

Inspection of a good school: Hadrian Academy

Hadrian Avenue, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 4SR

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 September 2023

Outcome

Hadrian Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Ross Griffin. This school is part of Hadrian 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, Ross Griffin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Angela Leishman.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love learning at this school. They thrive in the school's team ethos. Pupils work well together in lessons and bring the best out of each other. They also enjoy playing together and show kindness on the playground. Pupils readily take responsibility for themselves and others, whether serving in one of the many leadership roles in the school or simply by being helpful around and about school. Every parent that responded to Ofsted's online survey recorded that their children are happy at school.

Pupils have high ambitions for themselves and their peers at school. Pupils speak articulately and with enthusiasm about their learning goals and their aims for the future. They work hard to achieve leaders' high expectations. Pupils know that learning is important and fun. They embrace the school's many opportunities for them to learn. For example, the library is regularly full of pupils eager to check out new books.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They know what bullying is and what to do if they have concerns. Bullying is rare. Pupils feel confident that staff deal with it effectively so that it stops and does not continue.

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

The school's curriculum has undergone positive developments over recent years. Leaders' curriculum plans and guidance support staff to deliver the curriculum effectively. In a few subjects, leaders have not clarified exactly what pupils must know by the end of primary school. This means that teachers are unsure which content to emphasise or check that

pupils have learned. As a result, pupils forget some of what has been taught. In early years, leaders' inexact plans lead to staff not routinely providing activities linked to the school's curriculum.

The school's processes ensure the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly and accurately identified. Leaders provide staff with the guidance and training they need to provide effective support for these pupils. Pupils with SEND overcome the challenges they face to learn the curriculum as well as possible. This ensures pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers.

From the start of Reception class, staff deliver the reading curriculum with impressive attention to detail so that pupils learn what they need to read fluently. When pupils do not understand something, staff quickly provide them support. Staff also have an effective catch-up programme for pupils who need more time and support to learn the basics of reading. Pupils love reading and enjoy the different reading activities, such as 'Read-opoly', at the school.

Pupils focus on learning in lessons. They know and live up to the school's expectations for behaviour. On the rare occasions of unacceptable behaviour, staff follow the school's policy and behaviour improves. Staff provide well-judged support for pupils who find managing their emotions difficult. This helps pupils to return to their learning swiftly.

The school provides many enriching opportunities for pupils to learn about themselves, others and the wider world. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the diverse beliefs and lifestyles found in contemporary Britain. Pupils talk proudly about their experiences in the performing arts, such as singing in national choral events and working towards a London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art award. Pupils willingly take up opportunities to contribute towards the school community, such as by serving on the many pupil-led councils in place to improve aspects of the school.

Staff are proud of and enjoy working at the school. Leaders support staff to do their jobs well, and they ensure that the well-being and workload of staff are well managed. Leaders protect them from an unreasonable workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, curriculum plans do not set out the exact knowledge that pupils must remember. Some teachers, including in the early years, are not clear about what to emphasise or check that pupils have learned. So, pupils forget important knowledge from the curriculum. The school must make sure that the curriculum in all subjects makes clear the important knowledge pupils should learn.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2018.

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	137778
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10288508
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	379
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Angela Leishman
Principal	Ross Griffin
Website	www.hadrianacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal took up his post in January 2023.
- The school is the sole school within the Hadrian Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides before- and after-school care for its pupils.
- A privately owned house is located within the boundaries of the school.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the principal, vice-principal, special educational needs coordinator, the chair of the trust and trustees, subject leaders, teachers, members of

support staff and pupils. The inspector also spoke with the school's school improvement adviser.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, mathematics and reading. 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 also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 looked at records regarding pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders, staff and pupils and looked at documents regarding the provision for pupils' personal development.
- The inspector considered the responses from the 22 pupils, 28 staff and 40 parents who took part in Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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