



# Assessment report: Stage 2: (Assessment Day)

<b>School name and postcode:</b>	Gamesley Primary School, SK13 6HW
<b>Assessment date:</b>	Thursday, 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024
<b>School Head Teacher:</b>	Deborah Meredith
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## School context

Gamesley Primary School is a 1-form entry primary school in Glossop, Derbyshire. There is also a nursery on site (Early Excellence Centre). The staff and children of the nursery relocated to the primary school building in the summer of 2023. The two schools now operate side by side in the building and share the same Headteacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and Pastoral Manager. The school is part of the Victorious Academies Trust.

There are currently 195 pupils on roll in the school with an additional 30 in the nursery.

The school's cohort is mainly drawn from a local council housing estate, part of the Manchester overspill. The area is in the highest quintile for poor health, high levels of debt, county lines activity, poor social amenities, poverty, unemployment, and low educational status. The area also has very poor transport links.

Gamesley's pupils are largely from white, low paid working-class backgrounds. The proportion of children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding is 72% - significantly above national figures.

Approximately 46% of pupils have SEND - including SEMH needs, over 10% of pupils have EHCPs, and there are a significant number of children who need additional help to keep up with the curriculum. The level of profound need (particularly autism) amongst children in the community is so high that leaders have developed a specialist provision (Orchard) within the school.

Both the school and the nursery were judged as Good in their most recent Ofsted inspections (April 2023 and June 2024 respectively). Inspectors noted that 'staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are aspirational and want to achieve.'

Gamesley Primary School has a very good reputation in the locality for behaviour management, and trauma informed practice.

## Summary of strengths for provision and outcomes

- The school's vision which includes the commitment to 'continually strive to achieve the best progress possible for pupils and maintain high expectations and outcomes for all' and to 'encourage children to aspire to be the very best that they can be' accurately describes the

aspiration and ethos of this successful school, its high ambitions for and expectations of every learner.

- Challenge and More Able provision are at the heart of the school with policy and provision very ably and enthusiastically led by a More Able/Challenge Lead working closely with the whole staff team. The portfolio of evidence provided for the accreditation was of an extremely high quality.
- A detailed and strategic More Able/challenge action plan is in place. This includes a focus on making the school's approach to the More Able and 'challenge for all' clear to the wider community; continuing CPD for staff on oracy for challenge; implementing metacognitive approaches; and working to support the identification of More Able learners in EYFS.
- The entire staff team have worked effectively over the past three years to change a culture of 'teaching to the bottom' to one of 'teach to the top', to ensure that More Able learners have their needs met and that, in doing so, all children will be effectively challenged, and the bar will be raised for every learner. This approach is clearly explained in the Challenge for All and More Able section of the school's website and in the Teaching and Learning policy which also provides exemplification of challenge pedagogy.
- Similarly, clear definitions and guidance to support the accurate and consistent identification of the More Able – including those learners who are multi-exceptional - are also located within the Teaching and Learning policy. More Able identification across the curriculum is further strengthened using subject specific checklists developed by staff.
- All staff are provided with regular professional development activities which, they explained, have effectively supported their understanding of challenge for all and effectively developed their More Able and challenge provision. For example, CPD has included a focus on cognitively challenging pedagogy, oracy and metacognition. Similarly, as a result of professional development on Relational Inclusion, staff understand perfectionism, particularly the potentially negative impact of this, and know how to identify and support More Able pupils with these traits. ECTs and staff new to Gamesley also feel well supported in terms of their knowledge of More Able and challenge provision.
- As a result, staff are actively engaged in and see themselves as leaders of this important aspect of the school's work. They were keen to talk about the ways in which they are supported with challenge and More Able provision and the positive impact this has had on their own professional development and classroom practice.
- The More Able provision map has been developed well over time, capturing each pupils' strengths, barriers to learning, standardised scores and the provision in place - both in and beyond the classroom. This document also provides opportunities for pupils who are 'potentially more able' to be identified and provision put in place to nurture this potential. All teachers are involved in creating and maintaining the provision map.
- Focused tracking of the progress and attainment of More Able learners takes place across all subjects. This includes a specific lens on disadvantaged pupils and those who are multi-exceptional within the cohort. This supports teachers in identifying barriers to learning and offering targeted instruction that meets learners' specific needs. For example, as required, lesson plans are adapted to provide more challenge and support, ensuring continued progress.
- Further provision and support for pupils who are multi-exceptional are detailed within IEPs which include agreed targets and milestones that are shared with parents and the child. Leaders recognise the challenges faced by many neurodiverse children and so staff have worked with the SENDCo to develop personalised approaches which provide these learners with full access to the curriculum. For example, one child was supported to create their own set of rules to support them to access a challenging curriculum. This type of approach has opened doors for stronger partnerships with parents.
- The quality, consistency and effectiveness of Challenge for All and More Able provision is regularly evaluated through a rigorous cycle of monitoring and review activities across all subjects. This includes focused lesson visits, pupil voice, and book looks which, alongside analysis

of formative and summative assessment data, provide leaders with an accurate view of challenge and more able provision. For example, a recent 'Maths Study Day' included lesson visits and a work scrutiny focussed on challenge, retrieval and oracy.

