

Inspection of a good school: Godinton Primary School

Lockholt Close, Ashford, Kent TN23 3JR

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

The headteacher of this school is Jillian Talbot. This school is a single-academy trust school which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve King.

Outcome

Godinton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of their happy school community. Relationships between adults and children are respectful and trusting. This is in keeping with the school's 'STAR' (Showing Tolerance and Respect) values. Throughout the school, there is a strong sense of togetherness among pupils and staff.

The school's 'guiding stars' approach threads across all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils acquire the skills needed to really engage with their learning. Consequently, attitudes to learning and behaviour are excellent across the school. Pupils are taught how to manage their emotions and behaviour in positive and independent ways. Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy making friendships with their peers. They work and play confidently together.

The school develops pupils' character and sense of responsibility through various leadership opportunities. For example, house captains, prefects, playground buddies and 'mini managers' support the school leaders to bring about positive changes in the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school as staff make their learning fun and engaging. Pupils' talents are fostered through a range of activities as well as different visits and trips. Pupils keenly described how much they valued these opportunities and their enthusiasm for the clubs on offer such as chess, cross stitch club and netball.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and unique curriculum that enables rich learning experiences. Because knowledge is carefully ordered, pupils can make links across the broad range of subjects that they learn. This begins at the start of their schooling in early years and then carefully builds through to Year 6. This helps to ensure pupils are ready

for the next stage of their education. This is evident in mathematics where children become fluent in number recognition in early years. Older pupils then go on to develop skills in solving more complex mathematical problems. Teachers check pupils' understanding in class to ensure pupils get the help they need to learn well. Staff carefully identify the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND benefit from the precise support staff give them to ensure they can learn the same curriculum as their classmates.

Leaders are continuing to develop and refine a small number of subjects within the school curriculum. This is to ensure that pupils' learning is consistently strong across all areas. In a few subjects, the school has not yet precisely identified some of the key knowledge they want pupils to learn. This leads to some inconsistencies in how well the staff teach the curriculum in these subjects. Gaps in pupils' understanding can lead to some difficulties in applying what should have already been learned to new and interesting topics. Leaders are aware of this and have plans in place to address these inconsistencies.

The school is dedicated to developing a culture of reading among pupils. Pupils express their enjoyment of the books they explore. Staff actively encourage and promote the habit of reading regularly. Older pupils enjoy reading modern, complex texts and developing their comprehension skills in lessons. There are 'reading for pleasure' opportunities for pupils where they bring books from home or choose books from class 'book corners'.

To help pupils learn to read, phonics teaching starts as soon as children join the school in the Reception Year. The school has recently introduced a new phonics programme. As this is being implemented, leaders are training staff to ensure any inconsistencies in teaching this new programme are quickly eradicated. There is also a focus on ensuring staff have the expertise to give any pupils who find reading more difficult the precise support they need. This is to ensure pupils quickly develop the skills and confidence to become confident readers.

Behaviour around the school and in the playground is routinely calm and positive. Pupils uphold daily the schools' high expectations. This begins in early years when children learn to cooperate and develop increasing independence. Staff effectively plan activities to develop children's communication skills. Staff provide bespoke support for any pupils who may need extra help in managing their behaviour or emotions. Leaders have also prioritised improving pupils' attendance. They have clear systems in place to address any absences.

There is an embedded programme of experiences to support pupils' wider development. Staff organise visitors to the school and local trips to broaden pupils' understanding of different places and cultures. Pupils are considerate and mindful of the needs of others and very accepting of differences and beliefs that their friends may have. They cherish the rewards and recognition that staff provide to celebrate their achievements. Pupils readily want to share their success through the 'proud pegs' in their classes and in weekly celebration assemblies. Staff and pupils are both proud to be a part of their school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not carefully identified and sequenced the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn. This makes it difficult for teachers to identify and address any gaps in learning as swiftly as they could. This can mean pupils find it hard to recall what they have learned and to therefore understand new topics. Leaders should continue their ongoing work to improve these aspects of the curriculum.
- The school are continuing to refine the use of the newly adopted phonics programme. This means that currently, there are some inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics. This includes examples where pupils do not always have a carefully selected reading book to help them practise reading letters and sounds. As a result, pupils are not yet consistently becoming as confident and fluent in their reading as quickly as leaders intend. Leaders must continue to check the full implementation of the new phonics programme.

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 predecessor school, Godinton Primary, to be good in March 2018.

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	141754
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10288049
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve King
Headteacher	Jillian Talbot
Website	www.godinton.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Godinton Primary converted to a single-academy trust school in March 2015
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The inspector also met with members of the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and religious education. In each subject, the inspector met with subject leaders, talked to

pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults. Other aspects of the school's curriculum were also considered.

- 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and trust board minutes.
- The inspector considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Nuamera Anwar, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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