

Inspection of a good school: Golborne High School

Lowton Road, Golborne, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 3EL

Inspection dates:

4–5 December 2019

Outcome

Golborne High School continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and well cared for at Golborne High School. Teachers deal with the rare cases of bullying well. Pupils feel safe. They say that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem.

Teachers have very high expectations for their pupils. Pupils work hard and enjoy their learning. They behave well in class and around the school. Pupils say that their teachers help them to do their best at all times. All pupils achieve well in this school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make excellent progress in their learning. Some subjects, for example history, are particularly good at helping pupils to make connections to topics and themes taught in other subjects. Pupils remember more knowledge when this happens.

There are a wide range of clubs and activities for pupils. As well as a number of sports clubs, there are music clubs, debating clubs and film clubs. Pupils are encouraged to engage in these through an award system. There are also opportunities to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their leadership skills. The school has an active pupil council. The council recently organised a successful Christmas shoebox appeal in the school. Pupils are also encouraged to take up responsibility through the prefect programme.

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

Leaders and governors have brought about considerable improvement since the last inspection. They have developed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. A significant proportion of pupils are entered for the English Baccalaureate. By the end of key stage 4,

pupils' achievement is exceptionally high across all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils thrive at this school and achieve well across the curriculum. Therefore, the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils nationally is closing quickly by the end of Year 11.

All subjects have a well-sequenced curriculum that enables pupils to build on what they already know and can do. Pupils are given the opportunity to revisit learning. This helps them to make strong progress through the school's planned curriculum. In most subjects, leaders have created links to key themes that run through the curriculum to make a strong framework for learning. Leaders acknowledge that some subjects are not as far along in the journey as others.

Ambition for pupils is high. Teachers are adept at planning their lessons so that pupils become increasingly confident in making the connections between themes and topics across different subjects. Teachers know their pupils very well and develop learning resources that promote high-quality learning.

All pupils with SEND have a 'passport' that is closely monitored by the special educational needs coordinator. This passport gives teachers the information that they need to help pupils with SEND to learn well and be successful.

Leaders have taken the decision to enter a small group of pupils for their GCSE English literature examination at the end of Year 10. This is a well-founded decision that enables disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND to achieve highly in both English literature and English language by the time they leave Year 11.

There is a broad curriculum to support pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online. They learn about the dangers of social networking sites that could put them at risk of harm. They are encouraged to stay healthy, both physically and mentally. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about other cultures. Pupils are made aware of the importance of respecting people that are different from themselves.

Most pupils are committed to their learning. They demonstrate this commitment through their high levels of attendance and punctuality. Few pupils misbehave, particularly during learning. Any disruption to learning is quickly resolved by teachers.

Teachers' subject knowledge is well developed. Leaders provide training for teachers to help them to improve their skills. Departments are given time to share good practice. Teachers said that this time is very helpful and enables them to plan their curriculums effectively. Teachers are proud to work at the school. They feel that they are well supported. They say that leaders do what they can to reduce their workload. Teachers feel that key decisions that affect their work are communicated clearly to them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are appropriate systems in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe in school. Leaders have made strong links with external agencies so that they can provide effective help to all pupils. They move promptly to ensure that pupils in need are well supported.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, achieve highly across all subjects. In some subjects, pupils do not make connections between the key concepts as readily as they do in others. Leaders should review the planned curriculum in some subjects to enhance opportunities for pupils to make greater connections in their learning across different subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 22 May 2013.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	106525
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10110980
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	972
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Margaret Byrne
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Gormally
Website	www.golbornehigh.wigan.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10 February 2016

Information about this school

- There are currently no pupils attending alternative provision. However, there are a small number of pupils being provided with home tuition through the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and the school development plan. We scrutinised information about attendance and behaviour.
- We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 93 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View. We considered the 52 responses to a questionnaire for pupils and the 70 responses to a questionnaire for staff.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and support for pupils.

- We looked closely at mathematics, history and science during the inspection. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Erica Sharman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim Long

Ofsted Inspector

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