- The curriculum at Gamesley Primary is broad, balanced and engaging. Leaders are solutions focused and creative in their approaches to maximising learning time and ensuring that children experience their full curriculum entitlement. For example, siting a mobile swimming pool on site so that children are taught to swim without the extraneous cognitive load of travelling to a local swimming baths, and reducing the time this usually takes from the curriculum.
- A range of appropriate resources are in place to support effective challenge and More Able provision. For example, access to high-level quality fiction and non-fiction texts in 'book corners' ensure more able readers experience challenging and ambitious language and remain motivated and engaged by the reading materials on offer.
- The curriculum is supported by carefully planned enrichment activities. These experiences enhance learning whilst also developing cultural capital. Activities include, for example, working/playing with the Halle Orchestra, participating in Young Voices, theatre trips, and visits to mosques and local churches. Staff understand the importance of carefully preparing children for these trips through a real focus on the learning intention. This reduces levels of potential stress and cognitive load, ensuring the experience is then one focused on learning.
- The school provides a range of leadership opportunities for pupils. These include, for example, Mini Masters: Mathletes; School councillors; Head of Houses. More Able learners spoken with as part of the assessment process were keen to articulate how they value these opportunities and understand how they prepare them for the future, saying 'they teach us something new every time'.
- A wide range of extra-curricular clubs are also provided to further enrich pupils' learning, develop existing abilities, and help to identify latent abilities and talents. These include timetabled enrichment activities on Wednesday afternoons. Children can opt out of these activities, but many choose to attend. These clubs include, for example, the Gamesley Gazette Newspaper; Design & Technology; Health Champions; Football; Music; and Crafting. In addition, all children in Y5 participate in chess lessons once a week. There is also the option to attend the after-school chess club. Each year, children who show a talent in chess compete in a chess tournament. This year it will be held at the Emirates stadium.
- A group of More Able learners from Year 5 and 6 are involved in the Brilliant Club as part of a two-year rolling programme (see Case Study 2, below). Pupils report finding this experience one which has made them believe that they 'could go to university' and a parent explained that it made her child realise the importance of hard work and effort in achieving success.
- All staff at Gamesley are keen to raise pupils' aspirations and, as a result, this focus is threaded through the Personal Development curriculum through units such as 'Being me in my world' and 'Dreams and Goals' which include consideration of future careers. This topic is explored in greater detail through the Year 6 'Raising Aspirations' programme culminating in a careers fayre.
- Every opportunity is taken to celebrate pupils' positive attitudes to learning, behaviour, attendance, achievement, and demonstration of the school's values. A wide range of rewards is in place and includes, for example, Reading Star, Kindness Star, Star of the Week (linked to the value of the week), and a '50 reads award'.
- Effective systems are in place to support More and potentially More Able pupil transition between year groups, key stages and schools. For example.
  - Transition meetings are held across each year group at the end of each academic year during which staff pass on details of these learners, as well as their current targets and the provision currently in place for them.
  - The final Pupil Progress meetings of the year include an in-depth discussion of each child.
  - Scheduled visits take place from local secondary schools to support learners' transition from Year 6 to Year 7. During these visits, the Year 7 Leads are provided with important handover

information including details about whether pupils are More Able or potentially More Able and in which subjects. Information on pupils' interests is also shared.

- A three-day transition activity takes place with the secondaries.
- All pupils in Year 5 are given the opportunity to experience a science lesson at their new secondary school.
- Dance Days for KS1 and KS2 pupils, delivered by GCSE dance students at the secondary school, support future transition whilst also developing pupils' aspirations.

In addition, Gamesley's More Able/Challenge Lead has set up a More Able Maths group at a local secondary school to be delivered by the secondary maths specialist and involving 3 other primaries. As well as further supporting learners with high levels of anxiety around transition, this will help challenge assumptions sometimes made about Gamesley's children.

