

Inspection of a good school: Green Park School

Green Park Avenue, Stowlawn, Bilston, West Midlands WV14 6EH

Inspection dates: 27–28 February 2020

Outcome

Green Park School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Green Park is a happy school where special things happen. Pupils thrive because cheerful staff provide good-quality care and well-planned lessons. Pupils overcome barriers to learning because they get the support they need. As one parent put it, 'Pupils radiate joy, as do staff.' Staff value pupils as individuals and this inspires learning.

The school's motto of 'learning for life' is at the heart of everything it does. Teaching communication is a priority. This is so that pupils can experience the joy of interacting with staff, friends and families. Staff support pupils to develop their independence so that pupils can find their place in the world around them. Learning is fun because staff celebrate every moment of achievement.

Pupils behave well and work hard in lessons. This is because staff work hard to deal with the reasons that poor behaviour occurs. As a result, this is a calm and purposeful environment. Leaders have worked hard to make sure that this is a place where bullying is rare. When any incidents are reported, leaders work quickly to investigate and act.

Parents and carers told us that this is a great school. One parent commented, 'The school has been nothing but amazing and supportive.' This mirrored the views of many others.

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

Children get off to a great start at Green Park. This is because staff in the early years get to know the children's individual needs well. Good-quality personalised care means that children feel safe and are safe. Skilled staff nurture early friendships between children. Children learn the communication, physical and personal skills they need to be successful later in school.

All pupils have lessons in a range of different subjects. Leaders aim to ensure that these lessons not only teach the right skills but that pupils can apply these in the wider world. Leaders have recently introduced more functional skills lessons to develop real-life skills

such as shopping or cooking. However, in some cases, pupils do not always have enough opportunities in other lessons to practise new skills. This affects how successful they are in learning and remembering these new skills.

Staff work well with speech and language therapists to make sure that the pupils have the right communication systems. Picture exchange, Makaton signing, Eye Gaze and a range of other systems ensure that pupils learn to, and can, make themselves understood. Most staff patiently wait to find out what pupils want to say and respond when needed. There are, however, a few cases where staff overload pupils with too much language and do not give them enough time to understand what has been said to them.

When pupils are ready, they are taught to read. Before this, teachers work hard to make sure that pupils have the right skills to be ready to enjoy books. This includes developing attention and listening for sounds. As pupils get older, teachers carefully plan opportunities to develop real-life reading skills. Menus, signs and timetables develop pupils' reading when they are out and about in the community. All staff are experts in making sure that all pupils get the support they need to catch up when they fall behind in their reading.

Physical development, like many other subjects, is a strength. Skilled staff work well with physiotherapists to make sure that all pupils develop the skills they need to move, handle objects and gain the attention of others. Physical education lessons develop the agility, balance and coordination pupils need to be physically healthy when they get older. A new outdoor gym and regular visits to swimming pools and gyms support older pupils to further develop these skills in the world around them.

Learning in the sixth form ensures that students have the skills they need to be successful when they leave school. Well-chosen qualifications celebrate learning and achievement. Opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme broaden their outlook on life. When students leave, staff continue to check up on them to make sure that they are safe and successful. Staff say that the students 'will always be part of the Green Park family'.

Leaders work hard to make sure that pupils attend school as much as they can. There are a high number of pupils with complex medical needs which affect how often they attend. When pupils cannot attend due to medical needs, leaders maintain contact with the pupils. When needed, staff increase levels of support to make sure that the pupils' return is as swift as possible.

Pupils learning the skills they need to thrive in the world around them is a priority. Trips to places like Dudley Zoo and Drayton Manor bring learning to life. Yoga, relaxation sessions and massage teach the pupils how to manage their own feelings. Careers advice informs pupils about what jobs they want. Supported work experiences provides opportunities to have a go.

Assemblies are a strength. Carefully chosen content broadens the pupils' understanding of the world around them. Exciting drumming, signing and musical performances inspire the pupils. Parents who attend feel that assemblies are great: 'very engaging, proactive and soul warming'.

Staff feel well supported and feel that regular training helps them to develop in their role. They rightly feel that the school is well led and managed. They are proud to be members of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff work in partnership to make sure that pupils feel safe and are safe. Good-quality training is in place to make sure that all know how to raise concerns when they are worried about a pupil's welfare. Leaders follow up on these concerns to make sure that the child is safe, bringing in external help when required. Pupils and families therefore get the high-quality support they need from the school.

Leaders and governors make sure that all required pre-employment checks are in place. All safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and understood by staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The development of the communication strategy at the school has been strong. Most staff accurately understand the developmental needs of the pupils in terms of communication. However, some staff use too much spoken language when interacting with pupils. This limits how much pupils will understand and retain. Leaders need to ensure that all interactions with pupils are well matched to their receptive skills. This will in turn mean that they can understand, learn and remember more.
- Pupils are systematically developing the skills they need as successful learners. Most staff regularly provide opportunities for the pupils to practise these skills. However, some do not always provide the opportunities for pupils to put these skills into action. This affects how well the pupils learn and remember and limits how successfully pupils will be able to use those skills independently outside school. Leaders need to ensure that all staff consistently provide opportunities for all pupils to practise their new skills.

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 17 October 2012.

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 school 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	104415
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10088599
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barry Bond
Headteacher	Lorraine Dawney
Website	www.greenparkschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 December 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the number of pupils on roll has increased from 114 to 146.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we focused on the following subjects: reading, communication and language, personal, social and health education (PSHE), and physical development. In these subjects, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, examined teachers' plans and talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects were taught. We also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were planned and taught.
- We examined external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.

- We asked staff, leaders, local academy members and trustees about safeguarding arrangements. We examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. We also found out about safety procedures and routines.
- We observed informal times of the day, to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, governors, teachers and pupils. We also talked informally with parents, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. One inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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