

Inspection of Goodwin Academy

Hamilton Road, Deal CT14 9BD

Inspection dates:	21 and 22 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Philip Jones. This school is part of The Thinking Schools 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 (CEO), Stuart Gardner, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gerard Newman.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), appreciate how the school has improved in recent years. They benefit from strong relationships with caring and committed staff. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. If they are worried about any issues, pupils trust that staff will resolve them quickly. Pupils have a mature understanding of topics linked to equality and diversity. They rightly feel a strong sense of belonging in this welcoming and harmonious place.

The school has raised its expectations for pupils' academic success. Pupils know that their school is a better place in which to learn and thrive. Consequently, they are now achieving well. Across lessons, most pupils work with focus and purpose. Classrooms are calm and orderly places, conducive to successful learning.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities which broaden their horizons. For example, visiting art galleries and museums. Pupils are proud of their roles such as being a member of the school council or as an 'anti-bullying ambassador'. They benefit from the wide range of interesting clubs, including anime, kick boxing and drama. Sixth-form students play an active role in school life. They enjoy leadership responsibilities, such as supporting younger pupils with their reading.

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

The trust, and school leaders, are steadfast in their aim to ensure that pupils benefit from a strong quality of education. They have left no stone unturned to make sure that the school moves from strength to strength. However, in 2024, pupils did not achieve well in public examinations. This is because, historically, their learning was disrupted by changes to staffing. The school has now addressed this successfully. Additionally, some pupils' learning was also affected adversely by the impact of COVID-19, with a number experiencing high levels of absence. Consequently, they did not benefit from the ambitious curriculum that pupils are now experiencing.

The curriculum has undergone significant improvements and is well crafted. Similarly, the sixth form also offers a suitable range of subjects and qualifications, providing students with choices to match their interests and future aspirations. However, at key stage 4, the number of pupils undertaking the English Baccalaureate is comparatively low. The school is taking appropriate steps to raise the proportion of pupils studying French.

Reading is a high priority. The school ensures that pupils read widely and often. Those who need extra help to become fluent readers are identified quickly. Staff provide suitable additional reading support to help the weakest readers. As a result, these pupils read with increasing accuracy and confidence.

Teachers receive effective professional development. They use their strong subject knowledge to present information clearly and model learning effectively. Across subjects, including in the sixth form, there is a clear focus on developing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified accurately. Teachers check and

make sure that these pupils, including those in the specialist resource provision, receive the tailored support they need. They check pupils' understanding systematically. Teachers address any misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge before moving them on to new ideas. However, there are a few inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school has raised its expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff apply these effectively and consistently. They provide well-considered support for a minority of pupils who need help to manage their behaviour. The school takes every opportunity to promote good attendance. It works well to help pupils and their families to overcome any barriers to regular attendance. Despite this, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Also, a small number of pupils do not attend school or lessons on time. These pupils do not benefit fully from all that the school has to offer.

Pupils are well prepared for life in a changing world. For example, pupils talk knowledgeably about different cultures and religions. They learn how to take care of their mental health and well-being, including age-appropriate relationships and consent. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, access high-quality careers advice and guidance. This means they are well informed about their next steps in education, employment and training.

The trust and local governing board are ambitious for all staff and pupils. They provide robust support and challenge to the school. The trust's support is central to the school's growing success. Staff workload is considered carefully when making decisions about the school's work. Staff appreciate this and feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school often enough. In addition, a small number of pupils are not punctual to school or lessons. As a result, they miss out on essential learning and vital school experiences. The trust should ensure that their ongoing work leads to tangible improvements in pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- There are a few inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The trust, and school leaders, should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently and securely by staff so that pupils learn well across the different subjects.

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	146624
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341870
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	834
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	73
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gerard Newman
CEO of the trust	Stuart Gardner
Headteacher	Phil Jones
Website	www.goodwinacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 October 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Goodwin Academy is part of the Thinking Schools Academies Trust.
- The school has a specialist resource base with places for 14 pupils. This provides support for pupils who have speech, language or social communication needs.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers to provide education and support for a very small number of pupils.
- The headteacher took up his post in June 2024.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 (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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other senior and curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with some of the trustees and representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of the local governing body. She also met with the regional director and deputy CEO for the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, art, modern foreign languages and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documents, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also visited lessons from a range of other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspection team took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Martin

Ofsted Inspector

Zoe Harris

Ofsted Inspector

Eliot Hodges

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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