

Godmanchester Bridge Academy

2 Butcher Drive, Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire PE29 2NL

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' and trustees' work to establish this new school has been effective. They have ensured that pupils benefit from a good quality of education and that the school is in a strong position as it continues to grow each year.
- The head of school, ably supported by her assistant head of school, has high expectations and is committed to the school's continued improvement. Together, they accurately assess the school's successes and are taking appropriate action to ensure its further improvement.
- Governance is strong. Governors have been quick to develop their levels of skill and understanding. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they provide leaders with effective support and challenge.
- Teaching is typically good, and it is improving. Consequently, most pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school.
- Leaders and governors ensure that pupils enjoy a broad and balanced range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They make strong and increasingly better progress.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and are grateful for the many training and development opportunities that are open to them.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well looked after and that they are kept safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- Leadership of the early years is good. This ensures that children get off to a positive start in their education. Children enjoy a rich and interesting curriculum.
- Leaders are afforded an appropriate range of support, challenge and training. The leadership of English and mathematics is well established and has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Leadership of other subjects is less secure in checking the quality of teaching and its effect on learning.
- Learning activities and teachers' questioning do not always provide appropriate challenge to all pupils, including in subjects other than English and mathematics (foundation subjects).
- The outcomes of a small number of pupils are not currently meeting leaders' high expectations.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of the small number of pupils who are currently not meeting leaders' high expectations by further improving their progress.
- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment, including in the foundation subjects, by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan learning activities that consistently challenge pupils
 - question larger groups of pupils more effectively to ascertain, and respond to, what they know and understand.
- Develop and embed more consistent and effective strategies to monitor and enhance the impact of the foundation subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The head of school has established a culture of high expectation for staff and pupils. She has built a team of staff that have a positive outlook and are resilient to the challenges that they have faced during the school's establishment and early growth. Governors, teachers and other adults share the head of school's vision, and they are fully committed to implementing it in a consistent manner. As a result, pupils receive a good quality of education.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are supportive of the school. One parent, reflecting the views of others, wrote, 'It has been a joy to see my son develop his academic aspirations and his interpersonal skills.' Another parent stated, 'The school has very friendly and welcoming staff, who make time for any questions or concerns.' The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View, and all those who spoke to the inspector, would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide staff with appropriate professional development which staff value highly. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Equality and diversity are promoted well in lessons, in assemblies and through the behaviour of adults around the school. Pupils also gain a strong understanding of the importance of fundamental British values, such as democracy, respect and tolerance. This is evident in displays around the school and through the positions of responsibility that they hold. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that the study of English and mathematics is supplemented by a wide range of subjects, such as geography, history and art. Pupils enjoy new, interesting topics such as traders and raiders, predators and tremors.
- Pupils' experience at school is enhanced by the range of extra-curricular activities that leaders provide. Activities such as dance club, choir and multi-skills are popular with pupils.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning that are faced by disadvantaged pupils, and those with SEND. They understand their needs, check their progress closely and provide them with additional support when needed. The head of school holds teachers and teaching assistants robustly to account for the progress of both groups of pupils. Consequently, these pupils make good overall progress from their starting points.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is spent effectively. Pupils can access a wide range of sporting clubs and new equipment, while staff have benefited from effective training that has improved their teaching. Participation in clubs and competitions is high and increasing.
- English and mathematics are well led. Subject leaders are knowledgeable, they monitor their areas closely and their plans for improvement are having a positive impact on

pupils' progress. Leaders' approaches to the teaching of phonics have led to greater consistency in the teaching of early reading and writing.

