

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Godmanchester Bridge Academy

2 Butcher Drive, Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire PE29 2NL

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

Godmanchester Bridge Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Claire Pirrie. This school is part of ACES 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 (CEO), Andrew Goulding, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Brian Message. There is also a director of primary education, Simon Eardley, who oversees this school and the other primary schools in the trust.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn all about the school's '5 Rs', which are: ready, respectful, responsible, resilient and reflective. They show these throughout the school day and enjoy many interesting and engaging play activities at lunchtime. Pupils come back into lessons eager and ready to learn.

Staff check in on how pupils are feeling. When any pupil is feeling sad or upset, staff listen and help. Pupils feel happy and safe because they know the school cares for them. This also helps ensure they behave well. Where any pupil does need any extra support to deal with their emotions, they receive it. For example, staff support pupils with movement breaks where they need them. This creates classrooms that are settled and calm.

There are high expectations for pupils' achievement, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils typically realise these expectations. They learn to be confident and fluent readers and build a wide range of knowledge across the curriculum. However, on occasion, pupils do not deepen their knowledge as well as they might.

Pupils enjoy a range of trips and wider experiences that aid their personal growth. Every pupil has a chance to learn a musical instrument and there is a wealth of clubs, including cooking, football and gymnastics.

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

The school has worked with the trust to develop an interesting and ambitious curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils learn this intended curriculum securely. This is particularly the case for mathematics and reading. Pupils achieve well in these areas. This is because the school's approach has been very well established. The school is developing the wider curriculum to better consider the local context and provide a richer range of experiences to deepen pupils' knowledge. For example, pupils visit the local supermarket to learn all about fair trade. This deepens their geographical understanding. However, this work is still in the early stages and is not consistently established.

The school enables pupils to learn to read fluently and build their reading comprehension well. Pupils get very well targeted support with learning to read. Staff accurately model sounds and provide precise additional support for pupils, including those with special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND). Pupils with more complex needs are expertly supported to build the foundations in speech and language they need for reading.

The foundations for all of this are built in early years. Here, children's learning is often based on a carefully chosen class reading book. This connects and further develops children's reading with other areas of early learning. Children in the early years also get lots of opportunities to practise accurately writing the sounds they are learning to read. This is through the range of stimulating and engaging activities that are set up indoors and outside. However, as pupils get older, they do not consistently develop the depth of their writing well enough. Consequently, some pupils' writing is not consistently of the high quality they are capable of.

The school has worked with the trust to carefully identify and cater for pupils with more complex needs. The school has diligently developed a therapeutic behaviour policy. This is based around relationships and dealing with emotions. This benefits everyone, but particularly those pupils with SEND who have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils learn in a more bespoke and nurturing environment, with additional support to help them access the school's curriculum. This has had great success in supporting these pupils to engage with learning and develop positive habits of behaviour. As a result, the school's use of suspensions has reduced and pupils' behaviour is typically focused and engaged.

Pupils now attend well. This is because the school now carefully tracks each pupil's attendance. Leaders put in place appropriate support or challenge where there are any patterns of absence.

Pupils are increasingly well prepared for life beyond school. They learn about social responsibility through raising money for the local food bank and democracy through a visit from a local magistrate. They take on leadership responsibilities, such as house captains and playground buddies. Everyone gets a voice in the school council. All of this helps pupils to feel a real sense of cohesion, community and friendship.

The school is building strong links with the community. Local governors play a very active role in this. The trust works proactively with the school to support areas of need. For example, trustees approved funding to cater for the changing school context. The trust supported the school with expertise in special education to ensure this funding translated into meeting needs well. Leaders are mindful of staff well-being and workload. They build in additional time for staff to adapt learning to meet needs. Consequently, staff feel valued and well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, teachers do not support pupils to develop the depth of their writing as well as they might. This means that some pupils do not consistently produce writing in the depth that they are capable of. The school should ensure that teachers support pupils to develop the depth of their writing well across the full range of different styles and types of writing.
- Sometimes, what pupils learn is not clearly linked to local context or grounded in real experiences. As a result, pupils do not consistently deepen their knowledge as well as they might, as what they learn can be too generic. The school should ensure that it further develops the wider curriculum, so that it is better tailored to the school's local context and provides a greater range of experiences for pupils to connect and deepen their knowledge.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding,

behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

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	141690
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10345403
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Brian Message
CEO of the trust	Andrew Goulding
Headteacher	Claire Pirrie
Website	godmanchesterbridge.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a nursery on site, but this is run by a separate organisation.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with representatives from the local governing body and trust board. This included the chair of local governors.
- The inspector met with the CEO, the trust director of primary education, the trust director of SEND and inclusion, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.

- The inspector conducted further meetings with staff regarding safeguarding, special educational needs provision, behaviour, attendance, pupils' personal development and any pupils on a part-time timetable.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. He considered responses to the confidential online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024