

Inspection of a school judged Outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Forge Wood Primary School

Somerley Drive, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 3SW

Inspection dates: 21, 22 and 24 January 2025

Outcome

Forge Wood Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Katharine Holman. This school is part of GLF Schools multi-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by a chief executive officer, Julian Drinkall, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lynne O'Reilly.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this welcoming school. There are many opportunities to develop their personalities and leadership skills. Pupils learn about their responsibilities for the environment while litter picking or celebrating 'world clean energy day'. They show kindness and consideration for each other. Older pupils help younger ones at lunch times. They work together to fundraise for charities in mixed-age groups.

The school is ambitious that pupils will achieve highly and be self-assured in their knowledge of the curriculum. Pupils learn how to be resilient. They frequently practise what they have learned until they have the knowledge of key grammatical and mathematical facts at their fingertips. In doing so, they develop personal stamina and highly positive habits for learning. Pupils achieve well overall.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. Staff act as excellent role models. Expectations are consistent throughout the school. Pupils are taught to understand different emotions. Pupils learn how emotions such as fear and anger can make them act. They are taught ways of helping themselves feel ready to learn. Pupils rightly feel safe in the knowledge that if they are worried, adults in school will listen to them and help them.

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

The school has redeveloped its curriculum, so it is more ambitious. The new curriculum particularly benefits pupils who have gaps in their learning, such as pupils who join during the school year. Pupils are taught technical vocabulary so they can talk about their learning in detail. Pupils routinely revisit the most important knowledge and ideas throughout the curriculum. This helps them to remember key information and apply it to their understanding of new ideas.

The school's 2024 Year 6 published outcomes do not reflect the current strength of pupils' achievement, nor the school's typical end of key stage 2 attainment. During the year, the school experienced a turbulent time with unavoidably high levels of staff turnover and pupil mobility in the school. These circumstances adversely affected pupils' attainment. The school has overcome these challenges and is now in a much more stable position.

The school has recently further refined the English curriculum so that pupils' learning builds more securely as they become fluent readers and writers. Staff have had the training that they need and the school is supporting them so that English is taught using the school's agreed design, as happens across other areas of the curriculum.

Staff check pupils' learning systematically. Carefully designed activities enable staff to spot pupils at risk of falling behind. Staff address misconceptions. They make sure that pupils understand what they have learned, before moving on to more difficult concepts. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly and given the support they need to thrive. They are taught to learn independently, and this helps them to be ready for the next stage in their education.

Reading is taught well. In Reception, pupils are surrounded by song and rhyme. They learn letter sounds quickly. Staff swiftly identify any pupils who struggle and help them to catch up. Those who do not meet the standard at the Year 1 phonics screening check catch up by Year 2. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their gross and fine motor skills. This helps them with letter formation as they develop their writing skills. Most pupils attain well in reading and writing and become confident, fluent readers but there is still a minority who have gaps in their knowledge in these areas.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop an understanding of others' faiths and traditions through visitors to the school. They learn about democracy when voting for leadership roles. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. They know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly.

The school supports families to overcome barriers to pupils' attendance. Persistent absence is gradually reducing, and attendance is increasing. However, too many pupils whose attendance has improved still arrive at school late. This means that they have gaps in their learning and do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils show highly positive attitudes to their learning. They behave respectfully and are motivated to achieve their best. Low-level disruption is extremely rare and does not interrupt pupils' learning.

Governors have effective systems to challenge and support the school. They scrutinise detailed information about pupils' achievement and invest in the areas which benefit pupils most. The trust works seamlessly with the school in their pursuit of excellence for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge in reading and writing. As a result, they sometimes struggle with fluency, and this prevents them from achieving as highly as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the ongoing support needed to teach the new reading and writing curriculum to the same high standards as other areas of the curriculum.
- Some pupils arrive at school late. This means they have gaps in their learning and do not attain as well as they could. The school should strengthen its work to increase punctuality.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

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	140651
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10341771
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynne O'Reilly
CEO of the trust	Justin Drinkall
Headteacher	Katharine Holman
Website	www.forgewoodschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a member of the GLF academy trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection started on 21 January 2025. It was paused in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. The inspector returned on 24 January 2025 to complete the inspection.

- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She also met with the chair of trustees, members of the local governing body, the CEO and the regional director.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils to discuss their learning.
- 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' interest first.
- The inspector considered parents' views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspector met with groups of staff. They also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025