematics in key stage 1.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and disadvantaged pupils. The school adjusts and supplements the curriculum effectively to help pupils in these groups to learn well. For example, a specialist EAL tool is used to support pupils to improve their knowledge of English and to access lessons.

Overall, the curriculum is delivered well. In subjects such as reading, mathematics and geography, and in the early years, staff have strong subject knowledge. They introduce new learning clearly. There is a strong focus on language development and subject-specific vocabulary. Staff check pupils' learning and address any gaps or misconceptions promptly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to adapted resources or additional adult support. This enables most pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers. In the specially resourced provision, pupils learn an adapted curriculum with higher levels of adult support. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well from their various starting points.

In a few areas, the delivery of the curriculum does not always focus on the most important learning for pupils. Checks on pupils' knowledge are not always used to inform future teaching. As a result, in these subjects, some pupils do not learn as well as they should.

The school promotes a love of reading, such as through weekly 'parent reading cafés', reading reward badges and 'secret reader' sessions. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite genres and authors. In Nursery, children learn different letter sounds through songs, stories and rhymes. Phonics lessons in the Reception classes and key stage 1 build on pupils' early reading skills effectively. Staff provide effective, focused support for pupils who need it. This helps them to catch up. In key stage 2, pupils successfully develop higher-level skills, such as inference and prediction.

Strong routines and clear expectations help pupils to behave well. They listen attentively in lessons and focus well on independent tasks. This includes the youngest children, who maintain their attention on independent activities at an age-appropriate level. The school has strengthened the way it tackles pupils' absences. From Nursery onwards, the school encourages children and families to develop good attendance habits. Overall, attendance is in line with national averages and improving because of this work.

The school caters amply for pupils' wider development. It celebrates the diversity of its own community and pupils learn from the religious and cultural differences between them. They are tolerant and inclusive. Pastoral care is a strength, and the school's animals play a part in supporting pupils' well-being. Older pupils learn important age-appropriate messages about consent, peer pressure and stereotypes. Pupils have a strong understanding of right and wrong.

Governors bring a range of expertise to their role. They support and challenge leaders. This helps them to drive further improvements. There are systems in place for checking what is working well and what needs to improve. These are not always as effective as they could be. They do not always focus on the most important areas. However, leaders, staff and governors share an ambitious vision. The whole team is committed to providing the best experiences for pupils.

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 small number of subjects, the implementation of the curriculum is less effective. Assessment is not used consistently well to shape future learning. This means that in these subjects, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff are supported to teach the curriculum effectively across all subjects, so that pupils learn consistently well.

- The school's systems for checking what is working well or where things need to be strengthened are not as effective as they could be. This means that the school does not always identify the most important areas for improvement. The school should ensure that its strategic planning is clearly focused on the right things in the right order, and that the right checks are in place to support improvement.

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	139523
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10345365
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	608
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Bridle
Headteacher	Caroline Skingsley
Website	www.goldingtongreenacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is the only member of the Goldington Green Academy trust.
- The headteacher was not present during the inspection.
- The Nursery offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school runs its own wraparound care for pupils before and after school.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 12 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 a range of senior leaders, including the deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, the inclusion leader and the raising standards leader. The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair. She spoke with the school's local authority improvement partner on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, geography and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, and spoke with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to several pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- An inspector visited the specially resourced provision with the assistant headteacher responsible for inclusion. She spoke with staff and pupils in the provision.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation and policies. These included the school development plan and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys. In addition, inspectors spoke with pupils, parents and staff to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Nathan Lowe	His Majesty's Inspector
Ahson Mohammed	Ofsted Inspector
Lynne Williams	His Majesty's Inspector

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