

Inspection of Great Bookham School

Griffin Way, Great Bookham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT23 4JJ

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jenna Allen. This school is part of the South Farnham Educational 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), Sir Andrew Carter, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Linda Ross.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to attend this exceptionally friendly, welcoming and happy school. The 'CLUB' values of curiosity, love, unity and belief are very clearly demonstrated throughout the school. Many pupils talked about how the school is like a family. Relationships between adults and children are incredibly warm and caring. Older pupils take on the role of 'special friend buddies' for the children who join in Reception.

The school has high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND). From the early years, children develop strong learning behaviours, such as listening attentively and working collaboratively. Pupils achieve extremely well in national assessments in English and mathematics.

Pupils feel that their voice is heard in school and that they can make a genuine and positive difference to their community. The school council recently purchased new playground equipment. Pupils also become sports crew members, well-being ambassadors, prefects or house captains. They appreciate these roles, which encourage them to become engaged and active citizens in their school.

Many staff and pupils commented on the significant improvements in the school in recent years. Parents were glowing in their praise of the school. All stakeholders are rightly proud to be part of this wonderful school community.

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

Supported by the trust, the school has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It has clearly defined and sequenced the knowledge that pupils need to learn from early years to Year 6. For example, in science pupils gradually deepen their understanding of the human body. First, they learn the names of body parts. They then learn about the digestive system and puberty. Pupils in Year 6 are able to explain in detail the human circulatory system.

Reading is a high priority throughout the school. Pupils learn phonics from the start of Reception through a well-structured phonics programme. For example, all pupils read in a group every day and one-to-one with an adult regularly. Those who find learning phonics difficult receive additional support from highly skilled staff. This gives these pupils, who may be at risk of falling behind, every chance of keeping up with their peers. As a result, most pupils become fluent readers and develop a genuine love for reading.

Typically, the curriculum is taught effectively, and pupils learn well. For example, in art, pupils could talk about the techniques used by artists such as William Morris and Claude Monet. In geography, pupils are able to connect their learning about continents, tectonic plates and volcanoes. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and check pupils' understanding carefully. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils did not always have enough opportunities to recall and apply new knowledge. As a result, they were not able to articulate their learning so clearly.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs swiftly and ensures that effective adaptations are put in place to support their learning. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve as well as their peers. Children in the early years develop exceptionally strong foundations for learning in a highly nurturing, language- and number-rich environment. The children quickly become deeply engaged in whatever they are learning. The overall quality of care and support in the early years is excellent.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Children in the early years cooperate with each other and focus well on what they are doing. Older pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm for their learning. Lessons proceed without disruption. Pupils know who to talk to if they are worried about anything. They feel very happy and safe in school. The school has high expectations of pupils' attendance at school. It works tirelessly with children and families to remove any barriers to attending school.

The school provides exceptionally well for pupils' wider development. All pupils attend a pantomime, and older pupils perform their school play at the local theatre. Pupils visit places of worship, local museums and London landmarks. They attend residential trips in Years 4, 5 and 6. Almost all pupils participate in school clubs, for example on gardening, chess or Mandarin. Pupils love the annual snail racing event. They represent the school in sport, music and maths competitions. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils are well represented in these activities. The school prepares pupils very well for life in modern Britain. Parents describe the school as "a window to the world", reflecting the school's commitment to broadening pupils' cultural understanding.

Trust and school leaders collaborate very effectively. Governors and trustees know the school very well. Staff greatly appreciate the genuine care for their workload and well-being shown by leaders. They benefit from the excellent development opportunities provided by the trust. Everyone is deeply committed to the trust's vision of the 'continual pursuit of excellence'.

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 does not always ensure that pupils are provided with opportunities to recall and apply key knowledge. As a result, pupils are sometimes unable to retain this as well as they should and apply it to future learning. The school should ensure that there is sufficient focus on the things that pupils need to remember and recall so that pupils can build their knowledge more effectively over time.

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	149115
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341923
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	259
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Linda Ross
CEO of the trust	Sir Andrew Carter
Headteacher	Jenna Allen
Website	www.greatbookhamschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of South Farnham Educational Trust.
- The school currently uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- The school operates breakfast and after-school clubs on site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the school senior leadership team, a selection of subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also met with the chair of trustees and the deputy CEO, as well members of the trust board and governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, geography, early reading and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' wider development, behaviour and attendance. They also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and during breaktime.
- 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 inspectors considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for school staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Christian Hicks, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Priya Bhagrath

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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