

Inspection of Fulbridge Academy

Keeton Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 3JQ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

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 executive principal of this school is Ben Erskine. This school is part of The Four Cs multi-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, Mike Sandeman and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Whiles.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Fulbridge Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Fulbridge Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as Fulbridge Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school and are profoundly happy. They value the outstanding education they receive. Pupils achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, they attend regularly and care for each other. They respond enthusiastically to teachers' high expectations. Pupils know their teachers are always mindful of their physical and mental well-being. Pupils can seek support from an adult if they ever need help.

Pupils are eager to learn. They listen attentively and take turns. Pupils are resilient learners. When they make a mistake, they try again. Pupils share their ideas with confidence. They help their friends to learn better. Pupils have highly positive attitudes. They are open minded and respectful to everyone.

Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular opportunities. They play sports, board games, sing, dance, do yoga and take photographs. All pupils take part in musical performances. They bring to life characters from the books they read. These experiences nurture pupils' artistic skills, cultural knowledge and sporting abilities. Trips to the theatre, the beach, a safari park and cave systems enhance what pupils learn in class. Pupils are proud of their forest school. They plant trees and pick litter. Pupils make a considerable contribution to the school and local community.

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

Ambition permeates the school's broad curriculum. Leaders have chosen the knowledge pupils learn carefully. New knowledge links to what pupils have learned before. For example, children in the Nursery build new language. In Reception, children gain a rich vocabulary to describe the world around them. Pupils build on this in subsequent years so that, in geography, they can use subject specific language to explain the physical features of the planet. They learn about their place in the world. Pupils begin to embrace the responsibilities they have as global citizens.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They introduce knowledge in small stages. Teachers consistently check for gaps in pupils' knowledge and that pupils understand. Pupils practise what they have learned before. This helps them remember knowledge well and express sophisticated ideas. In mathematics for example, pupils calculate at speed and reason clearly. In groups and independently pupils use their mathematical knowledge to solve complex problems.

Leaders ensure learning to read is a priority. Children in Reception quickly learn to blend sounds. They read words and sentences with ease. Teachers meticulously check how well pupils read and write. Any pupils who fall behind receive immediate help so they catch up. Pupils are expressive readers. They are keen to retell and dramatise stories. Many pupils achieve better in national tests than other children nationally. As many pupils' first language is not English, this is exceptional. Pupils'

knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar is strong. However, some outcomes in writing were lower than expected in 2023. In response, leaders refined how writing is taught. Pupils now write at length in a variety of styles. They use interesting vocabulary. They apply grammar accurately to edit their work.

The school caters exceptionally well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders adopt innovative approaches to ensure that the support pupils with SEND receive is precise and effective. Pupils with SEND achieve well. Other pupils look out for their friends with SEND. They are patient and kind.

Pupils' knowledge of world religions and cultures is strong. They celebrate difference. They focus not on what divides them but on what unites them. This ensures a highly inclusive ethos in this diverse community. The stories pupils read help them to understand the reasons for world events. They learn about the holocaust and the plight of refugees. Pupils raise money for local charities and support food banks. They develop empathy and are compassionate.

Pupils have opportunities to hone important leadership skills. Pupils vote for 'Future Leaders' who represent their views. They also visit the Houses of Parliament and interview their local MP. Pupils understand they have a voice. They know how to use it in a democratic society.

Leaders, the trust and governors accurately review how all areas of school life are performing. Staff find leaders supportive. The training leaders provide enables teachers to be at their very best. The school works well with parents and the community. This has been essential in realising the school's outstanding ambition for pupils' lives. Pupils have high aspirations for the future. They gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to achieve them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	139370
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10295061
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	914
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Whiles
CEO of the trust	Mike Sandeman
Principal	Ben Erskine (Executive principal)
Website	www.fulbridgeacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Four Cs multi-academy trust.
- A small number of pupils receive part-time provision from one unregistered alternative provider and from one registered alternative provider.
- Over three quarters of pupils have English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the CEO, chair of trustees, chair of governors, other governors and trustees, executive principal, head of school, other senior leaders,

subject leaders, teachers and support staff. The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education, geography and music. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and a review of any curriculum documentation. They also scrutinised other curriculum areas and pupils' work.

- 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 pupils, staff and parents. There were 67 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 167 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey. There were 64 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors considered 63 free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also spoke to parents.

Inspection team

Adam Cooke, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Gammons	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Garrett	Ofsted Inspector

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