

# Inspection of a good school: Fishtoft Academy

Gaysfield Road, Fishtoft, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 0SF

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Inspection date:

5 March 2024

## **Outcome**

Fishtoft Academy continues to be a good school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Craig Early. This school is part of Voyage Education Partnership 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, Emma Hadley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Chris Penney.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Fishtoft is a happy and harmonious environment. Pupils say they enjoy school and have positive, nurturing relationships with staff. Pupils can talk to adults about any worries they may have. These strong relationships have built a positive and inclusive school.

The 'heart' of Fishtoft beats throughout the school, with core values of honesty, equality, ambition, resilience and thoughtfulness. The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy the broad range of learning the school provides. They say, 'It is an amazing and fun place to be.'

The school ensures that staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. As a result, pupils behave well in class and at social times. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and work well with their classmates. Pupils say that staff deal with any issues quickly. Older pupils take on the role of playground leaders. They enjoy supporting younger pupils.

Wider opportunities are well considered. Pupils talk with pride about being elected as house captains and raising money for charities. They learn how to reduce their carbon footprint as part of the 'Voyage Partnership Green Pledge'.

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

New leadership has brought a renewed sense of purpose to the school. The school has a strong vision that is shared by staff, parents and carers, pupils, and the trust. They speak positively about the direction of the school.

The school has recently refreshed its teaching of early reading. Staff have the necessary subject knowledge so that they teach phonics well. Staff training is a strength of the collaborative partnership approach taken by the school. Children begin learning to read as soon as they start at the school. Pupils read books that are closely linked to the sounds they have learned in lessons. Those who fall behind receive support to catch up and keep up. There is a widespread love of reading through the school. Staff ensure that pupils experience a rich range of carefully chosen texts. Pupils talk in detail about books their teachers read to them.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year. The school is developing the outside learning space to provide children with more resources that support their development. Children are helped to improve their communication skills quickly. They work well with older pupils. There are well established routines and pupils are being prepared for their next stage, including learning about the importance of brushing their teeth.

The curriculum is ambitious and well ordered. The school has thought carefully about the sequence of learning in mixed-age classes. Staff are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They model learning well and provide practical resources to support pupils' understanding. This practice is particularly successful in mathematics. Staff question pupils well to deepen their thinking.

In some subjects, the school does not check closely enough on the impact of the curriculum, which means that gaps in pupils' learning are sometimes missed. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could.

Personal development is a strength at Fishtoft. Pupils know how to stay safe online. For example, they know the importance of not sharing personal information. Pupils learn how to be safe in the community they inhabit. The school teaches pupils how to be safe on the road, through programmes like bikeability. Sport has a high profile at Fishtoft. Pupils are given additional swimming opportunities. They take part in a range of tournaments, including those for pupils with SEND, such as new age curling. This not only develops tactical knowledge but self-esteem. Pupils also become more independent through residential visits. The school celebrates pupils' achievements in assemblies. Pupils have a strong grasp of equalities. For example, they know that families come in different forms, and that everyone is welcome.

The trust supports and challenges the school appropriately. It regularly makes checks on the school's work, such as safeguarding and reading. A new hall was built after checks on the curriculum showed a lack of indoor sports opportunities.

Staff enjoy being a part of the school community. They are unanimous in their appreciation of the school's consideration for their well-being. Teachers in the early stages of their career are well supported.

## **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 evaluate the implementation and impact of some subjects sufficiently. It does not fully understand how well pupils learn the intended curriculum in all subjects. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could. The school should ensure that all subject leaders accurately gauge what pupils know and can do, ensuring that any gaps in pupils' learning are identified and addressed swiftly.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139266
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10313287
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Chris Penney
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Emma Hadley
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Craig Early
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fishtoftacademy.net">www.fishtoftacademy.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Voyage Education Partnership.
- The executive headteacher took up his post in September 2023.
- Fishtoft Academy converted to be an academy school in February 2013. When its predecessor school, The Fishtoft School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, curriculum and inclusion leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils and executive leaders from the Voyage Education Partnership. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer and chair of trustees for Voyage Education Partnership.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and trust leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of work in geography and art.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and the staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Ian Toon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Adrian O'Malley

Ofsted Inspector

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