

Inspection of an outstanding school: Garswood Primary and Nursery School

Hamilton Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, Lancashire WN4 0SF

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 July 2024

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. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' everyday actions embody the school's aims of being kind, ambitious and respectful. Pupils are attentive and considerate towards one another and towards staff. This begins in the early years, where children quickly adapt to the school's routines and high expectations for behaviour.

Pupils value the positive relationships that they have with staff. They trust that staff will help them with any worries or concerns. This helps pupils to feel happy at school. Those pupils who need extra help in managing their emotions are supported well by caring staff.

The school expects pupils to succeed. This is reflected in the ambition that the school has for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In many subjects, pupils, including those with SEND, leave the school well prepared for the demands of secondary school.

Pupils embrace the wide range of leadership opportunities that the school provides for them, including being pupil governors, house captains and junior road safety officers. Such opportunities build pupils' understanding of responsibility and how they can influence change for the benefit of others. The school also provides pupils with a range of extra-curricular clubs that help them to develop their talents and interests. These activities include rugby, cooking and a reading club.

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

The school has carefully considered and organised the important knowledge that pupils should learn across the curriculum. This begins from the new provision for two-year-old children through to Year 6. Across a number of subjects, teachers use this curriculum

information well to design activities that help pupils build up their knowledge and understanding.

Teachers benefit from high-quality training that helps them to deliver the curriculum consistently well. Effective training for staff also informs the well-chosen resources and adaptations to curriculum delivery for pupils with SEND. This helps pupils with SEND to fully access the same curriculum as their peers. This is all underpinned by the school's systems that accurately identify the additional needs of these pupils. In the main, pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well across a range of subjects.

In a small number of subjects in the foundation curriculum, refinements to the curriculum are relatively new. In these subjects, the curriculum is well thought out. However, as a result of weaknesses in the previous subject curriculums, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge that remain unaddressed. Consequently, their understanding is insecure and at times, this hinders these pupils' ability to make sense of new learning and concepts.

Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme with confidence and consistency. Pupils quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. The school uses assessment information well to identify and support any pupils who need additional help. This support helps pupils to keep up with their peers. The vast majority of pupils build up a deep body of knowledge in phonics. Furthermore, children in the Reception Year soon begin to master how to write the different letters that make these sounds.

The books that pupils read in the early years and key stage 1 are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. This helps get them off to a positive start in reading. By the end of key stage 1, many pupils are confident and fluent readers. Most pupils demonstrate a love of reading by the end of key stage 2.

Children in the early years are very well behaved. They follow established routines and learn cooperatively alongside one another. Behaviour across the school is highly positive and learning is rarely interrupted. Pupils have excellent attendance at school. The school's systems and procedures to maintain high rates of attendance are highly effective.

Pupils experience a broad range of opportunities that enhance their wider development and prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Many pupils have a strong moral conviction that everyone should be treated with respect, regardless of their differences. Pupils understand that people live in different types of families. They experience activities in school that bring British values to life, such as voting for house captains.

Governors closely monitor how well the school operates at all levels. They have a clear focus on the quality of education provided by the school and carry out their duties effectively. Staff value being part of the school. They are positive about what the school has done to further support their workload and well-being. This includes changes to the marking policy and access to training that enables them to deliver the curriculum well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects in the foundation curriculum, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result of weaknesses in the previous curriculum. Consequently, some pupils' knowledge is insecure and at times this hinders their ability to make sense of new learning. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to swiftly remedy these gaps in pupils' knowledge. This is so that pupils can build and further strengthen their knowledge in these subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be 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 2017.

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	104778
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10291383
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Murphy
Headteacher	Pamela Potter
Website	www.garswoodprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened educational provision for two-year-old children in January 2024.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The governing body operates a breakfast club and after-school provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. As part of the deep dives, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, met with teachers and looked at pupils' work. The inspector also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects. The inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.

- The inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. He also considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons. He spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. He also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. He also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online staff survey.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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