

# Gorse Hall Primary and Nursery School

Forester Drive, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 2DP

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Staff have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. Displays of pupils' work provide an inspiring environment for learning.
- Achievement is good. The downward trend in attainment has been halted. The majority of pupils are making rapid progress from their starting points.
- Good teaching helps pupils develop their skills effectively in mathematics, reading and writing. Pupils enjoy a range of subjects.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of how they can improve their written work because of teachers' excellent marking.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and lessons are calm and purposeful. They are courteous and polite to visitors.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They are confident that poor behaviour will be dealt with effectively.
- Leadership and management are good. The impact of this effective leadership is seen in the improvements since the last inspection.
- Teaching is now good and achievement has risen as a result of effective performance management and well-targeted professional development.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement planning is focused on the right things. Improvement is supported well through links with schools in the local area.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and provide good support and challenge to leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some of the most able pupils do not make the same rapid progress as other pupils.
- Occasionally, pupils with special educational needs are not supported as well as they could be during whole-class lessons.
- Middle leaders are not yet having sufficient impact on improving teaching.
- Communication between the school and parents is not developed well enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and in support groups.
- They examined pupils' work in each year group and heard pupils read. Work scrutiny was conducted jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils including the school council and many pupils randomly selected from registers. They spoke informally with pupils in lessons, in the playground and dining room.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents including pupil progress tracking, self-evaluation, school improvement planning, subject leaders' files, performance management and safeguarding procedures, attendance and behaviour records.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, teachers, a local authority representative, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 123 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) made in the last 365 days and of the 170 responses that have accumulated over time. They also took account of 29 staff questionnaires.
- The lead inspector had telephone conversations with four parents at their request. All inspectors spoke with a number of parents at the school gate at the beginning of the second day of inspection.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law , Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Fann	Additional Inspector
Steve Rigby	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Gorse Hall is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs who are supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- There is a smaller than average proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are in the care of the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Build on good teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - increasing the amount of challenge for the most able pupils, particularly in reading and mathematics, so that more pupils reach the higher standards
  - ensuring that pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, including those with behavioural special needs, receive appropriate support when they are working alongside their peers in the classroom.
- Continue to develop leadership across the school by:
  - developing the roles of middle leaders further, particularly in leading professional development to improve teaching and raise achievement
  - developing the role of the newly appointed learning mentor in supporting vulnerable groups, engaging with parents and working with the Parent Teacher Association.
- Improve communication between parents and the school by:
  - making sure that all parents are aware of the good things happening in school
  - increasing governors' involvement in gathering parents' views and sharing information through a variety of media
  - devolving more responsibility to class teachers for dealing with low-level behaviour incidents as they occur and communicating them to parents.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are mostly typical for their age, although their communication and literacy skills are often lower. They make good progress, so they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment and progress improved in all key stages in 2013. Attainment at the end of Year 2 was broadly average. At the end of Year 6, attainment was above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. Most pupils made at least expected progress from their starting points.
- In 2013, pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals attained highly compared with similar pupils nationally. They made the same good progress as and attained similarly to other pupils in the school in mathematics and writing. Eligible pupils were about six months behind other pupils in the school in reading. The gaps are closing in all subjects as leaders have used additional funding effectively to make sure eligible pupils make good progress.
- Pupils currently in school make good progress overall from their starting points in each year group. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in writing, because they write for a range of purposes and receive excellent guidance on how to improve their writing. Pupils' knowledge of grammar, punctuation and text structures is impressive.
- In reading and mathematics, middle- and lower-ability pupils make the most rapid progress. There are occasions when work in these subjects does not offer enough challenge for the most able pupils, so they do not make the same rapid progress as others.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make good progress overall. However, there are occasions when these pupils do not achieve so well in whole-class lessons because they do not receive exactly the right level of support in this setting.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and the few who speak English as an additional language make similarly good progress to others.
- Leaders and governors ensure that good relationships are fostered, discrimination is tackled and all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and make good progress. Regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress ensure that underachievement is identified early and pupils are supported appropriately to catch up.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View feel that their children make good progress and are well taught.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching promotes pupils' good progress. Pupils say lessons are interesting and varied.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because activities promote their key skills well. Communication, language and literacy skills are promoted particularly well, so children learn how to read and write simple texts.
- The marking of pupils' work is a strength across the school. Excellent marking helps pupils understand how they can improve their writing in all subjects and develop their mathematical understanding. Pupils are adept at checking and improving their work.
- Teaching assistants are well briefed and organised effectively to support pupils of all ability. This helps pupils to learn more effectively.
- Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make good progress because they are usually supported very well. Additional support helps the small number of pupils who have behavioural special needs to focus on their learning targets. However, there are rare occasions when these pupils are not supported as effectively when they work alongside other pupils in lessons.
- Where learning is most effective, tasks are adapted to provide more challenge or support when

appropriate. Teachers' good subject knowledge supports effective questioning to probe and deepen pupils' understanding.

