

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Greenhall

Second Avenue, Holmcroft, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 1PS

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

Greenhall has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Joanne di Castiglione. This school is part of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sam Compton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Ford.

What is it like to attend this school?

Greenhall is a life changing place for its children. All children who attend the school face significant challenges with learning. The school provides an inspirational learning environment for them. It fully achieves its aim of 'nurturing the champion within'. Children excel and 'fly' in all aspects of school life. Well-trained staff expertly cater for children's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Parents and carers are unanimous in their appreciation, with one comment being typical of many when they stated, 'This school works wonders.'

Highly respectful relationships between staff and children are one of the pillars of this school community. Staff know children's specific needs in detail. They understand what will and will not work for each child. Children behave exceptionally well. This is because staff are highly attuned to children's feelings and anxieties and are successful at minimising these extremely efficiently. Staff skilfully help children to learn to regulate their behaviour and manage their emotions.

Preparing children for the world around them is a top priority. Children benefit from an impressive range of activities to promote their wider personal development. They experience activities such as swimming, outdoor learning and horse riding. The school ensures that children are involved in, and regularly visit, the local community.

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

The school has designed a highly effective and ambitious curriculum. Learning goals in children's education, health and care (EHC) plans and 'personalised learning plans' are seamlessly interwoven into all aspects of the curriculum. Staff use the curriculum to identify the knowledge and skills that children need to know. Using the school's assessment systems with expertise, they identify the specific next steps in children's learning. Staff then use this information, alongside their knowledge of how to engage individual children in their learning, to help children learn the intended curriculum. They are skilled in doing so highly effectively. This ensures that children learn exceptionally well.

Children's physical development, personal social and emotional development and communication and language development are central to all aspects of learning. Staff expertly develop these and use these areas of learning to enable children to learn effectively across the curriculum. They check that children progress through the curriculum steadily and that they are continually moving towards the long-term goals in their EHC plan. Consequently, children's achievement is impressive.

Central to the school's work is to develop children's communication and language skills. Staff use a variety of methods to help children with their communication, including using objects, symbols and signing. Staff make effective use of carefully created pupil communication books. They use these systems to help children build their attention and listening skills. Children learn swiftly how to communicate.

Songs, rhymes and stories permeate the environment inside and outside. Staff use books to engage children in their learning. For example, staff read a book about planting a seed when children are outside. As they read each page, children follow the steps in order to feel soil, water and leaves. Children learn about different sounds in pictures and spoken words. When they are ready children in Reception Year learn about letters, the sounds they make and how to identify these in words.

Routines are exceptionally well thought out and embedded across the school. There is a clear flow to routines, which ensures children are well prepared to learn. Staff recognise negative behaviour is a form of communication. Children benefit from staff's highly effective strategies to support their behaviour needs superbly. The school makes sure that parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school from an early age.

The provision for children's personal development is impressive. Children learn about the importance of 'engagement, motivation and thinking'. The school uses puppets, such as 'creative chameleon', and the 'slinky-linky snake', to help children to understand these concepts. Staff give children lots of opportunities to help in school. For example, collecting resources in the forest school provision. The school provides children with 'champion opportunities', such as maypole dancing, creating music and visits from a school choir. Children experience cultural events, such as Diwali and Eid. They are extremely well prepared for their next steps and later life.

The local governing body is passionate and supports the school effectively in carrying out the tweaks it needs to make to continue to excel. Trust leaders have enabled the school to focus on improving its provision, while using the school's specific skill set to improve SEND across the trust. Staff are passionate and feel that leaders support them well to improve their practice further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Greenhall Nursery, to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in January 2013.

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	149002
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10378286
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Ford
CEO of the trust	Sam Compton
Headteacher	Joanne di Castiglione
Website	www.greenhall.staffs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, which consists of 10 schools.
- The school shares the same building with Little Learners at Greenhall, which provides childcare on non-domestic premises for children from 0 to 5 years. This provision is also run by The Creative Learning Partnership 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and groups of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust and local governing body, including the chair of the trust and chair of the local governing body. They also held a meeting with the CEO and deputy CEO of the trust.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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 children's interests first.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with children about their learning and looked at samples of children's work.
- The inspectors observed children's behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the online staff survey. The inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ellen Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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