

Inspection of an outstanding school: Boston West Academy

Sussex Avenue, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 7QG

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone at Boston West knows the school's core 'CARE values' of collaboration, attitude, respect and equality. These values are evident in the way that pupils treat each other and do their best. Staff model the 'CARE values' too. Because of this, pupils feel comfortable and well looked after in school. They do not worry about bullying. They comment that it does not happen often. They trust adults to deal with it if it does.

Outdoor learning, the arts, physical development, well-being and developing a rich vocabulary are central to the curriculum. The school successfully prepares pupils to live confident, healthy, rewarding lives, now and in the future. Pupils enjoy the time they spend learning outdoors. They get plenty of fresh air and exercise, and they learn to respect and value nature. They grow fruit and vegetables, study the pond and perform in the outdoor theatre. They like working together on their annual class plays. They grow in confidence.

Pupils read widely and often. They know that reading is the key to learning. Their teachers are ambitious for them. Teachers make sure that pupils learn lots of vocabulary in each subject. However, sometimes, pupils do not get the more challenging work that they need to make progress.

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

This is an inclusive school. Leaders at Boston West, including from Anthem Schools Trust, want all pupils to achieve well and be prepared to make the most of life's opportunities. They have made sure that it is clear to all teachers what they should teach and when so that new learning builds on what has gone before. In 2022, key stage 2 progress in

reading and mathematics was below the national average. Leaders have taken swift action to address this by making well-judged improvements to the curriculum.

Subject leaders have considered how best to support teachers to develop secure subject knowledge. In many areas of the curriculum, teachers give clear explanations and choose appropriate tasks for pupils. When this is the case, pupils practise their new learning, building on what they already know. However, sometimes, teachers do not think carefully about what pupils might find confusing. Their explanations lack clarity, and pupils are not fully successful in the learning tasks teachers give them. In lessons, teachers focus pupils' attention on retrieving what they have learned before and on the new knowledge pupils must learn. However, they do not always move pupils on to work that enables them to deepen or apply their learning. When this happens, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Leaders work closely with external agencies, parents and staff to ensure that the provision meets pupils' needs. They set precise targets and give the right support. As a result, pupils make good progress. A very small number of pupils follow an appropriately adapted curriculum.

Leaders make sure that pupils know how important and enjoyable reading is. Pupils read widely and often. Leaders ensure that pupils learn phonics from the start of Reception. Leaders make careful use of assessment to make sure that pupils who are at the early stages of reading read books that match the sounds they know. Leaders' effective use of assessment also means that pupils at all stages get the help they need to become more confident readers.

Children in the early years enjoy warm relationships with the adults. They learn to be independent and communicate well. Leaders have introduced effective approaches to widening children's vocabulary. This enhances the early reading curriculum, as well as children's social and creative development.

Leaders have set clear routines that support the calm atmosphere which pervades the school. They have established a school culture where every child can be themselves and respect others. When pupils need help to improve their behaviour, they get it. Pupils comment that they really value the pastoral support they get at school.

The programmes for outdoor and arts learning contribute significantly to the school's highly effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils also benefit from a carefully considered curriculum for personal, social and health education. They have meaningful opportunities to discover and develop their talents as leaders, performers, horticulturalists and sports people.

Leaders have set a clear vision for this school. Staff share this vision and are proud to be part of the team. The vast majority of staff praised leaders for their support. Governors and the trust provide effective support for the school in its work to achieve its ambitious goals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and leaders know pupils very well. Leaders ensure that staff get effective safeguarding training and know their duties. Safeguarding leaders bring valuable experience to their role. They work closely with local safeguarding partners. They make sure that pupils and families get the help they need.

The curriculum is designed to make sure that pupils can learn to keep themselves and others safe. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe online and when riding their bikes. Pupils learn the safety rules for learning at the pond or around the campfire with their teachers.

Anthem Schools Trust and governors provide thorough oversight of safeguarding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always identify when pupils are ready to move on to more challenging tasks. When this is the case, pupils do not make the progress that they could. Leaders must ensure that all teachers move pupils on as soon as they are ready so that pupils can deepen their understanding and apply the knowledge they have learned.
- In some areas of the curriculum, sometimes, teachers do not consider what pupils might find difficult. As a result, they do not give clear enough explanations, and pupils get confused. Leaders must ensure that teachers think carefully about misconceptions pupils might develop and plan their explanations carefully so that pupils can carry out learning tasks with confidence, and their learning is more secure.

Background

When we have judged outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in June 2016.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	138291
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10229082
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	421
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jay Bhutani
Headteacher	Ceri Braybrook
Website	www.bwacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2016

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the post of acting headteacher in September 2022.
- The school is part of Anthem Schools Trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, early reading, English and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding the lead inspector reviewed the school's policies, procedures and records. She met with the designated safeguarding leads. Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires. An inspector spoke with parents at the school.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Moira Dales

Ofsted Inspector

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