- There is a nominated link Governor for the More Able and Challenge, and Governors are kept regularly informed of the progress and attainment of More Able learners. They understand the importance of a focus on More Able learners and challenge, and the link Governor was able to articulate the value of the Challenge Award in terms of the impact on school's further development such as knowledge of challenge concepts like the learning pit and metacognition, as well as a means of celebrating all that has been accomplished. He explained how engagement with the Challenge Award was enhancing the profile of challenge for all children, promoting high expectations and raising aspirations. Through engagement in monitoring activities such as learning walks, this process has also enhanced Governor knowledge of the needs of the More Able.
- The parents of the More Able feel that their children are challenged and well-supported in their learning and personal development, and they are grateful for the additional activities provided with which they can support their child at home. They feel that the provision of enrichment activities supports children who are struggling with perfectionism because these activities provide an environment where children do not feel under pressure to succeed. One parent explained that their child had said of one of these activities, 'I don't care if I win, I just want my form to be alright'
- Parents are kept well informed by the school. For example, they are invited to stay for lessons and, during parents' evening and as part of a rolling programme, topics such as who the More Able are, desirable difficulty and challenge, are explained to parents of the More Able on a 1:1 basis. Similarly, these parents have been provided with resources such as the NACE Essentials 'Guidance for parents and carers'.
- As a result, the majority of parents interviewed value the advice, support and information they receive from the More Able Lead. They explained that this has focused on both their children's well-being and learning. For example, they have received information on the nature of challenge, been given inspiring home learning projects, and have taken part in visits to university with their child as part of the Brilliant Club. With reference to this support and to the way in which children are celebrated, one parent stated, 'I had unbelievable parents' evening,'

### Case Study 1

This case study details the school's provision of Emotional Literacy Support for a More Able pupil who – like a number of More Able pupils - was struggling with anxiety and/or the regulation of their emotions. The school's strategy aimed to prevent any of the potential negative impacts on achievement and emotional and social well-being. It involved training an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) to develop and deliver individualised support programmes.

The impact of the school's work in this area has been very positive. Within the classroom, class teachers saw huge improvements in the child's resilience and confidence. During the assessment day this was echoed by the parent of the child. Pupil voice demonstrates that the pupil now understands that new learning should be challenging and is much more accepting of mistakes. As a result, ELSA has been rolled out across the school with many children accessing this support. Teachers

interviewed explained that this work has ‘transformed the child’ in terms of confidence and resilience levels.

### **Case Study 2**

This case study explores the implementation and impact of the Scholars’ Programme (Brilliant Club) for a group of Y5/6 disadvantaged More Able learners. The primary purpose of the intervention was to raise pupils’ aspirations, providing them with the opportunity to learn about higher education and the different options available to them after school. The programme also aimed to challenge the children’s philosophical thinking and their ability to reason, debate, think critically and write at a more academic level.

The children who participated in the programme completed a written assessment both before and after the programme. All children’s written work had improved due to their participation on the programme. Their knowledge about university greatly improved and so their perceptions of university also changed; after the programme, all children believed that university was a place they would like to go to and could attend whereas, prior to the programme, the children who thought university was for them were in the minority.

### **Areas for development (provision and outcomes)**

- Develop a clear action plan for the effective dissemination - beyond the school - of case study findings.
- Consider the development of a support group for the parents of More Able pupils, providing them with increased opportunities to:
  - share information about the More Able
  - support one another
  - share and celebrate their children’s achievements
  - develop the skills, aspirations and confidence to advocate for their children as they progress through the education system
- Provide support and guidance for the Governing Body to ensure that they are highly effective in holding leaders to account for the outcomes of More Able pupils.
- Following a dip in 2024, maintain the current focus on improving Key Stage 2 outcomes - particularly in Maths - to bring these back in line with national and match the school’s usual performance.

### **Summary of strengths for teaching and learning**

Lessons visited: Reception: continuous provision and phonics (blending), Year 1 Maths, Y3 English (Grammar), Year 4 History, Year 6 Maths.

- The learning environment is calm and purposeful with teachers demonstrating high expectations of pupils’ work and behaviour. The pace of lessons is good with learning time maximised and high levels of pupil engagement.
- Teachers make effective use of a range of evidence-based pedagogy and, as a result, pupils needs are met. During the assessment day, they were observed making good progress from the start of lessons. In addition, good progress across units of work was evidenced through their responses to key questions and retrieval tasks, and through the work in their books where learners move from just answering the question to explaining how they arrived at that answer.
- Teachers’ subject knowledge is strong and reflected in highly effective expositions with pupils’ understanding of abstract concepts such as ‘cause’ supported through concrete examples and images.
- From the Foundation Stage onwards, a range of effective opportunities for retrieval and to activate prior knowledge are in place to help learning stick and support the development of schema. These strategies - such as quizzes, questioning to encourage the linking of prior and

new learning, and ‘deliberate mistakes’ - are also used as an Assessment for Learning tool to determine starting points and/or ensure that pupils can move on to the next stage in their learning more quickly where appropriate. As a result of such approaches, pupils generally demonstrate strong and secure prior knowledge. For example, in a Y6 Maths lesson, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how to divide fractions and of key terminology, using this accurately to explain their reasoning. In Reception, children were able to independently identify phonemes and write these, applying their sound knowledge of segmenting and blending.

