

# Inspection of a good school: Lostock Gralam CofE Primary School

School Lane, Lostock Gralam, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7PT

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

## **Outcome**

Lostock Gralam CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming, nurturing and caring school. Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

There is a strong sense of community at the school. Pupils feel safe. They said that their friends, and the staff, look after them well. Leaders support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs effectively. They ensure that the school's vision to 'put children at the heart of everything' is lived out on a daily basis.

Classrooms are calm. This allows pupils to do their best in lessons. Teachers' high expectations for behaviour are clear from the start children join the school in the Reception class. Pupils behave well. They said that their teachers act quickly and successfully to resolve any bullying.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of diversity. They know that everyone is different and that all will be included in their school. Older pupils enjoy supporting others, for example as anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils' learning is successfully enhanced by leaders and staff through a range of trips and after-school clubs.

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

Leaders have built an ambitious curriculum. They provide pupils with many opportunities to learn about the school's locality. Leaders have designed the curriculum carefully so that pupils extend their vocabulary in each subject. Staff teach pupils new knowledge in well-ordered steps as they move through the school. Most pupils, including children in the early years, achieve well.

Teachers know what pupils in their classes need to learn and understand. They have an effective knowledge of the subjects that they teach. However, at times, pupils do not fully remember their previous learning. In history, for example, pupils have learned important

facts from the curriculum. Even so, they struggled to recall some of these facts and confused events from different historical periods. This is because, in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not check that pupils have understood what they have been taught sufficiently well. This stops some pupils from deepening their knowledge over time.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn phonics through a well-ordered curriculum. This begins when children start in the early years. Any pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their learning of phonics are identified early. For these pupils, additional and effective support is provided by staff. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils are successful readers.

Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to read and listen to stories. Staff teach pupils the meaning of important new words and help pupils to understand how language is written. As a result, pupils' understanding of the texts they read is improving well over time. Older pupils read fluently with expression, intonation and a real sense of understanding.

Leaders and staff are skilled at identifying the specific needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers and teaching assistants support the learning of all pupils effectively, including those with sensory needs. This is because staff are trained effectively in educating pupils with SEND. They ensure that pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as other pupils. This helps these pupils to achieve well.

Children in the early years know the routines to help them work and play safely and purposefully. Pupils across the school concentrate on their learning with limited distractions. They are keen to do their best. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum provides high-quality opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, links with the local church and diocese help develop pupils' deep spiritual and global understanding.

Staff talked positively about the strong and supportive teamwork that exists in the school. They know that leaders will consider their workload before new initiatives are introduced. They said that they are proud to work at the school.

Governors know the school well. They work productively with leaders to understand how effectively the curriculum is helping pupils to know more and remember more.

Parents and carers spoke positively about the support provided by leaders and staff to their children. They know that their concerns will be listened to. They value the school's response to their needs.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They have ensured that staff are well trained to protect pupils from harm. Leaders have developed an effective safeguarding team in the school.

Leaders keep meticulous records and diligently follow up on any concerns they may have about a pupil's safety or welfare. They work in partnership with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need.

The school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Year 6 pupils recalled a recent visit to a locally arranged safety event to promote their understanding of, for example, water safety and first aid.

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

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

- In some subjects, teachers do not check well enough what pupils have understood and remembered. This stops some pupils from deepening their learning. Leaders should ensure that staff check that pupils know and remember their learning securely before new topics are introduced.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2011.

## **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>	111289
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212400
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Barker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Powell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lostockgralam.cheshire.sch.uk">www.lostockgralam.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2016.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection and there have been significant changes of staff in this time.
- Leaders have created a designated class to support nine of the school's pupils with sensory needs. They attend this class either part time or full time. Where they attend part time, they join the rest of their year group for the rest of the school day.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. He also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke with representatives from the local authority and diocese. He also spoke with the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school's single central record of checks undertaken on staff and visitors and leaders' safeguarding records.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. He talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. The inspector also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. The inspector observed pupils reading to their class teacher.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and as they moved around school. He also observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke with a group of pupils about their experiences at the school.
- The inspector looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also met with some parents to find out their views of the school. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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