

Inspection of a good school: Gamlingay Village Primary

Station Road, Sandy SG19 3HD

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Outcome

Gamlingay Village Primary continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Dawn Henry. This school is part of The Cam 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, Claire Heald, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sue Williamson. There is also an executive headteacher, Shelley Desborough, who is responsible for this school and two others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from trusted adults who listen and look out for them. The adults keep the pupils happy and safe. They also support them to resolve any friendship issues or wider worries. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who struggle with verbal communication, are supported to express their feelings well.

Everyone is expected to participate fully in lessons and take pride in their work across all subjects. Those who need it get lots of extra support to close gaps in their knowledge. Due to recent improvements, pupils now learn to read confidently and are achieving increasingly well across the curriculum. However, some pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. This limits how well some pupils achieve in mathematics.

Pupils value that staff have thought carefully about how best to cater for their needs. Where pupils struggle with their own behaviour, staff support them to cope well. This means that lessons are calm and focused and interactions around the school are positive and kind.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to follow their interests and develop culturally and socially. These include the choir performing in London and various residential trips.

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

The school has worked to develop the curriculum so that it is of high quality. Pupils study the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. In each of these subjects, the

knowledge pupils learn prepares them well for secondary education. For example, in computing pupils develop confidence in using portable devices, to enhance their learning. They also confidently understand the meaning of important subject-specific vocabulary, such as 'cropping' and 'algorithms'.

The school has introduced and trained staff in new approaches to teaching reading and mathematics. This has raised pupils' achievement and has ensured pupils typically retain and recall important knowledge well. However, reading is further forward than mathematics. In mathematics, staff do not always use assessment precisely enough to identify and address gaps in some pupils' knowledge.

Most pupils read with age-appropriate fluency. They develop effective comprehension skills and a love of reading across the school. This is because the school has worked with the local 'English hub' to provide lots of training and coaching for staff. This has ensured staff deliver the new approach to teaching early reading consistently well. Leaders have also introduced 'reading champions', who provide precise support to enable pupils who find reading tricky, to quickly catch up.

The school accurately identifies the specific needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use this information well to enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. The school has put in place suitable interventions, such as social development therapy and speech and language therapy, to further support those who need it. Pupils from 'The Cabin' are included and spend the majority of their time learning in lessons with other pupils. This is because support staff are skilled at supporting their needs.

In early years, the school has set up a suitable environment to interest and engage children. Staff have the necessary expertise to plan and adapt activities that support children's learning well. They take opportunities to develop mathematical understanding by supporting children to count and keep score. However, some support staff do not take enough time to engage in conversation with pupils and really draw out and develop the key learning from activities. This is because they have not had enough training in how to do this.

The school has ensured that pupils understand and follow agreed behaviour expectations. Older pupils support younger pupils in the playground by putting a friendly arm around them. In early years, adults help children to learn to maintain their focus. As a result, children concentrate on activities. This supports the quality of their learning and sets expectations for behaviour and attitudes in Year 1.

Personal development is richly promoted. Pupil leadership plays a key part in school life. Play leaders run activities on the playground and older pupils all have responsibilities. These include 'office angels' who do jobs around school. This helps them learn all about collective responsibility. There are regular opportunities for pupils to develop a strong sense of community, such as the recent Year 6 'all about me' exhibit.

The trust has ensured that it knows the school well and provides the support to address areas that need it. The school manages the workload and well-being of staff well. Staff

value how leaders and trustees take account of their views when considering how to continue to improve these issues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that all teachers use assessment precisely enough to identify where pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. Therefore, some pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge that are not fully addressed. The school needs to ensure that teachers carefully identify where pupils have any gaps in their mathematical knowledge and put in place precise support to ensure they close these.
- On occasion, support staff do not use communication and language opportunities well enough to draw out high-quality learning from planned activities. This means that some children miss out on opportunities to acquire important knowledge and further develop their speech and language skills. The school needs to ensure that they provide further development for support staff on how to use high-quality speech and language opportunities, to draw out learning as effectively as possible, from planned activities.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Gamlingay First School, to be good in October 2013.

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 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	142638
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10345423
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	402
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sue Williamson
CEO of trust	Claire Heald
Headteacher	Dawn Henry
Website	www.gamlingayvp.org
Date of previous inspection	25 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school has a Nursery provision catering for children from three years old.
- The school has a specialist resource base 'The Cabin' that caters for pupils with an education, health and care plan, whose primary special educational need is autism. Places are requested by the local authority and approved by the trust.
- Within Cam Academy Trust the school is part of the West Village Partnership, where three schools share a single local governing body. This local governing body is chaired by Elizabeth Simpkin.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- To discuss governance, an inspector met with the chief executive officer, primary executive leader and a representative sample of trustees and local governors.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school and other senior leaders, special educational needs coordinator, designated safeguarding leads and behaviour and personal development leads.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector spent time in early years and spoke with children and staff there. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects, including personal, social, health and economic education and relationships and sex education.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 looked after children, 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