

Inspection of a good school: Great Horwood Church of England School

School End, Great Horwood, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK17 0RG

Inspection date: 26 January 2022

Outcome

Great Horwood Church of England School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and nurturing school where pupils feel safe. Leaders have created a school where all communities are welcome. Pupils do not recall any incidents of bullying. Pupils trust that staff will help them deal with any worries and concerns they may have. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful.

Pupils play and work well together. They describe their school as 'one big happy family'. Pupils enjoy positions of responsibility, such as junior governors, eco-monitors and house captains. They are particularly proud of their work to raise funds to develop the 'Seeds of Hope, Garden of Tranquillity' on the school site. Pupils say that this is a place for everyone to 'relax, appreciate nature and be grateful for our blessings'.

Pupils actively play a role in the local community. They write letters and poems which they share with the elderly residents, sing at the village church and perform with the local brass band. One pupil said: 'Our school values of love, perseverance and respect guide us. They always help us think about what we can do to help ourselves and others.'

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious, interesting and well-organised curriculum. It is broad and balanced. For example, it develops pupils' appreciation of the arts and gives them an understanding of fundamental British values. The curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils' learning builds on what they have learned previously as they move through the school. This starts as soon as children enter Reception Class.

In English and mathematics, teachers carefully check and help pupils, including children in early years, make links in their learning. They quickly identify and address any gaps in pupils' understanding of the concepts being taught. Pupils achieve well in these subjects. However, in some of the other subjects, this is not as consistent overall. As a result, pupils

do not learn as well as they could. Leaders are providing further training for staff, to address this.

Reading is a top priority. Pupils look forward to visiting the well-stocked library. They enjoy choosing interesting books to read, from a diverse range of topics and themes. Children learn to read as soon as they join Reception Class. Leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. They have provided staff with essential training, which means that teachers deliver the school's chosen programme effectively. The books that pupils read help them to practise the sounds they learn. Adults provide useful support for pupils who need to catch up. Consequently, pupils learn to read quickly and fluently.

Classrooms are hubs of lively discussions. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their very best. They do not distract each other. Teachers accurately identify the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers' support for these pupils enables them to access the curriculum confidently and with increasing independence.

Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships. Older pupils speak maturely and knowledgeably about consent and how to look after their mental health. One pupil said: 'No one should force us to do anything we are not comfortable about. We should never be pushed by peer pressure.'

Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities available to them. These include swimming, learning to play musical instruments and a variety of after-school clubs. They are particularly fond of the sports, dancing and computing clubs. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the wider world, including different cultures and religions. Pupils understand fairness, and they know that everyone is equal regardless of any differences. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, including the local governing board and trustees, know the school very well. Governors hold leaders to account effectively, for instance in probing their actions to ensure that pupils learn and achieve well in all subjects. Teachers and leaders value the specialist training and support provided by the trust. Staff feel appreciated and motivated by the talented headteacher. They are rightly proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' systems for ensuring that they keep pupils safe are robust. Their response to concerns is prompt. This ensures that pupils get the help they need. There is a well-planned and extensive programme of training for staff. They are vigilant and quickly pass on any concerns they have. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in school. They receive helpful information about how to stay safe in different situations, such as on the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, teachers move learning on too quickly. They do not carefully check and address pupils' misconceptions. This means, at times, pupils do not always make links with prior learning. Leaders should continue to provide training to develop teachers' expertise to deliver the foundation curriculum effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Great Horwood Church of England Primary School, to be good in May 2017.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145032
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10203166
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Peckham
Headteacher	Paula Shaw
Website	www.greathorwood.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) in November 2017.
- This is a Church of England voluntary-controlled primary school. The last section 48 statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in May 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also met with the trust's chief executive officer and the director of education.
- The lead inspector had a telephone discussion with a representative from the Diocese of Oxford.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including additional free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, pupil premium and catch-up funding plans.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. Inspectors also heard a selection of pupils read.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Ellison

Her Majesty's Inspector

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