

Inspection of Golden Valley Primary School

Nailsea Park, Nailsea, Bristol, Somerset BS48 1BB

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Richard Riordan. This school is part of Lighthouse Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gary Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Adele Haysom.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Golden Valley Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Golden Valley Primary School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Golden Valley Primary is a vibrant and welcoming school. Staff are ambitious for pupils and have high expectations of them. Pupils rise to these expectations and achieve well, as exemplified in recent published outcomes. They are well prepared for their next steps into secondary school. A minority of parents and carers have struggled to adjust to the changes that leaders have made. However, most parents are positive about the improvements in their child's educational experience and overall enjoyment of school.

Pupils move calmly around the school, demonstrating the 'wonderful walking' they have been taught. Pupils appreciate the golden postcards that they receive in the post, which recognise their various achievements. Pupils represent the school's motto to 'share kindness' in how they interact positively with staff, peers and visitors. They are happy and feel safe in school.

Pupils benefit from many opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities, for example, as digital leaders, anti-bullying ambassadors or as members of the eco or sports council. Pupils have a strong voice in decisions about school life. They enjoy the range of clubs that are available to them, including coding, girls' football, basketball and the 'chill zone'. The Year 6 residential is a particular highlight for the older pupils.

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

The school has carefully reviewed the curriculum that pupils learn. Leaders ensure that it meets the ambition of the national curriculum and supports pupils to develop their knowledge successfully over time. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as their peers. They have their needs identified quickly. The school puts any additional support in place and reviews the impact of this regularly. Where appropriate, pupils with SEND can access calm spaces around the school such as 'The Nest'. This supports them to be successful in their learning.

As soon as children join in the Reception Year, they start to learn the phonics sounds they need to begin their reading journey. They read books that allow them to practise and use the phonics sounds they are learning. This helps them to become confident and fluent readers. If any pupil struggles with their reading, they receive timely and focused support, which means that they catch up quickly. Pupils develop positive reading habits as they move up through the school. Older pupils love reading with the younger pupils. All pupils value this special activity.

Staff find opportunities to develop pupils' learning across the different areas of the curriculum. For example, in the Reception Year, children place a cube on a balance scale to vote for the book they would like to read together. They then count the cubes to discover which is the winning text.

The school has made significant changes to the curriculum. In some subjects where the curriculum is new, at times staff are not as successful in checking what pupils know and

can do. On occasion, staff ask pupils to recall knowledge they have not been taught or ask them to complete tasks that are too complex.

Pupils learn to be physically active through events such as the daily mile. Pupils explain how they monitor their heart rate before and after exercise. Children in the Reception Year benefit from the recently enhanced outside space, which supports the development of their gross motor skills. The school supports pupils with their mental health effectively. Staff teach pupils how to manage their emotions. Staff ensure pupils who have experienced trauma, such as a bereavement, receive excellent care.

Pupils benefit from purposeful social times, where they enjoy a range of activities. Children in the Reception Year learn to take turns and share. Strong routines help them to know what to expect next in the school day. Incidents of bullying or unkind language in school are rare. When they do occur, staff take these seriously. The school put appropriate sanctions and supportive measures in place to ensure that these behaviours are not repeated.

A thoughtfully designed programme of learning and activities supports pupils' personal development. For example, children in the Reception Year learn about making positive friendships. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they explore the importance of having high self-esteem. Pupils develop a good understanding of current affairs and different religious festivals.

The school has a sharp focus on improving pupils' attendance. Consequently, pupils' attend regularly, and the number of persistently absent pupils has reduced.

Staff are positive about recent school improvements. They are confident that decisions leaders make are in the best interests of pupils and mindful of staff's workload. The school and trust leaders have ensured that staff have strong subject knowledge in the core areas of English and mathematics. However, staff's subject knowledge is less secure in some of the other curriculum areas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The checks on learning in some wider curriculum subjects do not identify what pupils can and cannot do effectively enough. This means learning does not always successfully build on what pupils know. The school should ensure that staff consistently check what pupils know and can do so that pupils learn well across the curriculum.
- Staff's subject knowledge in some areas of the curriculum is less developed than it is in subjects such as English and mathematics. As a result, the development of the

curriculum and the effectiveness of its delivery in these areas is not as secure. The school should ensure that staff are supported to develop their knowledge and delivery of the curriculum from the Reception Year to Year 6 across all subject areas.

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	149548
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10379005
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	405
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adele Haysom
CEO of the trust	Gary Lewis
Headteacher	Richard Riordan
Website	www.goldenvalleyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Lighthouse Schools Partnership.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2023.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the chair of the local governing body, other members of the local governing body, a trustee and the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Additionally, inspectors spoke to subject leaders of science and physical education. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in these subjects and in religious education and art and design.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered parents' responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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