- There is a clear and determined focus on the development of oracy in all lessons. All staff effectively model disciplinary language and have high expectations of children in this regard. For example, terminology such as consistent, cause, effect, plausible, quotient and turbulent was modelled by staff and then its accurate use expected of pupils. The use of the ‘my turn, your turn’ approach, where pupils echo key vocabulary, helps to embed its use.
- The classroom learning environment supports vocabulary acquisition through working walls which display key words, modelled examples, phoneme walls and representations of phonemes on children’s tables. Retrieval practice at Gamesley also includes this focus on vocabulary development. For example, at the start of a Year 4 History lesson, children were asked to, ‘give 3 words to describe the character of King Athelstan’.
- Alongside such approaches, learners are provided with authentic opportunities for talk. For example, pupils in Year 6 Maths were given the opportunity to ‘teach’ their partner how to divide a fraction by an integer, and - in Year 1- children had to tell the dinosaur what was wrong with its shape pattern.
- Pupils generally demonstrate good levels of collaboration, discussion and reasoning with their talk partners, in groups and as a whole class.
- Children are confident learners, willing to challenge each other’s and their teacher’s explanations. For example, in a Year 6 Maths lesson, a pupil volunteered an alternative approach to a calculation which had been modelled by the teacher.
- Teachers talk regularly to children about the importance of the ‘learning pit’. In turn, children can articulate what being in the pit means and how it helps them ‘to make their learning better and think about what you need to do to get out of it instead of getting frustrated’, ‘It makes you think really hard.’
- The use of a range of questioning strategies to successfully promote challenge and prompt deeper thinking was evident in many lessons. Approaches included, the use of higher order questions, cold calling; pose, pause, pounce bounce; and no hands up where all learners had to listen to each other’s responses and be ready to build upon and/or explain whether they agreed with those opinions. For example, in a Year 4 History lesson, when asked ‘Would it have been peaceful in England after this ruler died?’, children were observed thinking hard to justify their responses and challenge other’s opinions.
- The children at Gamesley Primary confidently articulate the ways in and extent to which they are challenged. They explained how they enjoy the ‘tough questions’ their teachers ask, and the freedom to choose additional challenge activities when they feel ready. They know what experiencing challenge feels like, ‘It’s where you don’t know the answer straight away and have to work at it’. Children from Year 3 upwards spoke enthusiastically about the learning pit and cognitive wobble ‘...when you get it but you’re still a bit wobbly about it so have to keep working to solve it with a bit more time.’
- Formative assessment is ongoing in all lessons which are then skilfully adapted in response to the security of pupils’ prior learning, their grasp of new learning and their readiness for further challenge. They are not held back as staff effectively move children from guided to independent practice, checking their understanding and providing time for them to apply knowledge.
- Children are also expected to self-assess and choose further challenge where they feel they need and are ready for this. Similarly, where any pupil is struggling with an aspect of their work or has



developed misconceptions, they receive appropriate support to address the issue. For example, Maths interventions take place each afternoon where required.

- Scaffolds and adaptations are effectively used to support children's progress towards ambitious objectives. For example, key questions help to guide thinking; writing frames and bar models support understanding of abstract concepts/calculations, and adapted learning objectives increase challenge further where needed.
- Non-negotiables/success criteria are provided for pupils to clarify the high expectations of what work should include in English. Such resources also support peer and self-assessment, and the development of meta-cognition.
- Children respond well to verbal and written feedback from their teachers as evidenced by the regularity of their 'green pen responses' showing that they have added to or amended their work to 'up-level' it.
- Pupils' behaviour for learning and conduct are consistently good.

### **Areas for development (teaching and learning)**

- Maximise every opportunity to secure and deepen learning by ensuring that cognitively challenging pedagogy, such as high-quality questioning, is consistent across the school.
- Ensure that the learning activities planned are always the most effective in supporting children to achieve the learning intention by, for example, removing extraneous cognitive load.
- Further develop and implement structures for effective talk, such as talking rules for pupils, to ensure that all learners understand the conventions for talk and contribute positively to discussions.
- In some lessons, expectations of presentation need to be increased to ensure that knowledge is represented accurately and the repetition of common errors avoided.

### **Key issues** (*key action points to be included on the school's Key Issues Matrix*)

- Further embed cognitively challenging pedagogy such as high-quality questioning, consistently across the school.
- Provide appropriate CPD for staff to ensure that learning tasks are always carefully matched to learning intentions.
- Share the school's work on challenge and More Able provision within the Trust and across the locality by, for example, effectively disseminating the findings from the case studies submitted.
- Develop a parent group to support and guide the parents of More Able pupils.
- Provide guidance to support Governors' understanding and scrutiny of More Able pupils' outcomes.

**Challenge check-in due (+18 months):** May 2026

**Reaccreditation application deadline (+3 years):** November 2027

**Lead assessor's signature:**