- Leaders of the foundation subjects are relatively new to their roles, and their monitoring and assessment practices are not as well established. Consequently, expectations of pupils are not as consistently high in these subjects as they are in English and mathematics. Senior leaders are providing foundation subject leaders with appropriate support, training and challenge. However, it is too early to see the impact of these actions.
- Leaders check pupils' work routinely. Together with teachers, they support most current pupils to make good progress across the school from their different starting points. However, there are a minority of pupils whose outcomes are less favourable. These pupils have typically moved to Godmanchester Bridge from other schools midway through their education. Although they have made good progress since joining the school, they have not reached their age-related attainment targets.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school very well. They have a clear and accurate understanding of its strengths, its priorities and the plans for its continued growth. Governors are effective at holding leaders to account. They do this at governing body meetings, when undertaking routine visits to the school and in meetings with school leaders.
- Governors ensure that their legal duties, especially in safeguarding pupils' welfare, are fully met. The link safeguarding governor checks safeguarding arrangements, including the record of pre-employment checks, routinely. She also undertakes routine safeguarding audits. Governors receive valuable training that helps them to understand their responsibilities regarding keeping pupils safe.
- Governors and trustees have been effective in supporting the head of school to support another school in the trust. Rather than this reducing leadership capacity, they have ensured that leadership has been strengthened within the school, and that good practice is shared across the trust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff at all levels receive routine safeguarding training and they know how to identify pupils who are potentially at risk. Staff understand, and follow, leaders' clear procedures for the reporting of any safeguarding concerns.
- School leaders ensure that safeguarding concerns are logged appropriately and that child protection referrals are dealt with effectively. The maintenance of child protection files is effective, and leaders work well with representatives from other agencies to ensure that pupils quickly get the support they need.
- All required checks are carried out when recruiting new staff to work with pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- As a result of leaders' actions, the overall quality of teaching across early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 is good, and continuously improving. Parents who met with the inspector, and the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View, agreed that pupils are taught well and make good progress. Pupils who met with the inspector agreed.
- Teachers plan interesting and engaging learning activities that capture pupils' imagination. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed a practical mathematics activity where they used miniature clocks to develop their understanding of time. In Year 2, pupils all participated in a well-thought-out session where they learned about rotation through their own physical movements. In upper key stage 2, pupils were intently focused as they progressed through a range of mathematical investigations of increasing difficulty.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Teachers establish clear routines and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respect their teachers and have positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils are keen to get involved in activities and they are not afraid to take risks and make mistakes.
- The teaching of phonics is consistently effective. Sessions include a variety of different activities that encourage pupils to recall what they already know, practise new sounds and apply their learning to reading and writing activities. Staff are adept at routinely assessing what pupils know and understand. This enables them to focus their teaching on the right things at the right time.
- Teachers provide pupils with effective opportunities to undertake individual, paired and group tasks. Pupils are confident to share and discuss ideas with their classmates. They use this opportunity well to debate issues and think of questions that they would like to ask.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils. They have strong subject knowledge and develop positive relationships with pupils. Their explanations of tasks and their probing questioning support pupils with SEND to make good overall progress.
- Teachers' questioning of larger groups of pupils is less effective than when they work with pupils individually. Teachers do not always use questioning rigorously enough to check the extent of pupils' knowledge and understanding before moving on to new tasks. When this happens, pupils either struggle to complete tasks because they do not fully understand them, or they are not moved on to more challenging tasks quickly enough.
- Teaching in the foundation subjects allows pupils to study a wide range of new topics that they enjoy. However, learning activities in these subjects do not always provide an appropriate level of challenge to sufficiently develop pupils' subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills. Consequently, pupils' progress is less consistent in these subjects than in English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils say that they are safe at school. They say that bullying is very rare and that they know who to talk to if they have any worries. Pupils say that staff deal with any concerns quickly.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe, for example through lessons and visiting speakers. Topics covered include bullying, internet safety and conflict resolution.
- Pupils' personal development is enhanced by leaders' commitment to promoting positive mental health. For example, pupils are able to access the support of the school's own counsellor. They also participate in other types of support, for example small group sessions focused on improving their confidence and social skills.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They get on well with their teachers, collaborate effectively when working in groups, and take pride in their work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is positive. They are friendly, polite and well-mannered. Teachers are consistent in applying the school's behaviour policy and pupils respond positively to their teachers' requests. Consequently, low-level disruption is infrequent. When it happens, teachers respond promptly and effectively.
- Pupils behave well at lunch and breaktimes, where they are well supervised. Pupils enjoy socialising or playing sensibly in the very well-resourced outside areas.
- Leaders and staff have mutually high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, good behaviour is the norm. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare, and there have been few fixed-period exclusions in recent years. When fixed-period exclusions are issued, their use is appropriate.
- Pupils enjoy school and very few are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils typically enter Year 1 having reached a good level of development at the end of Reception.
- Current pupils' overall progress is in line with (and sometimes above) leaders' expectations. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are making particularly strong progress in reading, while they make good overall progress in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in Year 1 acquire phonics knowledge well and make good progress in the development of their reading skills.

- Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged currently make good progress from their starting points. Their different needs are quickly identified by staff and they are supported effectively in their learning.
- Although current pupils' overall progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good, there are a minority of pupils whose attainment is lower than it should be. Often, these pupils joined the school midway through their education. They are making good progress towards reaching the attainment targets for their ages, but they still have a considerable amount of ground to cover in order to catch up.
- The strong overall progress that current pupils make across reading, writing and mathematics is not always replicated in the foundation subjects. This is because pupils are not consistently challenged to develop subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding to the same extent as they are in English and mathematics.
- In 2018, pupils' progress at key stage 2 was in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, although published data needs to be treated with caution in schools with such small cohorts of pupils.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment at the expected standard and at greater depth was also broadly in line with national averages.
- Leaders organise a variety of transition activities so that pupils are well prepared, both academically and personally, for their transition to secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the early years with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of effective early assessment, leaders ensure that children's individual needs are identified quickly and that learning activities support their progress.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was above the national average in 2018. Leaders' assessments, evidence in children's workbooks, and observations of teaching all demonstrate that children this year are currently making good overall progress.
- The early years team's work to support children as they join the class is effective. The team works closely with families and pre-school providers to ensure that children make a smooth start at Godmanchester Bridge. These partnerships develop well as children move through Reception.
- Teaching in early years is effective. Children benefit from a range of well-planned activities that interest them and allow them to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. Adults question children effectively. They observe them closely and ensure that learning activities are sufficiently challenging.
- The curriculum provides children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their academic, social and emotional skills. Adults are effective in linking interesting topics through the curriculum. For example, children enjoyed selecting high-quality tasks, inspired by a discussion about 'what animals produce', that ranged from painting to writing, and guided play. These tasks linked to children's prior learning and allowed them to develop their skills well across the different areas of learning.

- Children's learning opportunities are enhanced by a very attractive learning environment that stimulates their curiosity, encourages collaboration and supports their early reading and writing. Children benefit from effective individual, small-group and whole-class support.
- Adults ensure that children behave well and that they are safe. Children collaborate well, and they support each other effectively. They are confident, friendly and resilient. The environment is safe, and adults are well trained to care for and protect the children. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.

School details

Unique reference number	141690
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10087462

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	109
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ariel Tang
Head of School	Claire Wood
Telephone number	01480 276 599
Website	www.godmanchesterbridge.co.uk
Email address	office@godmanchesterbridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened to pupils in all year groups in 2016. It is a part of the Orchard Learning Trust.
- Responsibility for the school's performance lies with the Orchard Learning Trust's board of directors. There is representation from the trust board on the school's local governing body. There are currently three schools within the trust.
- The school is currently a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. However, its roll is increasing rapidly each year. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language, pupils with SEND and those who have an education, health and care plan are below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the head of school, leaders, teachers and governors. The inspector also met with the interim chief executive officer.
- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes, jointly with the head of school.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life.
- The inspector heard pupils read and discuss their reading habits.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including assessment information and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The inspector also scrutinised leaders' improvement plans and their behaviour, safeguarding and attendance records.
- The inspector spoke to parents before school and also considered the 16 responses, and the 10 free-text comments, made by parents to the Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

Daniel Gee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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