

Inspection of a good school: Gee Cross Holy Trinity CofE (VC) Primary School

Higham Lane, Gee Cross, Cheshire SK14 5LX

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 March 2023

Outcome

Gee Cross Holy Trinity CofE (VC) Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are happy and make lots of friends. Pupils said that they like coming to school because their teachers are kind and make lessons fun. Pupils who join the school at different times of the year are always made to feel very welcome. Pupils said that they feel safe because leaders and staff care for them. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone with respect, regardless of their differences. Bullying is rare. Should it happen, leaders resolve it quickly.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour, and pupils behave well. They are polite to adults and to each other. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn. They settle down to tasks quickly. At lunchtime, they enjoy playing on the recently installed artificial grass pitch or exploring the school's outdoor learning area.

Leaders and staff are determined that all pupils will succeed, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils try hard to live up to these high expectations. They enjoy their lessons and progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities available to them. They are encouraged to try a wide range of sports and to play different types of musical instruments. Pupils in Year 5 are excited about the forthcoming residential trip to north Wales.

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

Leaders and governors have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious. The curriculum provides strong foundations for learning in reading and mathematics. Leaders and teachers have a secure understanding of what children in the early years need to know so that they are well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum. The curriculum in key stage 2 is designed so that pupils are ready to move on to secondary school with secure subject knowledge and skills.

Leaders have designed most subject curriculums well so that pupils build logically on what they have learned before. They have thought carefully about how the key knowledge is sequenced. This helps pupils to make connections between their learning across different subjects.

Across the school, teachers deliver the curriculum well. Children in the Nursery and Reception Years benefit from well-thought-through and creative approaches to developing their speech, vocabulary and understanding of numbers. Teachers in key stages 1 and 2 have strong subject knowledge. They think carefully about the best way to capture the interest of their pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic, work well together in groups and ask questions of their teachers confidently.

In some subjects, teachers are conscientious in checking that pupils understand what has been taught. This is especially so in English and mathematics. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not identify where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. In these subjects, some pupils are not fully secure in their learning.

Leaders have made reading a priority across the school. Pupils said that they enjoy reading and read frequently. Teachers have ensured that there is a broad range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction for pupils to read in the well-resourced library. Class readers are chosen carefully to help pupils reflect on important moral and social issues.

Recently, leaders have made changes to the way the phonics curriculum is delivered. These changes mean that pupils, including those with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, are learning to read with increasing fluency and accuracy. Well-trained staff support pupils who fall behind with their reading to catch up quickly in their phonic knowledge.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with SEND. They identify these pupils' needs accurately. Leaders provide staff with the information that they require to enable them to cater for pupils with SEND in lessons. Staff know each pupil with SEND well and use appropriate strategies to help them to succeed.

Children enjoy their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. The large and well-equipped indoor and outdoor spaces provide the children with lots of interesting activities to stimulate learning. Across the school, pupils are attentive and work hard in lessons. Staff support effectively pupils who find it more difficult to concentrate in lessons. They help pupils to persevere even if they find the learning difficult.

Leaders offer many opportunities for pupils to develop personally. The school is an inclusive community and pupils enjoy learning about different cultures, languages and religions. Pupils learn how to discuss difficult moral issues in age-appropriate ways. For example, they have recently discussed when and how it is right to forgive someone. Pupils participate in many local community events and support local and national charities through fundraising.

Leaders take workload issues into account when making decisions. Staff appreciate leaders' efforts to support them. Governors have a strong understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They provide challenge and support for leaders in equal measure.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. They promote a strong safeguarding culture across the school. Staff are well informed about the issues that pupils may face. Staff are well trained to spot the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They report any safeguarding concerns quickly, so that pupils can get the timely help that they need. Staff work closely with other agencies where needed.

Through assemblies, and in their personal development lessons, pupils learn how to keep safe in the community and online.

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 if pupils have understood and remembered the essential subject knowledge and skills they have taught them. As a result, in those subjects, teachers sometimes do not build effectively on pupils' prior learning. Leaders should ensure that, across all subjects, teachers use assessment strategies which allow pupils to build the essential knowledge and skills they need to know and have in order to move on smoothly to the next stage of their learning.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first graded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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.

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	106226
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10256179
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dan Cathie
Headteacher	Sue Lane
Website	www.geecross.tameside.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- This Church of England school is voluntary controlled. It last received a religious education inspection, carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in February 2017.

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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. The inspector spoke with six members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local education authority and a representative from the diocese.
- As part of this inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited some lessons,

looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers. The inspector observed individual pupils reading to their teachers and teaching assistants.

- The inspector met with groups of pupils from Years 2 to 6. He also observed breaktime and lunchtime.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding procedures and the checks made on staff. The inspector met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the school development plans, self-evaluation documents, curriculum documentation and behaviour records.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- The inspector also considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Timothy Gartside, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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