

Inspection of an outstanding school: Golden Hill Pupil Referral Unit

Earnshaw Drive, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 1QS

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Golden Hill Pupil Referral Unit continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this nurturing school. They cherish the care and support that staff give to them. Staff's trust in pupils, and the first-rate guidance that they give, is pivotal in helping pupils to rebuild their love for education. Pupils describe, and demonstrate, significantly more positive attitudes to learning while attending this provision. Staff understand pupils' individual needs incredibly well. Pupils are very happy and they are safe.

Pupils buy into the high expectations that staff have for their conduct. They understand the systems and structures that are in place to help them learn how to regulate their own behaviour. Pupils make considerable improvements to their behaviour while at this school. They engage with staff with maturity. These improvements set pupils up exceptionally well for their futures. Any concerns about bullying are also dealt with immediately and effectively by leaders and staff.

Staff have extremely high expectations for pupils' learning and achievement. During lessons, pupils are highly focused on their learning. From their different starting points, pupils achieve exceptionally well in this school.

Pupils take a very active role as part of the school council. They appreciate being listened to and enjoy making a strong difference to decision-making in their school. For example, pupils have been involved in decisions about equipment that has been purchased for many of their lessons.

Pupils relish the vast range of trips and visits that are available to them, including their weekly swimming trips, residentials, and adventurous activity trips. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum that pupils experience is exemplary.

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

Leaders are passionately committed to ensuring that pupils receive a first-class education at Golden Hill. They make this vision a reality. Staff ensure that pupils re-engage fully in

education and that they develop a new-found love of learning. Adults ensure that they create an environment where pupils build up their resilience to engage in day-to-day learning. Staff have extensive expertise in supporting pupils both pastorally and academically. Leaders' ambitious curriculum is perfectly adapted for those pupils who are on shorter 12-week placements, as well as those who are placed in the school for a longer period of time.

Leaders work closely with the local authority and with placing schools to provide a curriculum that seamlessly aligns with the curriculum that pupils experience in their home schools. This continuity in learning successfully allows pupils to have a smooth transition back into their mainstream school when they are ready. No learning time is lost.

Pupils settle into Golden Hill quickly and they make considerable improvements to both their behaviour and to their learning. Some pupils arrive at the school unable to read, often due to missing a significant amount of time in their mainstream education. They are swiftly assessed to identify a starting point to help them to read. Staff skilfully incorporate systematic synthetic phonics when necessary. Staff tailor the delivery of the phonics programme to the needs of the pupils. They ensure that pupils rapidly learn to read with increasing confidence and fluency.

Staff use leaders' assessment systems with skill to assess pupils' starting points when they begin at the school. For example, staff ensure that pupils do not duplicate what they already know and remember of each subject. Assessment systems are also used to establish how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Regular reviews help parents and staff to understand the progress that pupils are making across the curriculum. Adults support pupils to catch up quickly with any missing knowledge.

All pupils in this school are on the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) register. They have a variety of different levels of need. Leaders ensure that there are a range of processes in place to identify if pupils have any additional needs to those identified on arrival. All pupils access the same ambitious curriculum, with staff using their expertise to adapt the approach to delivering the curriculum when needed.

There is a clear structure in place to support pupils to regulate their own behaviour. The well-defined reward and sanction process ensures considerable improvement in how pupils behave towards each other and towards staff. Incidents of poor behaviour, which are rare, are managed well by staff.

Children in the early years benefit from a first-class experience. Outdoor and indoor learning resources are of a high quality and they support children to meet the early learning goals. Children in the early years flourish.

Leaders place great importance on the PSHE programme and on the opportunities to develop pupils' wider skills, including their social skills. Leaders have developed a sophisticated approach to personal development which is tailored to the individual needs of the pupils. Pupils relish these opportunities.

Staff benefit from a wide range of appropriate high-quality training. This ensures that they are up to date with how to deliver the curriculum, as well as with behaviour management techniques. Staff feel incredibly well supported by leaders. The staff work as a close-knit team to provide an excellent well-rounded experience for all pupils. Governors are acutely aware of staff well-being and prioritise it when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding among all staff. Staff are vigilant to any signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Pupils feel safe and have trusting relationships with staff. Pupils said that they feel confident to share anything that they are worried about.

Leaders are proactive in ensuring that the curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. They have invited a wide range of organisations into school to support pupils to understand how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, pupils have had talks about knife crime and the risks of gangs, along with first-aid training.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding 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.

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	119106
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226325
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Clarke
Headteacher	Allison Collinge
Website	www.goldenhill.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In December 2022, the governors appointed the deputy headteacher as acting headteacher. Two acting assistant headteachers have also been appointed.
- The chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- Some pupils at this school are dual registered with their mainstream primary school, while others are on longer single registration placements.
- All pupils have SEND. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive,

inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs team, subject leaders and teachers. The inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, as well as staff and pupils, to discuss the wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to the curriculum, pupils' behaviour, improvement plans and leaders' self-evaluation.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their programme of wider personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Elaine Mawson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Stillings

His Majesty's Inspector

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