





A Short Description of Bourn Primary Academy

Introduction

The purpose of this short description of Bourn Primary Academy, which we commonly refer to as 'Bourn Primary', is to give applicants for the teaching post an insight into the organisation and what makes it such a special place to be a part of.

Recent History

Following the award of the grade of 'Outstanding' from Ofsted, Bourn Primary became an Academy in November 2011: one of the first Primary schools in the county to convert to this status. The decision to become an Academy was taken to ensure that Bourn Primary had the freedom to decide how to educate our children, with the ability to use the funds allocated to best advantage. We immediately benefitted from making this move when, in June 2012, our application for funding from the Academy Capital Fund was successful and we expanded our facilities, using the £730,000 grant that we received to add two new classrooms, a soundproof music room, a group learning room and cloakrooms.

Organisation and Ethos

Bourn Primary is controlled directly by the Department for Education and supported by the Church of England. We currently have 7 classes of children within the age range 4 to 11 years.

We provide an inclusive education of the highest standard in accordance with our historic Church of England foundation. We teach respect and consideration for others and foster an awareness and tolerance of faiths and traditions. Our aim is that our children will become organised, confident, self-motivated, outward-looking and socially aware. We subscribe to the Church Schools ethos, provided by the Church of England.

The Academy's culture is one of respect, tolerance, courtesy and good manners. Standards of behaviour are very high and this is regularly commented upon by visitors to Bourn Primary. Through good supervision and monitoring, together with effective communication with parents, any behavioural problems are identified early and interventions made quickly so that the problems are minimised.

The children's moral and cultural development is very good and enhanced by international weeks, language days and links with schools overseas. We develop a strong social awareness in our children and encourage them to devise means to raise money to support local and international charities.

Bourn has an active School Council, comprising two children from each year group (elected by their classmates), which provides an excellent opportunity for children to say what they think about ideas, as well as putting across ideas of their own to improve the School.

Environment

Bourn Primary is very much at the heart of the local community. We are located close to the centre of the village in extensive grounds adjacent to open fields. The Academy serves the villages of Bourn, Caxton, Longstowe and Kingston, a rural area of some 24 square miles. It sits within the catchment area of the renowned Comberton Village College, to which the vast majority of our children progress.

The Academy occupies modern, purpose-built premises. We are particularly fortunate in our setting, as the buildings are surrounded by extensive playing fields and play areas, including a sensory garden and other informal garden areas, large mature trees and shady courtyards. Foundation Stage children have their own dedicated two-tiered outdoor space, leading from their classroom. We have wheelchair access to all areas.

Unusually, we have a mature nature reserve within our perimeter, which affords opportunities to study outdoors. The grounds are sufficiently spacious for several team sport areas, as well as two hard-play areas with tennis, netball and basketball courts. There is also a heated outdoor swimming pool, rebuilt in 2010, with its own changing rooms. A cricket pitch and nets were added in 2012.

Teaching and Learning

There are 12 teachers. The School also values its team of teaching assistants who enable detailed attention and support to be given to children individually and in small groups.

We endeavour to present Christianity in a clear and open manner without creating any sense of compulsion towards Christian belief, whilst encouraging the values of tolerance, compassion and faithfulness which are at the heart of the message of the Church.

We teach the core subjects, English, Maths and Science, in accordance with National Strategies. The Foundation subjects, such as History, P.E., Art and Music, are taught both as single subject lessons and in combination with other areas of the curriculum as part of an 'enrichment curriculum'. We teach French in Year 2 and Spanish from Year 3 onwards.

Our aim is to raise the achievements of all pupils by providing lessons which meet the requirements of the most able. In addition to this we plan individual challenges that stimulate and provide enrichment to learning for everyone. Teaching assistants and teachers support children of all abilities, including those with Special Educational Needs in small groups.

Formal curriculum teaching is supplemented by project work and specific themed weeks, as well as other in-school activities. A wide range of after-school clubs are offered free of charge. External visits take place to enrich learning and include inter-school subject festivals and workshops. In Year 4 the children attend a 3-day residential course of outdoor activities and in Year 6 a 5-day residential course focuses on personal development through outdoor activities.

We encourage our children to play a positive role in contributing to the life of both Bourn Primary and the wider community. Developing self-confidence and the ability to form good relationships is central to our PSHE teaching. Sex education is sensitively taught in throughout the school.

Music plays a deep and central part in our life. Children are encouraged to take part in musical activities, including learning a musical instrument under instruction from qualified visiting teachers or singing in one of the choirs. Almost half of our Key Stage 2 pupils play in the School Orchestra.

Sports and P.E. are led by a dedicated Coach. We have Football, Rugby and Netball teams, all of which play fixtures against other local schools, and our children participate in inter-school tournaments in Athletics and Swimming. Pupils swim in the heated pool in the summer months and children are encouraged to learn to cycle using the Academy's off-road bikes.

As an outstanding school, we are currently supporting another smaller school in the locality. This provides a wide range of professional development opportunities to our staff.

Health and Wellbeing

We are committed to ensuring the welfare of the children and members of staff. We run a buddying scheme for all new children entering the Foundation Stage. Considerable support is provided to pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 to assist their transition to Secondary education.

In September 2012 we launched “Bourn Bistro”, which provides lunches for children, cooked in our own kitchen. We offer a balanced daily hot meal, cooked using organic and locally-sourced ingredients.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We pride ourselves on the supportive relationship that exists between the members of staff, parents and their children. We believe that education thrives in an atmosphere where everyone recognises they have a role to play and we have a well-developed Home-School Policy. We particularly encourage parents to become actively involved in Bourn Primary, and to work in partnership with us to provide their children with the best possible support for their time at school.

We encourage parents to liaise with teachers to ascertain what help can best be given to the children at home. Termly creative projects offer an opportunity for extended work at home, supported by parents and/or siblings, and these have proved popular with the children, culminating in them presenting summaries in project assemblies.

We strongly support and encourage visits and assistance from parents. On almost every school day there are parents supporting reading or enriching learning in other ways. Many parents may have specialised skills and knowledge that will broaden the work that goes on in school and we welcome their contributions. All adults who regularly work in school are subject to a DBS check.

Our communication process with parents is highly developed. A weekly newsletter is issued by each class teacher, accompanied by a weekly review sheet completed by the pupil where they record their key achievements and highlights of the week, as well as stating the current learning targets. All teachers, including the Head Teacher, issue half-termly newsletters to all parents. We seek feedback from parents regularly using on-line questionnaires, open evenings and meetings. The School has an actively-managed website on which all communications, informative documents and other material can be found. Each Friday morning the school holds community assemblies where parents/carers are welcome to attend.

Bourn School Association

Our parent-teacher association is a pro-active and important partner. The Association raises a large amount of money to enhance the educational environment and benefit our children. The funds raised have supported a variety of school facilities and activities, including replacement of the swimming pool, specialised curriculum days, entertainment for the children, library books, additional school furniture, computers, play equipment and musical instruments. The funding decisions are aided by valuable input from the School Council.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body works closely with the Head Teacher and Staff in shaping and supporting the development of the Academy. It comprises members of the community, parents and teaching staff.

Bourn Primary Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.