

Gilthill Primary School

Gilt Hill, Kimberley, Nottingham, NG16 2GZ

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is very welcoming and caring and pupils are happy to attend. They are proud of their school, have very positive attitudes and develop a love of learning.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good and improving progress from starting points that are below expectations for their ages when they start school.
- All groups of pupils achieve well, including pupils who benefit from the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and thrive in a caring and exciting setting.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting and stimulating lessons that motivate pupils who work hard and want to do well. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school works outstandingly well to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure.
- The headteacher's leadership is highly effective and inspires pupils, teachers, parents and carers to want to do their best.
- Senior leaders check the school's work thoroughly and improve teaching where weaknesses are identified, so that pupils achieve well.
- The governing body supports leaders well and holds them to account for the school's performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities for writing at length are not always planned for across a range of subjects.
- Too few pupils who have the potential to do so attain the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils in Year 1 do not make fast enough progress in developing their phonic skills (linking sounds and letters).
- Pupils in Year 2 do not always make sense of what they are reading.
- Pupils are not always clear about the purpose of their learning in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, three of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, a group of pupils and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them informally at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, one letter from a parent, and the school's most recent parental survey. They had conversations with parents and carers as they dropped off their children at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- School documentation was examined, including data on pupils' current progress and records of governing body meetings, teachers' performance, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The way disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for was also carefully reviewed.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

James Fuller

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gilthill Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are seven classes, one class for each age group.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for certain groups, which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In January 2012, the governors appointed a new headteacher, and a new deputy headteacher in April 2012. In September 2012 they also appointed a newly qualified teacher and a literacy coordinator.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club not managed by the governing body and so these did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding in order to raise attainment by making sure that:
 - all pupils who have the potential to make faster progress to reach the higher levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are given everything they need to do so
 - pupils are clear about the purpose of their learning in mathematics and how mathematical skills relate to the world beyond the classroom
 - pupils' phonic skills are improved in Year 1 and that they use these skills to help them understand what they are reading in Year 2.
- Make sure that the school's plans for revising the curriculum extend opportunities for pupils to write at length across different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well during their time in the school, regardless of their ability level or background. Over the past two years, results of the Year 6 national tests have been slightly above average. These standards reflect good progress from all pupils' individual starting points.
- More pupils are working at the expected levels for their age, particularly in reading. This is the result of consistently good teaching and is reflected in the school's information on pupils' levels and pupils' work in books.
- Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work indicate that sometimes there are more pupils with the potential to make accelerated progress to reach the higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 than are currently doing so. This is because occasionally teachers' expectations are not high enough. As part of their drive to raise aspirations and make the school even more effective, leaders have rightly set a target to increase the proportion of the more-able pupils working at the high national curriculum Level 6 by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their ages. While children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the proportion achieving a good level of development across all aspects of communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development remains below average by the time they start Year 1. However, they do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 2, attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Any pupil at risk of falling behind receives timely and effective support to speed up their learning.
- The small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, often from very low starting points. This is as a result of effective leadership and management by the special educational needs leader, well-targeted support and highly skilled teaching for pupils who have complex needs.
- The very small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6 in 2013 means that it is not appropriate to comment on their attainment without potentially identifying individuals. School records and samples of work show that the current progress of this group of pupils is similar to other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics because of good teaching from their class teacher and effective funded support in small group work.
- In the 2013 phonics screening check, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected level increased from 2012 but was still just below average. Sometimes, readers in Year 2 are using their phonic knowledge to help tackle unfamiliar words but are reading without real understanding. This is because not enough attention is given to making sure pupils can explain the meaning of what they have read. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well and by Year 6, the more-able readers are fluent and expressive and are able to read between the lines and explore the plot and characters to develop their understanding of texts.
- In English, progress in writing is not as rapid as progress in reading. The school has correctly identified this and improving writing is a focus for the whole school. The impact of this focus is evident in pupils' writing books, although there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise

and improve through extended writing across different subjects.

- In 2013, more pupils made rapid progress in mathematics because of a successful focus on mental mathematical skills. On occasion, however, pupils are not clear enough about the purpose of their learning or how their skills relate to mathematics beyond the classroom, hindering their rate of progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes it is outstanding. Teachers provide interesting and stimulating lessons that motivate pupils. Good, and often outstanding, teaching means that pupils of different abilities have equally good chances to achieve well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are close and productive and learning is purposeful and enjoyable. Teachers show that they have high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour and that they expect pupils to take pride in their work. They provide good role models for pupils by making sure that their classrooms are tidy and displays are motivating and support teaching well.
- A very strong value is placed on effective learning. Teachers make clear what pupils are expected to learn, and set difficult work that helps pupils to achieve as well as they can. The requirement that all pupils extend their learning by completing regular homework makes a very significant contribution to the rapid rates of pupils' progress.
- Most teachers are skilled in asking questions that help pupils to extend their thinking and learning. Pupils' work indicates that they mostly finish tasks and try their best. Topic work in history and geography in Year 6, for example, is well presented and shows that pupils care about and take pride in their work.
- Teachers use a variety of exciting and creative approaches to meet and respond to pupils' different learning needs. For example, in Year 5, pupils were asked to use their senses and analyse their feelings when, as part of an English lesson, they left the classroom and experienced the contrasting conditions in the school's cellar. Back in the classroom single words were expanded into phrases and sentences, and using a variety of literary devices, pupils were able to evoke a particular mood. They showed a sophisticated use of language that was advanced for their age, linked to learning about sentence structure in prose.
- There are some excellent examples of marking and feedback that give pupils clear pointers about what they need to do to improve their work and many opportunities for pupils to consider their own and others' successes, and areas to improve, in a constructive way.
- Teaching is not outstanding because, although teachers provide work that is difficult enough for many of the more-able pupils, on occasion in some classes there are pupils who have the potential to complete even more demanding work. In Years 1 and 2, despite some good teaching in reading, some pupils do not make rapid enough progress in learning phonics or understanding how the text they are reading makes sense.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and this is a significant improvement from the previous inspection. Tasks are well-structured and interesting activities that fully use the wide range of resources, contribute positively to children's development in all areas. Very effective teaching and the close, individual support pupils receive in class and in small groups or individually, have a very positive impact on learning and their personal development.

