

Inspection of Greyfriars Academy

London Road, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE30 5PY

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

The headteacher of this school is Aidan McGovern. This school is part of Unity Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Glyn Hambling, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Jones.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They can see how the school culture has changed for the better. Pupils feel part of a team. They enjoy their lessons. Pupils know that when they listen and work hard, success follows. However, pupils' progress is sometimes affected by the fact that staff are still getting to grips with the new curriculum and teaching approaches.

Pupils feel and are safe. If pupils have a worry, there is always an adult available to listen. Classrooms and corridors are calm. Pupils are polite and respectful. Staff regularly teach and remind pupils how to be good friends. Pupils follow important routines, such as 'fantastic walking'. The school's rules and expectations give everyone the chance to focus, learn and feel safe.

There is a range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life, such as, becoming a sports leader, library monitor or taking care of school pets. Pupils enjoy suggesting new ideas to the school council to make the school even better. The school organises a variety of memorable trips and visits that enhance pupils' learning. These provide additional support so that all pupils can take part.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has steadily improved the curriculum. In all subjects, the curriculum now sets out important knowledge and skills in a logical order. There is a strong focus on language development. In some subjects and lessons, pupils do not learn as much as they could. This is because staff are still getting to grips with how to teach the curriculum and how to check what pupils have learned. Leaders have plans to strengthen teaching approaches. Over time, this should reduce the need for pupils to require extra help.

The school has prioritised early reading. All the adults involved have had ample training to teach reading well. Reading lessons start as soon as children join the school. Leaders regularly visit lessons to provide additional coaching for staff. Teachers check pupils' phonics knowledge often. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to catch up if they need to. Reading lessons for older pupils introduce them to different kinds of literature. Consequently, many pupils are becoming confident and fluent readers.

The school identifies pupils who need additional support quickly, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' targets match their individual needs. The school works closely with teachers, parents and external professionals to support pupils with SEND effectively. This includes checking accessibility arrangements so that pupils with SEND can attend clubs.

Every day, children in the early years sing songs, listen to stories, and learn new vocabulary and knowledge. Children learn new routines and how to be polite.

Carefully designed activities give children opportunities to show the adults how much they know. Children develop an enthusiasm for new learning, especially if there are books involved.

Behaviour was and is a priority for the school. Rules and routines make it easy for pupils to know what to do and how to behave. All staff use the same language when communicating their expectations to pupils. The school's consistent focus on behaviour has improved pupils' attitudes towards education. Pupils want to come to school and learn. Pupils' attendance is also a high priority. The school works effectively with parents to identify and overcome pupils' barriers to attending more regularly.

Personal, social, health and economic education is a strength. It gives pupils the tools to talk confidently about relationships, tolerance and mental health. The school provides unique opportunities for pupils to be heard. For example, the school's crafting club provides a safe and calm space for pupils to talk about what is worrying them. The 'Greyfriars Academy Pledges' outline opportunities for pupils to succeed and take part in a wider cultural offer, such as learning Latin and a musical instrument.

School leaders bring energy, clarity and expertise to the school improvement journey. They have the time and resources to do their jobs well. Parents appreciate leaders' approachability and regular communication. Staff feel supported. Trust leaders provide additional guidance and appropriate challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are still getting to grips with the new curriculum, teaching and assessment approaches. This means that, in some subjects and lessons, pupils do not always build enough knowledge and understanding. The school should continue to provide guidance, training and support so that staff can continue to improve lesson rigour and ensure the curriculum is implemented as leaders intend.

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	145535
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10285079
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	229
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Jones
Headteacher	Aidan McGovern
Website	www.greyfriarsacademy.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Greyfriars Academy is part of Unity Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- This inspection began on 31 January 2024 as a monitoring inspection. Having found that the school performance appeared to be improving, we deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection. As a graded inspection requires more inspector time to complete than a monitoring inspection, we returned on 1 February 2024 to complete the graded inspection.
- Inspectors met with trust leaders, the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the pastoral support assistant, subject leaders, staff, and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 lead inspector considered three responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, including three free-text responses. There were no responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils or staff. Inspectors gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

Hannah Stoten, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kelly Stokes

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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