

Inspection of a good school: Garland Junior School

Clay Hill Road, Burghfield Common, Reading, Berkshire RG7 3HG

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The values of 'determination, respect, teamwork' are woven into the fabric of this inclusive community school. Staff conscientiously invest in relationships with pupils and the community. Pupils feel well looked after and know who they can go to if they need help. Their well-being is a priority for leaders, who are alert to pupils' mental and physical health, as well as any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) they may have. As one parent reported during the inspection: 'Garland has really great staff who go above and beyond for the children.'

Pupils are happy and behave well. They enjoy the wide variety of extra-curricular activities that leaders have organised for them. Many of these activities are designed to promote character development and an appreciation of diversity. Pupils have positive relationships with staff and respect others who are different to them. If there is ever any unkindness, or a report of bullying, the school takes swift and effective action.

The school wants the best for pupils. However, not all of their expectations for pupils' learning are fully realised. Improvements are needed to some aspects of teaching, to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they could.

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

The school has a curriculum which clearly outlines what pupils need to learn. In some foundation subjects, it is less detailed than it is in others. Where it is precise and cohesive, it is supporting teachers to know exactly what to teach, when, and in what order. In some subjects, this accurately and effectively builds on prior learning, and starts from when pupils arrive in Year 3. However, this is not yet consistent in all subjects.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. This is particularly evident in mathematics where teachers provide clear explanations. This, alongside regular opportunities to practise using new learning, helps pupils to understand and remember what they have been taught. The school has effective systems to identify the needs of pupils with SEND, and give them the help they need to achieve. In some subjects, checks on what pupils already know are not precise enough to ensure learning builds on prior knowledge. This means that in some subjects, the work that is given to pupils is not matched carefully enough to what they need to learn next.

The school's reading provision is variable. The phonics programme is not currently providing effective support to pupils at the early stages of learning to read. As a result, they do not acquire the key knowledge they need to be able to read fluently at a level appropriate to their age. However, the school has prioritised wider reading, and most pupils clearly enjoy experiencing a broad and diverse range of texts.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils' conduct is polite and respectful in classrooms and during play times. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They try hard and enjoy their work.

Pupils' wider development is supported well. Pupils are taught what good and bad relationships look like, and how to stay safe online. The school takes a considered approach to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's 'job shop', where pupils apply for and undertake a range of leadership roles, allows them to make a tangible contribution to the school community. Lessons teach pupils about different faiths and cultures in modern Britain, and the value of differences. As a result, pupils demonstrate an inclusive attitude towards peers, creating a positive environment for all. As one parent described the school, 'It's supportive, accepting, and positive.'

Governors, and leaders at all levels, are highly committed to improving the school and share a desire to provide the best possible opportunities for all pupils. They are clear about the school's current strengths and weaknesses, and are mindful of staff workload and well-being as they continue to implement positive changes at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some older pupils remain at the early stages of learning to read, and do not receive the help they need to improve quickly. This prevents them from accessing the curriculum and achieving as well as they should. The school should ensure that pupils get the support that they need to address the gaps in their phonics knowledge, so that they become confident readers.

- In some subjects, teachers do not check how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. They are not clear about gaps in pupils' knowledge, and do not address these before moving on to new learning. As a result, the work given to pupils does not always build on what pupils already know and, therefore, pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively in all subjects, to ensure that the work given to pupils enables them to build knowledge successfully over time.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	109858
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10287822
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jason Chamberlin
Headteacher	Emily Dawkins
Website	www.garlandjuniorschool.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision currently.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other school leaders, teaching staff, the chair of governors and a range of other members of the governing body. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to behaviour and SEND.
- The inspector considered the view of pupils, parents and staff through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted surveys.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. The single central record was also scrutinised. The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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