- Skilled and effective teaching assistants have a secure understanding of their role and are successful in supporting pupils and guiding learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils from all different backgrounds work and play well together. They are proud to show the range of certificates they receive in assembly for their good work and effort.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Sometimes behaviour is exemplary, for example at lunchtime many pupils are involved in playing netball, basketball, or using the climbing wall. The activities are started by 'mini leaders' who have volunteered to be trained for this responsibility and make sure that all those who want to take part are included. At the end of the session pupils come into classrooms sensibly and safely, ready for learning.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and were happy to talk to inspectors about how much they like their school. Pupils behave equally well in lessons and when working with teaching assistants or other adults, for example those who come to hear pupils read as well as visiting sports coaches. School records show that this is typical of behaviour over time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and very well cared for. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils get on very well together and know that discrimination is not tolerated, as a result of thinking about how the school cares for each individual.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the various types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, but say that any incidents are rare and if they do occur, teachers quickly and successfully deal with them. They are confident to talk to their teachers if they have any problems and know they will be listened to.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because very occasionally, a few of the younger pupils need reminding about how they should conduct themselves, particularly during whole class activities.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey agree that their children are happy at school, feel safe and are well looked after. Pupils and many parents are jointly involved in a wide range of educational and social activities that support well pupils' achievements and personal development. Attendance is above average and this has been sustained over a long period of time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is very well supported by senior leaders and together they set high expectations for all staff. Staff say they feel valued and are very positive about the guidance and help they receive in improving their expertise.
- There is very strong team work in the school and the headteacher and staff are passionate about providing the best possible learning experiences for their pupils. Their enthusiasm leads to an accurate evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness and strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified and effective action is taken to drive school improvement. This is seen, for example, in the school's current work to make sure that pupils make more rapid progress in writing.

- However, leadership and management are not better than good because, despite an improving picture for pupils currently in the school, achievement is not yet outstanding.
- The strong caring environment has an immense impact on the daily life of the school. It places high value on developing pupils' basic literacy skills, expression of feeling and enjoyment.
- The checks on teachers' performance are clearly linked to pupils' progress. Where any weaknesses in teaching are identified, effective support and coaching are given and improvements are expected and checked closely.
- Senior and subject leaders make a positive contribution to whole-school improvement as well as providing skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and English is very effective and the governors support leaders' work strongly, particularly through the discussions they hold.
- The school provides a broad and varied range of subjects. There is a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs and these, along with visits and visitors to the school and links with the local community, greatly enhance pupils' experiences. The creative and expressive arts are strongly promoted, and pupils make very good progress in their French studies because they enjoy it so much. The rich displays of pupils' artwork around the school confirm the high standards reached in painting and drawing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school, not just for the education it provides for their children but also the way it works with them and the whole community to raise expectations. Expert and well-informed leadership of the work to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs provides valuable support to pupils and their families to help pupils who may be vulnerable.
- The school is using the primary school sports funding in a variety of ways, including developing teachers' skills and knowledge, extending the provision of specialist sports coaches, and increasing the range of after-school clubs. This is enabling an increased number of pupils to participate and broaden the range of their sporting activities. These improvements and the school's work on active and healthy living contribute well to pupils' health and well-being. Clear plans are in place to check the impact of the funding, particularly how well it is enabling pupils to improve standards in sporting activities.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education has a strong focus and shows the importance the school places on promoting pupils' well-being and self-esteem. The school promotes equality of opportunity very well and pupils learn in a supportive, caring ethos without fear of discrimination. As a result, all groups of pupils achieve well and particularly those who are supported very effectively by the pupil premium.
- The local authority provided additional support during the change in the school's leadership but now offers light-touch support. The skills and expertise of the headteacher and some other senior staff are used by the local authority to support other schools, and as part of the training of new teachers at Nottingham Trent University.

The governance of the school:

- The school has a positive and productive relationship with the governing body. Governors have a clear knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and understand how well

the school is doing compared to the national picture. They hold the school to account well for its performance. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's pay and promotion processes and closely checks the performance of staff and the quality of teaching. Governors show a clear understanding of how the school is using its pupil premium and sports funding and how this is providing beneficial experiences for pupils in lessons and through extra-curricular activities.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122574
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	431234

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Strickland
Headteacher	Sian Lamb
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
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