

Inspection of a good school: Garway Primary School

Garway, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8RQ

Inspection dates:

14 January 2020

Outcome

Garway Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that is extremely popular with its pupils and parents and carers. They love the family atmosphere, and pupils radiate enthusiasm for their work. One parent said that their children did not want to go to sleep before they had recounted everything they had learned. Pupils study a wide range of subjects.

Leaders and governors place the school's values at the centre of their work. Pupils care for each other, and older ones help younger ones. Behaviour in the classroom and the playground is consistently good, and sometimes exceptional. Bullying is not accepted and pupils feel safe. Pupils and their parents are sure that staff will sort out any disagreements quickly.

Teachers organise learning well. They plan the work so that it builds on what pupils already know. They check on pupils' progress and make good arrangements for those who need to catch up. Staff provide well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The headteacher has a shrewd understanding of the school's priorities. She has taken effective action to improve the quality of education and to manage recent staffing changes.

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

Class teachers plan pupils' learning well. They make sure that they base their teaching on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers draw effectively on a range of resources. Leaders for each subject provide additional support. Teachers combine the learning of different subjects well. For example, topics often combine history with geography and the art of the period. Pupils also develop their literacy skills effectively by writing at length about their topic work. Teachers nevertheless ensure that they teach the skills and knowledge that each subject requires. They encourage pupils to reflect on how new ideas relate to what they have learned before. As a result, pupils understand

how their learning fits together. They are able to recall knowledge and ideas in good detail.

In the classroom, teaching assistants help to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing abilities. Staff encourage pupils to be increasingly independent, but pupils know that help is always available if they need it. Sometimes, the most able pupils complete too many similar tasks. On these occasions, they would benefit from work that makes them think more deeply. This would help them to do even better at school, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Leaders recognise the central importance of early reading. Responding to a dip in reading outcomes for Year 1 pupils, leaders have revamped the teaching of phonics. Those who attend the pre-school begin their work on letters and sounds in the summer term of Nursery Year. From then on, pupils follow a programme that ensures that they learn letters in a helpful sequence. Staff group pupils using precise assessments of what pupils already know. This careful planning and lively teaching sustain pupils' interest and help them to make strong progress.

Pupils hear teachers reading, study texts together as a class and read on their own. Books are generally well matched to pupils' reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading and understand its importance.

Staff in early years teach numeracy well. Children are able to reason and develop an understanding of mathematics, alongside number facts. Older pupils' learning in the subject is broken down into small steps. These help them to acquire and retain mathematical knowledge. At key stage 2, in particular, pupils have the secure understanding to reason mathematically and apply their learning in different ways. Pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils' outcomes in mathematics have improved steadily over recent years.

Teachers know how to teach the different subjects of the national curriculum. For example, in history, they have a good knowledge. Teachers develop pupils' skills as historians, such as how to use different sources. They make sure that pupils have a sense of chronology, so that pupils can fit together their learning about different time periods.

There are several opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to serve the wider community. Staff carefully nurture pupils' self-confidence and personal independence. Most take part in clubs after school, and many receive instrumental music lessons. Pupils recognise how well staff teach and care for them. They consistently treat adults and their classmates with respect.

Teachers told us that their training has been very effective in improving their skills, especially in the teaching of phonics and mathematics. They have useful opportunities to visit other schools. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to manage teachers' workload.

This school year has seen a marked improvement in pupils' attendance, but it remains below the national average. Leaders have not persuaded some parents to send their children to school on every day that they are fit to attend.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the pupils and their families very well. They use this knowledge to help them to keep pupils safe. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained, so that they are vigilant and alert to any risks. If an issue arises, leaders take the right steps to involve other agencies that work with children. They keep good records. Leaders make the necessary checks on the staff who join the school. The governing body plays an effective part in safeguarding.

Pupils feel overwhelmingly safe in school, and their parents share this view.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should do. More key stage 2 pupils should attain at greater depth in mathematics and writing. Current steps to dovetail the curriculum in the pre-school with that in Reception Year will further increase the proportion of pupils who start key stage 1 having exceeded at least some of the early learning goals. Leaders should ensure that teachers at key stages 1 and 2 understand how to plan well in different subjects so that the most able pupils gain a deep understanding of the subject matter.
- Although this school year has seen a considerable improvement, both the overall rate of pupils' absence and the proportion of pupils who are absent persistently remain above average. Leaders and governors have stressed to parents the importance of good attendance. They should, nevertheless, redouble their efforts to demonstrate the benefits to both individual pupils and to the school community of the fullest possible attendance.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

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 the provider and 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	116677
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10122585
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Bevan
Headteacher	Julie Jones
Website	www.garwayprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 June 2016

Information about this school

- Although Garway Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, its roll is increasing. Each year, it admits a number of pupils other than at the normal points of transition.
- In April 2017, the governors of the school took over the running of the pre-school on the site, which had been an independent setting. The pre-school caters for children aged two to four, almost all of whom attend part time.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The previous deputy headteacher left the school in December 2019. A new deputy headteacher from the existing staff took up her post in January 2020. A number of teachers have joined the school in this school year.

Information about this inspection

- Before the inspection, I reviewed the information on the school's website and spoke to the headteacher on the telephone about the school's curriculum.

- We conducted deep dives into reading, mathematics and history. We held discussions with leaders, visited lessons, held meetings with staff, looked at examples of pupils' work and had discussions with pupils.
- We took account of the 51 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. We also considered 41 free-text comments. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- We considered the 16 responses to the staff survey. We also spoke to staff about their professional development and their support from leaders.
- We took into account the 46 responses to the survey for pupils. We spoke to pupils in lessons and at social times about their experiences at school.
- I checked the school's employment records and met with senior leaders about safeguarding. I met with the newly appointed special educational needs coordinator.
- I listened to pupils in Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 reading.
- I met with the chair and two other members of the governing body. I also spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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