- Pupils generally make good progress in learning to read because they are taught how to use a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words, including the sounds that letters make. The majority make similarly good progress in mathematics because they have opportunities to apply their knowledge and solve problems. Pupils of all abilities learn to write in a range of styles and make brisk progress in writing because the teaching of writing has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- There are times, however, when the most able pupils do not always make the same rapid progress as other ability groups in reading and mathematics because they are not moved on to more challenging work quickly enough.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium benefit from a range of additional support and opportunities to enrich their experiences. This is helping to close gaps between their achievement and that of others in the school.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The excellent displays around the school celebrate and inform about different cultures. Pupils take pride in the school's 'Eco-School' status and are knowledgeable about global and local issues.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils' good behaviour in lessons contributes to a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning. Good relations help pupils to gain in confidence. Pupils' positive attitudes to school are reflected in improved attendance over the last three years to above average levels.
- Pupils are keen to do their best. They are resourceful, saying for example that, 'we try to work things out and use all the aids, such as dictionaries, display and asking friends, before asking the teacher for help'.
- Behaviour in the playground and around the school is good. Pupils say that 'not many children get into trouble now because everyone is kind and teachers sort things out quickly'.
- Exclusions were above average in 2012, in the early stages of the new behaviour code being enforced. The proportion of pupils excluded has reduced since the start of this year.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their contributions to many aspects of the school. The school council are pleased with their contributions to improve the playground with the creation of a 'Trim Trail'. Play Leaders from Year 6 make a good contribution, supervising younger pupils over lunch and organising games for them. Prefects take their responsibilities seriously and are keen to help with the running of the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe and the vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children feel safe at school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. They are aware that racist name-calling has taken place in the past, but say it is not heard now.
- A small minority of parents feel that behaviour is not managed well. The vast majority are positive and feel that leaders deal effectively with behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour has improved in the last 18 months. They welcome the changes to the behaviour code and say the sanctions and rewards are much clearer.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leadership team provide effective leadership to secure improvements. All the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been tackled fully. They have good capacity to continue to improve the school.

- All staff have worked hard and with determination to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. They set high expectations for themselves and the pupils. Effective management of teachers' performance has secured consistently good teaching across the school. Performance management is appropriately linked to salary progression.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of performance based on effective systems to check teaching and track pupils' progress. Improvement planning is focused on the right priorities.
- Leaders have introduced a number of new policies, which are being applied effectively. Lesson planning, marking and assessment are of high quality across the school. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently, but too much falls to the headteacher in following up issues. Teachers do not routinely deal with low-level incidents, including reporting them to parents.
- Middle leaders are developing their skills in checking teaching and tracking pupils' progress, but they are not yet having full impact on improving teaching and raising achievement. The role of the newly appointed learning mentor is not yet having enough impact with regard to engaging with parents and supporting vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders make sure that learning is exciting and pupils enjoy a broad range of subjects. Pupils especially enjoy learning about different historical topics and conducting experiments in science.
- The majority of parents feel the school is well led and managed. Staff questionnaires were extremely positive and pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school. A few parents feel that leadership of the school is ineffective, but this is not the majority view nor the view of inspectors.
- Links with local schools and support from independent consultants have provided good quality professional development and moderation of leaders' views. 'Cluster' arrangements provide useful challenge and support between schools.
- The local authority has provided minimal support and challenge and has had little impact on the school's performance. This is because the local authority 'School Performance and Support Service' was disbanded two years ago. The service has been rebuilt and a support officer has recently been allocated to work with the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a good range of expertise and have reorganised committees effectively.
  - They are well informed about the performance of the school, including the quality of teaching. They have a rounded view, based on thorough analysis of data and seeing the school in action. They ask challenging questions about teaching, achievement and the impact of additional funding.
  - Governors monitor the use of pupil premium and additional sports funding to make sure it is making a difference to pupils' achievement and health.
  - They are managing the performance of the headteacher effectively and have a good overview of procedures to manage the performance of other staff and their salary progression.
  - There are rigorous procedures to safeguard pupils and ensure their health and safety. All statutory requirements are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106188
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	431660

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	458
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wendy Hartley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Stringer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 338 4262
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 304 9728
<b>Email address</b>	admin@gorsehall.tameside.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

