

Inspection of Great Finborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Road, Great Finborough, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 3AQ

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a positive, family feel at this small, rural primary school. Pupils attend school regularly and are well looked after. They get on well with each other and with staff. Pupils are polite and considerate and enjoy their schoolwork. They relish the challenge of learning more. Staff support children in the early years to settle into school routines. Children are taught to be kind and to share.

Pupils behave well. They know and embrace the school's values, showing kindness, patience and self-control. On the playground, they play nicely with their friends or read books from the outside library. In class, they listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. If it is, pupils know staff will deal with the issue so everyone remains focused on their work. Bullying is dealt with robustly on the rare occasions it occurs. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for.

A well-considered selection of trips and visits enriches the curriculum for pupils. Visits to places such as the beach, churches, mills and castles bring lessons to life and help pupils to remember what they have learned.

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

Leaders took swift action to address the concerns outlined in the previous inspection report. Working closely with governors, the local authority and the diocese, leaders reviewed and improved the school's curriculum.

Curriculum planning is now finished. Leaders have set out the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. Key 'milestones' show teachers what pupils should know and when. This builds carefully from Reception year all the way to Year 6. In art, for example, younger pupils learn about drawing, tone and texture so that by the time they are in older year groups they can draw more sophisticated pieces of artwork.

Leaders' assessment systems are designed to check on, and encourage pupils to remember, what they have been taught. Visits and experiences are used to support pupils' education in nearly all subjects. Pupils visited a watermill in design technology, for example, when learning about gears and levers. As a result, pupils remember a lot of what they learn and increasingly understand how different aspects of what they have been taught are interconnected.

In most lessons, teachers support pupils to learn through well-chosen activities that build on what pupils already know. Teachers use the 'milestones' and their own checks in class to identify gaps in pupils' understanding. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and have quickly gotten to grips with the new curriculum plans. As a result, most pupils make good progress. In a small number of cases, teachers do not choose the best techniques to support learning. When this happens, pupils find learning trickier than usual.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well looked after. Staff identify the needs of pupils accurately. For example, some children in early years get additional speech and language support and help with reading. Most pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. There are helpful adjustments to the curriculum, matched closely to pupils' needs, for those who need them. Overall, pupils with SEND make good progress as a result.

Pupils enjoy reading. They read a range of books from different authors and genres. Books in the 'lending library' are carefully tracked to ensure pupils read widely and often. The youngest children hear, and take part in reciting, exciting songs and stories. Staff ensure children learn their letters and sounds so they are ready to learn to read. If a pupil finds reading tricky, they are supported to catch up and read with increasing accuracy and fluency.

Leaders' high expectations of behaviour are echoed across the school. Teachers are consistent with how they apply the school's behaviour system. Consequently, pupils behave well. They are taught about the importance of good behaviour, resilience and being good citizens through the schools' effective personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. The PSHE programme is linked to the school's values and aligns closely with the school's work with the youngest children to ready them for Year 1.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and governors. Governors, through their updated curriculum training, hold leaders to account. Governors, with the support of the local authority and diocese, have overseen a period of rapid, positive change and ensured it was managed effectively. Leaders have ensured staff have been trained to take on subject leadership responsibilities. In some cases, this training is not complete. Consequently, some staff have not evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum areas they are responsible for.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Effective safeguarding training supports staff to identify if a pupil is at risk of harm. Safeguarding concerns are reported promptly to designated leaders. Safeguarding records include clear timelines and detail leaders' appropriate actions and follow up to any reported worry about a child. Leaders use different external agencies to support vulnerable pupils to get the help they need.

Clear systems support leaders to manage any allegations against adults.

Staff teach pupils about different risks to themselves, including risks of being online. Pupils have a good understanding of these risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some instances, teachers do not use the most appropriate teaching approach to help pupils learn. As a result, pupils find learning more challenging and do not make as much progress as they could. Leaders should ensure all teachers teach the curriculum consistently well.
- Some new curriculum leaders have not evaluated the effectiveness of their curriculum area. They do not have a clear understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. Leaders should ensure all curriculum leaders know how to, and do, successfully evaluate and improve their curriculum areas.

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](#)' 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	124732
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10240715
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Liam Page
Headteacher	Stephen Dodd
Website	www.greatfinborough.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The chair of governors has been in place since June 2022.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in January 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, design technology, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors met with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- In addition to the deep dives, the lead inspector spoke with curriculum leaders of science and art. He looked closely at curriculum plans and a wide range of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector held meetings with representatives from the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders, including the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and the business manager.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 20 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 19 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire
- There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire. Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils across both days of inspection.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Nutbeam

Ofsted Inspector

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