

# Inspection of Gorse Hall Primary and Nursery School

Forester Drive, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 2DP

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils quickly make new friends at this school. The overwhelming majority of pupils enjoy their learning. They feel safe and happy.

A very small number of pupils, parents and carers feel that bullying incidents are not always tackled as well as they should be. However, analysis of leaders' records shows that they take swift action to deal with bullying concerns or unkind behaviour effectively.

Senior leaders have high expectations for pupils. They expect them to follow the school's 'Bee' rules and to work hard. Most pupils proudly live up to these expectations.

Pupils value the varied opportunities that they have to contribute to school life and to make it the best it can be. They enjoy working as well-being ambassadors, school council representatives and members of the eco-committee. Pupils spoke very proudly about receiving a letter from the King thanking them for their recipe for spinach pastries. They also spoke with enthusiasm about gaining an award in recognition of their work on sustainability.

Most parents who shared their views with the inspection team were very positive about the school. They appreciate all that staff do to support pupils and to ensure that they learn well and enjoy school.

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

Leaders have worked collaboratively to develop their curriculum. They have made sure that, in most subjects, pupils learn new knowledge in small, logical steps, from the beginning of early years to the end of Year 6. Their ambition matches the expectations of the national curriculum. However, in a very small number of subjects, leaders have not clearly identified what pupils will learn and when.

For the most part, teachers show strong subject knowledge. They introduce new learning to pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), in a way that supports pupils to build on their prior knowledge effectively.

Teachers usually use assessment information well to adapt future teaching and to make sure that they quickly address any gaps or misconceptions in pupils' learning.

Leaders know that the key to unlocking pupils' potential is to ensure that they learn to read well and develop positive attitudes to reading. Children in the early years enjoy a range of popular and much-loved stories, rhymes and songs. This helps to spark their interest in reading and books.

Leaders have implemented an early reading programme which introduces pupils to letters and sounds in a logical way. Many staff implement the programme as leaders

intend. However, some staff do not have sufficient knowledge about how to support early readers. This means that they do not always use the most effective methods to help struggling readers. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to read new words from unfamiliar books fluently. However, older pupils read well, with expression and confidence. They feel that reading broadens their horizons and opens their minds to the wider world.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly. The SEND team works well together to provide staff with helpful support and guidance so that pupils with SEND can mostly learn the same curriculum as their peers.

In the most recently published data for writing at the end of key stage 1, and in the multiplication tables check for pupils at the end of Year 4, pupils did not perform as well as their peers nationally. However, the learning of current pupils shows that leaders have quickly and effectively addressed any residual gaps. Overall, pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

Most pupils behave well. However, in a very small minority of classes, some teachers do not always have the same high expectations for pupils' behaviour. This means that a small number of pupils report that, on occasion, other pupils disturb their learning.

Pupils participate in a wide range of engaging and interesting activities to enhance their personal development. This includes representing the school in swimming galas, raising money for the local hospice and learning about different ways to stay healthy. Pupils also learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law.

Governors are enthusiastic members of the school community. They support and challenge leaders well. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the support that leaders give them. They feel that their workload and work-life balance are well considered.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff pride themselves on knowing their pupils and families well. They have formed an effective team whose members work well together for the mutual benefit of pupils and the wider school community.

Leaders make sure that staff receive regular safeguarding updates so that they act quickly and diligently if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or well-being. Leaders have forged strong relationships with a range of external partners. This means that they know whom to go to secure timely and effective support for pupils and their families.

Pupils learn about a wide range of different aspects of safety in an age-appropriate way.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The early reading programme is not always implemented as well as it could be. Additionally, a few staff have insufficient knowledge about how best to support struggling readers. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as fluently as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the support that they need so that the early reading programme is delivered consistently well and that struggling readers are provided with effective help to support them to become confident and fluent readers.
- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. This means that pupils are sometimes not fully secure in their learning. Leaders should implement plans to improve the curriculum in these subjects so that pupils learn more and remember more over time.
- A few staff do not always ensure that pupils listen attentively or follow the school rules consistently well. This means that a small number of pupils sometimes make it harder for other pupils to concentrate or to behave as well as they should, particularly in less-structured situations. Leaders should make sure that teachers implement the behaviour policy consistently well so that pupils and parents are fully assured that pupils across school meet leaders' high expectations for their behaviour.

## **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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106188
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242157
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Michael O'Dowd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alexandra Flood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gorsehall.tameside.sch.uk">www.gorsehall.tameside.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The chair of governors recently took up post.

## Information about this inspection

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff in school. They spoke with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics, geography, music and science. They spoke with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. An inspector listened to pupils read to familiar adults.

- Inspectors also spoke with leaders from other areas of the curriculum. They looked at pupils' work, spoke with pupils and visited some lessons.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors evaluated leaders' safeguarding arrangements, self-evaluation document and improvement plans.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Louise McArdle, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Berry	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector

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