

Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School

Belgrave Road, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 7NH

Inspection dates 21–22 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From generally below average starting points, pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, reach standards that are broadly average in English and just below average in mathematics.
- The fastest progress is made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils supported through the use of the pupil premium do as well as other pupils at the school.
- Teaching in most classes is good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils with particular learning needs receive high quality support.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Well organised procedures and routines mean that pupils feel very safe at school.
- Pupils show respect for others. They are keen to learn in lessons, well-behaved around school, and polite to visitors.
- The different subjects, events and extra activities provided by the school give pupils many opportunities to learn new skills and to feel success. Sports tuition is excellent.
- The headteacher is a highly effective leader who brings out the best in others. She has established a strong leadership team who continue to bring about improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. They know what needs to be done to improve the school further.
- Governors' strategic thinking is strong. They are well informed and actively involved in checking the school's work.
- The school's work to inform and involve parents is a notable strength.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is not as fast as the progress that they make in other parts of the school.
- Occasionally, teaching does not take account of what pupils do, or do not, already understand.
- While pupils' progress in mathematics is good, it is not as strong as the progress they make in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher or other members of the senior management team. Inspectors also made short visits to other lessons and small group teaching sessions led by support staff. In addition, inspectors visited an assembly, the Early Birds pre-nursery group and two physical education sessions taught by specialist teachers. They observed lunch and break times, and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. A telephone conversation with a local authority representative also took place.
- Inspectors took account of 31 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the results of the school's own survey of parents' views, talked to parents at school, and considered the responses to the school staff questionnaire.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, and records of governors' meetings. The work in pupils' books, the school website, and records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila O'Keeffe

Additional Inspector

Terry Bond

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Full report

Information about this school

- Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The proportion supported through school action is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is in line with the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for children who are looked after by the local authority, and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a before- and after-school club on the school site. This is not managed by the school and is subject to a separate inspection at a different time.
- There is an Early Birds pre-nursery group which is managed by the school. This was included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching in order to raise standards higher, especially in mathematics and in Key Stage 1, by:
 - making sure that all teachers make careful checks on what pupils know and understand during lessons and then adjust their explanations and use of classroom resources in response
 - making sure the middle-ability pupils always get work that builds carefully on their previous learning in mathematics, so they can make faster progress
 - implementing plans for middle leaders to work with teaching staff to raise more teaching from good to outstanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at Gainsborough Primary School and, when they leave at the end of Year 6, are well-equipped for the next stage of their education.
- Most children start school with knowledge and skills that are below, and in some cases well below, the typical expectations for their age. Children make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because staff are skilled at meeting their needs. Nevertheless, many do not reach average standards by the time they start in Key Stage 1.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is steady and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are closer to, but still below, the national average for their age.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is strong; particularly in English and especially in writing. Over the past year, pupils have made huge strides forwards in their writing and the quality of written work seen in books, and on display around the school, is impressive. All groups of pupils, including the most and least able, make at least good progress and reach standards that are at least in line with those seen nationally at Levels 4, 5 and 6 by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2.
- While overall achievement in reading is not as strong as in writing, most pupils learn to be capable readers because of the well-organised approach to the way it is taught. Daily phonics sessions (teaching about letters and the sounds they represent) are delivered in fun and lively ways. In the Year 1 phonic screening check, girls do better than boys but the standard reached by both groups in 2013 was higher than the previous year.
- Progress in mathematics is not as fast as it is in English. The most able and the least able pupils make the best progress. In 2013, for example, the proportion of pupils reaching the top level 6 standard was better than that seen in most other schools. However, the progress and attainment of the middle-ability pupils does not match the higher standards that they achieve in English and, for these pupils, more could be done to push them on further.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress at Gainsborough Primary School. The extra support that they receive, sometimes with specialist input, is first class and this helps them to grow in confidence and to do their very best.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve equally as well as other pupils in English and reach similar standards at the end of Year 6. In mathematics, there is a wider in-school gap between the standards reached by the two different groups, with pupils known to be eligible for free school meals being over a term behind their peers. However, looking over time and at the current data, the key issue here is that most of the middle-ability pupils, whether they receive free school meals or not, do better in English than in mathematics.
- Overall, girls and boys achieve equally as well as each other with the boys being just ahead in mathematics and the girls doing slightly better in English. All pupils have equal opportunity to benefit from all that the school has to offer.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. Some teaching, particularly in upper Key Stage 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, is outstanding.
- Across the school, teaching in English is consistently strong. However, occasionally, teaching does not take enough account of what pupils do, or do not, already know. This happens more often in mathematics than it does in other subjects.
- Imaginative use of time and purposeful dialogue is a feature observed in many lessons. In a reception class, for example, even the time spent hand-washing or lining-up for lunch was seized upon by the teacher as an extra learning opportunity as children were prompted to estimate and count.
- In another example, seen during a Key Stage 1 'stay and play' session when parents join their

children in class, paper-planes united young and old in meaningful discussion about the best design and ways to measure how far different planes could fly. This simple activity stretched and extended pupils' language, physical and mathematical skills. It was good fun, too.

