

# Inspection of Gentleshaw Primary Academy

Darlings Lane, Gentleshaw, Rugeley, Staffordshire WS15 4LY

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Gentleshaw is a friendly and welcoming school. Relationships between adults, pupils and their families are positive. Leaders create a nurturing environment. Pupils feel cared for and valued. They work well with each other and their teachers. Pupils trust staff to help them with any worries that they may have. Leaders have worked hard to strengthen relationships since returning to school after the pandemic. For example, they arranged for the whole school community to come together at the start of term to celebrate 'G-Fest'. Pupils told us how much they enjoyed this event that helped them settle back into school.

Pupils behave well during lessons, when moving around the school and at playtimes. They are polite and well-mannered. They look after each other. Older pupils support younger ones through a programme of 'buddying'. This arrangement promotes the caring ethos of the school. On the very rare occasion that bullying happens, pupils know adults will deal with it quickly.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that enrich the subject curriculum. These opportunities promote pupils' confidence and sense of responsibility. For instance, some pupils act as 'pupil leaders' and 'eco-warriors'. Pupils take pride in the work and take these duties seriously.

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

Leaders have created a culture where staff feel valued. For example, teachers are involved in making decisions about the quality of education. Teachers and teaching assistants have worked together in curriculum teams. These teams have supported leaders in developing the curriculum. Staff appreciate this opportunity, which has boosted their morale.

Curriculum leaders have considered thoughtfully the order in which pupils learn key facts and ideas. Leaders have set out the important information that pupils need to remember each term and year in most subjects, including the early years curriculum. This helps all pupils to make progress and learn well. In many subjects, such as mathematics, reading and science, curriculum plans set out precisely the knowledge pupils need to remember. These plans support teachers to make careful checks on what pupils should know. Teachers use information from these checks well to spot pupils who need extra help and identify gaps in pupils' learning. However, in some subjects, such as in history, plans are less precise. In these subjects, the knowledge that teachers expect pupils to learn is not always identified clearly. This slows pupils' learning in these subjects. Leaders recognise this and have plans in place to develop the curriculum further.

Leaders promote a love reading across the school. They select high-quality texts for teachers to use in lessons. In addition, staff share book recommendations with pupils. This encourages pupils to read a variety of stories from different authors.

The school's approach to teaching early reading is well planned. Younger pupils have phonics lessons every day. They read to adults regularly. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), become better readers over time. However, some staff are new to teaching phonics. Leaders have rightly identified that these teachers need additional support to develop their knowledge of teaching early reading. Leaders have put a programme in place to train these staff.

The leader responsible for pupils with SEND ensures that pupils receive the right support when they need it. Leaders have trained staff in how to help pupils with specific needs. This means adults can help all pupils to access the curriculum and learn it well.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Children in the early years work calmly together. They focus on their tasks and use equipment in a purposeful way. Older pupils listen carefully and participate well in lessons. Some pupils lose focus in lessons occasionally. Teachers act swiftly to refocus them when this happens.

Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well through the curriculum. Pupils, including those in the early years, enjoy learning about relationships, faiths and cultures that are different to their own. This work is preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

The trust ensures that leaders receive effective support and challenge when needed. Those responsible for governance ask searching questions and have an accurate view of the school. This helps them in their duty to hold leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is woven into daily practice. Therefore, there is a healthy culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, maintain the belief that 'it could happen here'. They ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to protect children. Staff understand these procedures and are vigilant for potential concerns.

There is strong emphasis on pupils learning strategies to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum does not clearly set out the key knowledge that pupils need to learn in all subjects. This limits teachers' ability to check precisely what pupils

know and remember in some subjects. Leaders should ensure that end points are described in a sufficiently specific manner in every subject so that teachers are able to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning.

- There is variation in how well teachers are able to teach early reading. This slows some pupils' learning. Leaders should take swift action to ensure that all staff have the subject knowledge and gain rapid experience to teach phonics well.

## 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.

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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144604
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10201069
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Fliss Dale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Genevieve Saunders
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gentleshaw-squirrel.com">www.gentleshaw-squirrel.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is the first inspection of the school since it became part of the Future Generation Trust in 2017. The trust consists of four primary schools.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. They held discussions with the chief executive of the trust and representatives of the local governing body.
- Inspectors met with a range of teachers and support staff to check their views on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Inspectors focused most closely on these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. They visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work. They spoke

with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils about the quality of education. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading to an adult.

- When inspecting safeguarding, inspectors held discussions with designated safeguarding leaders and those responsible for governance of the school. They looked at examples from the school's safeguarding records, and they reviewed the single central record of checks made on staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school's website, leaders' actions plans, policies and curriculum documents. Inspectors also reviewed the school's records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered 41 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 41 free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered 25 pupils' questionnaires and 20 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rob Hackfath

Her Majesty's Inspector

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