

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Goat Lees Primary School

Hurst Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN24 9RR

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 June 2025

Outcome

Goat Lees Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming, inclusive and nurturing school. Pupils' well-being is paramount, which enables them to thrive and flourish as well-rounded individuals. Pupils behave well. They are happy, friendly, polite and kind. There is a positive culture that successfully supports all pupils to be the best they can be, both academically and personally. A parent, expressing the views of many, commented that, 'Goat Lees is a fantastic community school with a real family feel.'

The school values of 'respect, responsibility, pride and honesty' are demonstrated well by pupils in every aspect of school life. Pupils meet the school's high expectations of what they can achieve, whatever their starting points. As a result, pupils build their knowledge securely over time. They develop positive attitudes and a real thirst for learning.

Staff know the pupils well, and there are trusting and positive relationships. This helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils know they can talk to adults if they have any worries. They have a real sense of belonging and a strong voice in the school. Pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities on offer, which develop their talents and interests.

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

The provision for pupils' personal development is excellent and a strength of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep physically and mentally fit. They develop as confident, well-rounded individuals. A rich range of activities, including trips, visitors and many clubs, help bring learning to life and enrich pupils' cultural, social and emotional development. Pupils relish leadership opportunities, such as being ambassadors for different subjects. Pupils learn to care for the environment in and beyond the school. They spoke with enthusiasm about planting fruit trees for the community at the front of the school.

Pupils are extremely respectful of each other and adults. They accept individual differences. Pupils learn to listen to and respect the opinions of others, even if they do not agree with them. They develop confidence and personal skills, such as independence and resilience, that prepare them very well for later life. The school is a place where children want to be. Most attend regularly. Leaders work with determination to identify and remove any barriers to attendance.

The school has successfully developed its ambitious curriculum. It ensures that, from the early years to Year 6, the essential skills, knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn are clearly sequenced in all subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They skilfully plan interesting and exciting lessons that inspire pupils to learn. The curriculum is equally ambitious for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as it is for all others. Appropriate adaptations and skilled support ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn well. The few pupils with more complex and specific needs have a personalised approach to the curriculum, entirely appropriate to their needs.

Leaders have worked hard to develop the writing curriculum. Pupils have lots of reasons for writing in different styles in English and in different subjects. They learn the skills required to produce writing of quality, and they enjoy writing. However, there is some inconsistency in how pupils are taught to use these skills independently and as effectively as they could. This is particularly the case when learning to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. This means pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.

Firm foundations are laid in Reception so that children are ready to continue learning in Year 1. There is a strong focus on establishing positive and nurturing relationships in Reception, which continues throughout the school. The environment inside and outside the classroom successfully supports children's early reading, writing and mathematical skills as well as inspiring their imaginations and creativity.

The school library and reading displays around the school are inspiring and promote the importance and enjoyment of reading. Staff introduce pupils to a wide range of high-quality texts. Pupils develop as confident, fluent readers. In Reception, children enjoy rhymes and song as well as learning to love books and stories. Staff deliver the phonics programme with expertise. Children rapidly learn the sounds letters make to use in their early reading and writing. Staff keep a close check on how well children are doing. Any who are struggling are supported effectively to catch up quickly.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that all decisions they take are in the very best interest of pupils. Staff are a supportive team who are happy to work at the school. They appreciate the consideration given by the school to their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the writing curriculum are not as clearly and consistently taught as the school intends. This means some pupils are not using skills of planning, revising and evaluating independently or effectively enough to develop their writing skills as well as they could. The school should ensure that the writing curriculum is delivered clearly and consistently across all classes so it meets the aims of what pupils should know at each stage.

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 good 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2016.

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	136251
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10379849
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Bellman
Headteacher	Teresa Adams
Website	www.goatlees.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the CARE Foundation Trust, a cooperative trust of 10 primary schools.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 inspector held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspector met with some governors, including the chair of the governing board.

- The inspector held a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- The inspector considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments as well as speaking with some parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys, as well as speaking to staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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