- Further up the school, teaching is most effective when it holds everyone's attention and builds carefully on what pupils already understand. In a Year 5 English lesson, pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of how to punctuate speech because the teacher checked what they knew already, showed them some excellent examples and then checked throughout the lesson how well they were getting on and made sure they understood what to do next.
- There is a whole-school approach to the teaching of mathematics. It is clear that all staff follow the agreed systems and that pupils are making faster progress in mathematics than in the past. Even so, some aspects of teaching work better than others. For example, the use of coloured cups that the pupils use to show how well they understand, does not always work well; sometimes pupils show an affirmative green cup when it is clear they do not understand.
- While most teachers use a variety of methods to check how well pupils are learning in lessons, some teachers do not always do enough to check how well pupils are keeping up. Consequently, they do not provide pupils with the explanations or resources that they need to help them understand.
- Physical education and sports tuition is a huge strength. Pupils make weekly visits to South Cheshire College to receive expert teaching. Recently received sports funding has enabled the school to employ a specialist teacher for one day a week. The benefits are significant; participation in physical activity has increased and school teams and individuals have won recognition and awards in local competitions and events. Everyone feels buoyed up by these recent successes, which help to recognise talent and inspire all to get involved.
- Work in pupils' books is usually presented neatly. There is a good quantity of work and the regular formal assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and helpful in guiding teachers and pupils towards the next steps in learning. A few pupils report that marking in mathematics is not as helpful as it is in other subjects. Other inspection evidence shows that pupils do get regular feedback about their progress, know about the National Curriculum levels they are working at, and are involved in setting their own targets. However, they do not always get sufficient feedback during lessons to help them move forward with the task in hand.
- The work of support staff is highly effective. Small group teaching sessions are skilfully led and help pupils with particular needs to succeed and to feel good about their achievements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In all school situations, pupils conduct themselves in a good natured and courteous manner. They show respect to others and are polite to visitors. An examination of school logs, records, and the 'say what you see' book, which captures comments from visitors, indicates that the behaviour seen during the inspection is typical.
- Behaviour and attitudes in lessons are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils of all ages respond well to their teachers. They are quick to ask questions or to volunteer answers and want to learn and do their best. All teachers notice and praise good behaviour, and respond swiftly to any poor behaviour. This helps to set and maintain high expectations.
- Pupils arrive on time and attend regularly. Attendance at school has risen year-on-year since the last inspection and is in line with the national average. There is no doubt that the work of the parent support mentor has been a key factor in improving attendance.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The attention to site security is second to none and the school's efforts to teach pupils how to stay safe are highly successful.
- Through displays around the school, the work of the junior safety officers and regular messages in assemblies and lessons, pupils gain an excellent understanding of the risks that they can face and how to act responsibly so that they, and others, stay safe. The daily 'playground bulletin', that is read to pupils and then posted on the school notice board, gives pupils a regular update about which of the different playground zones are in use and everyone realises the importance

of adhering to these safety rules and routines.

- The behaviour strategies, including a 'safe play' initiative, used by the school are highly effective, particularly for those pupils who have found it difficult to cope in school. This is borne out by the below average level of fixed-term exclusions and that only one permanent exclusion has ever been necessary.
- Pupils understand that any type of bullying is unacceptable. They say that it is rare and are confident that the adults at school would deal with it promptly and properly if it happened.
- There is a high level of supervision at break and lunch times. Pupils are orderly in the dining hall and when moving around the building. The playground is usually harmonious and trouble-free, although arguments can occur from time-to-time and adults have to intervene. The older pupils who act as playground buddies take their responsibilities seriously and younger pupils describe them as 'helpful and fair'.
- Most pupils come in school uniform and look very smart. While it is rare to see a pupil who is not wearing a blue school sweatshirt, quite a few pupils do come to school in training shoes which goes against the school uniform code.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a very effective leader who sets high standards, inspires trust, and brings out the best in others. Through her calm, reflective and well-informed leadership, she has created a highly motivated team that shares her vision for ongoing school improvement. Together with other senior leaders, she holds frequent meetings with staff to discuss pupils' progress, identify training needs and set ambitious targets for the future.
- The senior and middle leaders in the school are skilful teachers who lead by example. Some of these key staff teach alongside colleagues or put on demonstration lessons to help staff at Gainsborough, and from other schools, improve their practice. During this inspection, several key leaders joined inspectors for lesson observations and showed an accurate eye for judging the quality of teaching and learning.
- In recent times, the headteacher has worked closely with the governors to successfully strengthen and widen the senior leadership team. Wise choices have been made and the current team is keen and ambitious. However, there is still more to be done in order to spread the workload and raise expectations even higher.
- While middle leaders are capable, some are quite new in post and have not yet had chance to put all their plans into action. Consequently, some staff do not get enough feedback about their day-to-day work.
- The school provides an exciting curriculum which is enriched by numerous trips and events. Pupils get plenty of opportunities to do interesting things and learn new skills, and there are many after-school clubs. The provision for sport, outdoor learning and physical education is excellent.
- A small proportion of parents responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, but the school has many other ways to gather parents' views and keep them informed and involved. The quality and presentation of information provided through the school website, for example, is superb. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school's work.
- The Early Birds pre-nursery group, which meets three days a week, is well led and greatly appreciated by families. Parents say they are made to feel welcome at these sessions which help to prepare children for school and provide parents with helpful support and guidance.
- The local authority describes the school as needing only 'light touch' support because of the strong leadership in place.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school and articulate this clearly.
 - Governors' strategic thinking and financial planning is strong and has led them to make some

wise decisions. The restructuring of the senior leadership team and the carefully thought-out plans for improvements to the school site, provide two striking examples of their well-informed forward planning.

- Governors regularly visit the school to observe pupils and staff at work and to gather information about the school's performance. They are informed about the quality of teaching and use this information to inform staff appraisal and pay processes. They make sure that teaching staff understand their expectations.
- They know and understand the main headlines about pupils' progress but do not have the detail about some aspects. For example, they know about the allocation and use of pupil premium funding but cannot readily explain its impact on standards.
- Through newsletters, a smart school website and regular consultation, governors make sure that parents are kept informed and involved.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	133352
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	431789

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	471
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Froggatt
Headteacher	Julie Metcalfe
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2011
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