

Inspection of a good school: The Gateway Primary Academy

Milestone Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 6DW

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2022

Outcome

The Gateway Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love learning in this school. They are incredibly proud to talk about how they can become better learners by being resourceful and resilient. They use the colourful classroom displays to help them talk knowledgeably about ambitious ideas like mathematical probability. They read a vast range of well-selected books where teachers encourage them to imagine themselves as a character in the story. Guest speakers like scientists, chefs, key workers and engineers visit the school. Their stories inspire pupils to want to learn more.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils, expecting them to always strive to do their best. Pupils listen keenly to their teachers and act upon the regular feedback they get. The 'golden rules' set clear expectations for all. Pupils eagerly collect headteacher stickers and 'Value Stars' during the weekly rewards assembly. The relationships between pupils and staff are warm and nurturing. Pupils trust the adults to keep them safe and help them. As one pupil explained, 'It is good to make a mistake, as it is another chance to try again.'

Pupils behave well in lessons and when playing with friends. They do not worry about bullying because staff help them to sort out problems as soon as they are reported.

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

Leaders have planned a creative and ambitious curriculum for all pupils from early years through to Year 6. Pupils learn through carefully designed topics such as the Year 4 'Living Islands' project where pupils learn about coastal geography. This is brought to life with a trip to a local aquarium.

Pupils can fully engage in learning because leaders have made sure all pupils learn to read and write very well. Pupils learn to read from the moment they join the school in Reception. They develop their phonic knowledge to help them blend and form words. Pupils enjoy reading. They read every day as a class, on their own or to an adult. Leaders

regularly check how well pupils can read and provide support to help those who struggle to keep up.

Subject leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge that they want all pupils to have about their subject. They check how pupils are learning and make adjustments to the order of the curriculum. Therefore, pupils have more opportunities to revisit prior learning. Subjects such as physical education (PE) and design technology are still in development. Leaders are still refining the order in which pupils will learn different knowledge and skills to meet the aims of the curriculum. As a result, teachers need further support from leaders to make an accurate assessment of pupils' progress in these subjects.

Leaders act quickly to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support to learn well. Training is regularly provided by the special educational needs coordinator and the specialist speech and language teacher. This means that all staff are aware of how to skilfully remove barriers to learning. For example, in mathematics, some pupils with SEND find it hard to remember how to complete column addition. Teachers support pupils to make photo books to provide a visual reminder of each step they need to take. Every adaptation is carefully planned to make sure pupils with SEND become confident and independent learners.

Leaders encourage pupils to be proud of who they are. They bring in photos of their family celebrations like Eid, Diwali and Christmas so they can share their own traditions with their classmates. Pupils learn about different types of families. They know that they should treat everyone with equal respect. Leaders make sure that pupils know what it means to be a good citizen. Staff regularly praise pupils for being kind or helping each other. Pupils learn how to communicate well, by listening, sharing and respecting the views of others.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive because staff know them so well. Teachers listen carefully to the interests of pupils and seize every opportunity to enrich the curriculum further. For example, a bird boxes project which enables the pupils to watch a birds' nest through a webcam. This has strengthened pupils' understanding of life cycles.

Leaders and governors carefully monitor the workload of staff. Staff are happy and proud to work at the school. Leaders ensure that appropriate support is swiftly put in place so staff can fulfil their roles in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have established a strong culture of vigilance. Staff receive regular training so they can recognise when a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff pick up on small concerns or worries quickly. These concerns are reported to leaders and, where

appropriate, action is taken to resolve them. Leaders make sure that external help and guidance is provided for pupils and their families when needed.

Leaders make sure that pupils know about personal and online safety. Visits from the local police and fire brigade provide pupils real encounters with services that are responsible for keeping the community safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects such as PE and design technology, leaders are in the process of identifying and ordering the skills and knowledge that they want all pupils to know. This also means that assessment is not yet aligned with the curriculum in these subjects to identify where pupils are making progress and who needs further support. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is fully sequenced to help pupils build knowledge effectively over time. It is clear from leaders' actions that they have taken significant steps already to bring this about. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

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 predecessor school, The Gateway Primary Academy to be good in September 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 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

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| Unique reference number | 140593 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10207104 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 210 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Gaynor Oakes |
| Headteacher | Jamiel Cassem |
| Website | www.gateway-pri.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed in February 2019.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils at the school. It is managed by school leaders and run by non-teaching members of staff.
- The school does not currently use 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 took that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. They also spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and the school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and physical education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector considered the 70 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including 48 free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the school's website and policies and met with safeguarding leaders. They also spoke to pupils, staff and governors and scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school.
- The inspector reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of governing body meetings and records of behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Michelle Lower, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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