

Inspection of an outstanding school: Guilden Sutton CofE Primary School

Arrowcroft Road, Guilden Sutton, Chester, Cheshire CH3 7ES

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

Outcome

Guilden Sutton CofE Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come into school happily each morning. Pupils, and their parents and carers, receive a warm welcome from staff at the start of each day. Pupils are proud to be members of this school, which sits at the heart of its community.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Pupils achieve highly. They progress very well through the curriculum from the early years through to Year 6. Pupils leave school very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and courteous to adults and to one another. They follow the school rules through their actions and attitudes. Pupils readily engage in their learning. They are not fazed by challenge. Indeed, they relish thinking hard. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are underpinned by their desire to 'give it a go and never give up'.

Pupils benefit from the wider opportunities on offer at the school. For example, pupils take the lead in organising and running charity events. They benefit from a wide choice of clubs to that they can choose to join, for example, nature detectives, choir and chess. Pupils develop their sporting skills in clubs such as cricket and athletics. All pupils are given the opportunity to represent the school.

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

The phonics programme starts in the Reception class where children quickly learn the sounds that they need to begin to learn to read. They love to have stories read to them by their teacher. For example, the children were delighted when the giraffe from a favourite book visited their classroom. As pupils move through key stage 1, well-trained staff enable pupils to become fluent and accurate readers. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. Older pupils spoke about different types of books that they enjoy.

The curriculum has been carefully designed to suit pupils' needs. Each subject curriculum sets out what pupils should know and be able to do. Teachers have all of the information that they need in order to design activities which help pupils to gain a secure and broad body of knowledge. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Skilled staff enable pupils to remember what they have learned. Regular opportunities to recall and apply important knowledge give pupils a strong foundation upon which to build new learning.

Staff identify pupils' errors and misconceptions and resolve them straight away. This means that pupils can successfully build on what they have learned before. Pupils achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Pupils with SEND are supported very well. The school identifies pupils' additional needs accurately. Staff expertly adapt activities so that these pupils learn alongside the rest of their class. As a result, pupils with SEND progress very well through the curriculum.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents beyond the academic curriculum. Visitors to school provide pupils with positive role models, such as in science and sport. Pupils are supported to become active citizens. For example, the choir sings to local residents and eco-ambassadors organise litter picking in the community. Pupils are well-prepared for life in modern Britain. For instance, they are highly reflective when talking about their work on the civil rights movement. Older pupils relish the time that they spend on residential visits. They enjoy taking part in new challenges such as kayaking and climbing. Pupils also make their own meals and tidy up. They recognise that these are important life skills.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional. They listen carefully to all that their teachers say. Pupils work very well with one another. For example, pupils prompt one another in order to help them to remember previous learning. Resilience is developed from a young age. This was evident in the Reception class where children displayed real determination to solve the problem when their work in the construction area did not go to plan.

Attendance has a high priority. The school takes effective action to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

The governing body offer a breadth of skills to support the school. They are insightful and hold leaders to account. Governors are particularly mindful of staff's workload. They make decisions based on pupils' best interests alongside their careful consideration of staff's workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged 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 September 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	111273
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10313988
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Parker
Headteacher	Theresa Rainford
Website	www.guildensutton.cheshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Chester. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools with a religious character, took place in November 2019. The next inspection is scheduled to take place in the 2025/26 academic year.
- A new headteacher and two new assistant headteachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and other leaders. She also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, looked at a sample of pupils' work, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and talked with pupils about their learning.
- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other areas. This included looking at curriculum documentation and talking to pupils.
- The inspector also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour as they arrived at school and during lessons and breaktimes. She also spoke with pupils about their views of school life.
- The inspector considered the views of parents. She looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Frith Murphy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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