

Inspection of Gloucester Academy

Painswick Road, Gloucester GL4 6RN

Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Phillipa Lewis. This school is part of Greenshaw Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, William Smith, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anne Spackman.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. Much has changed at the school since it joined the trust. Pupils learn more effectively than before, they achieve more highly and they feel safe. The majority of pupils appreciate that their learning takes place without disruption. The number of pupils who meet the school's expectations is markedly increasing, but a minority still find this difficult.

The school's curriculum is delivered well. Pupils know what is expected of them because there is a consistent approach across all subjects. This helps them to build knowledge over time and work with increasing independence. The majority of pupils enjoy reading with their teachers in the mornings and the opportunities this provides for them to learn about topical and challenging issues.

The school provides an extensive range of activities and support to develop pupils' character and resilience. This is central to the school's ethos. Many pupils come to school early to play sports or complete work, reflecting its highly ambitious vision. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, take part in the school's high-quality enrichment programme. Pupils enjoy the wide range of trips on offer, including visits abroad.

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

The school's increasing ambition for all pupils is partly reflected in the rising number of pupils choosing to study the full range of subjects in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). In each subject, the school has carefully identified the most important knowledge pupils need to know.

School and trust leaders ensure that all staff understand the curriculum and know how pupils learn best. Staff value regular professional development opportunities. As a result, staff are confident to explain new concepts clearly. They regularly check that pupils have understood new content. This consistency supports pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn the curriculum securely. The impact of this approach is also reflected in the school's improving published outcomes. However, in a few areas, the learning activities given to pupils do not enable them to develop a deep understanding of the content taught. When this occurs, pupils do not use subject vocabulary to explain their learning or extend their thinking in sufficient depth.

Pupils with SEND are accurately identified. Teachers have access to information about how to support these pupils. This information is usually used effectively, to enable pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum well. However, occasionally, staff are unclear about how this information can be used to adapt learning appropriately. The school's work to develop pupils' reading skills is effective. Those who need extra help with phonics and reading comprehension receive this. Pupils with English as an additional language are exceptionally well supported.

Over time, the school, supported by the trust and governors, has ensured that pupils and parents understand its high expectations. As a result, the majority of pupils behave well.

Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. However, while the number of pupils who do not meet these expectations is decreasing, there is a significant minority who are suspended or removed from lessons. This has an impact on how well they learn the curriculum.

The school has worked successfully to improve pupils' attendance. While still not high enough, attendance has improved significantly and reflects the positive culture that now exists within the school. There is a strong focus on rewards and praise, which motivates pupils to attend, work hard and be aspirational for their futures. Many pupils proudly wear badges for their achievements and contributions to the school community.

The trust has supported the school to create this positive culture. Staff are united in their efforts to deliver a strong academic curriculum alongside ensuring that the school is a place where pupils want to be. The school celebrates its diverse community and provides weekly opportunities to discuss and debate a range of issues. Many pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Pupils have a strong understanding of the fundamental British values. On the rare occasion that bullying happens, it is dealt with appropriately. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. There has been much recent work, including with external organisations, to support pupils' mental health and resilience. The school's work in this area is exemplary. In addition, pupils are encouraged to be aspirational about their next steps and futures, supported by high-quality guidance, visits from employers and trips to universities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few areas, the work given to pupils does not enable them to develop a deep understanding of the content they are learning. This means that there are occasions when pupils are not given tasks to extend their thinking or learn in sufficient depth when they complete initial activities. Some do not talk about their learning with the confidence and vocabulary needed. The trust should ensure that work given to pupils meets their needs so that they develop a deep knowledge of their subjects over time.
- The school's enhanced pastoral support programme has only been in place for a short time. It has not had the desired impact on improving the behaviour of a minority of pupils. This means those pupils miss important learning and wider development through suspension or lesson removals. The trust should sharpen its focus on reducing suspensions and removals from lessons so that all pupils access a good quality of education.

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	148036
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10344847
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	955
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Spackman
CEO of the trust	William Smith
Headteacher	Phillipa Lewis
Website	www.gloucesteracademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Gloucester Academy joined Greenshaw Learning Trust in June 2020. When its predecessor school, Gloucester Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness.
- The school has a high number of pupils who join the school during the school year and a higher-than-average number of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently uses three registered alternative provisions and one unregistered alternative provision.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, physical education and geography. 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. An inspector also visited lessons in mathematics and science.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the executive team from Greenshaw Learning Trust, other senior leaders from the school and a selection of staff during the inspection.
- In addition, the lead inspector met with a chair of the local governing body and the vice-chair of the board of trustees from Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- Inspectors analysed responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses of staff and pupils to Ofsted’s online survey.
- An inspector discussed how the school identifies and supports pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils during lessons and social times. They met with staff who oversee the personal development and behaviour of pupils.
- 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.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Barnes	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Davies	Ofsted 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