

Galley Hill Primary School and Nursery

Galley Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 3JY

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders, including governors have not ensured that pupils achieve well enough. Outcomes achieved in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016 were low.
- Pupils' progress over time has not been monitored rigorously. Consequently, disadvantaged and the most able pupils have underachieved.
- Revised procedures to assess pupils' progress are not compared systematically with other information gained from observations of teaching and the scrutiny of pupils' work to confirm that all pupils are making the progress expected of them.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of pupils, or plan work suited to their different abilities. The quality of questioning and marking varies widely.
- The curriculum lacks breadth and balance.
- Leaders' views of the school's effectiveness are too generous. The monitoring of the impact of teaching and leadership lacks rigour.
- Governors have not ensured that pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher is leading significant improvements to the school. She has galvanised the commitment of staff and quickly gained the confidence of parents and the local community.
- Her actions to raise the expectations of pupils and hold staff accountable are leading to improvement.
- Pupils are provided with a rich, stimulating environment in which to learn.
- Children in Nursery and Reception classes get off to a great start. They settle quickly, develop routines, forge good relationships and learn well.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are courteous, respectful and are proud of their school. They feel school is a safe, friendly and stimulating place to be.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Gain greater consistency to the quality of teaching by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, are capable of achieving
 - planning learning suited to the different abilities of pupils
 - providing further training to develop questioning techniques
 - applying the school's marking policy so that pupils who make common errors receive good-quality guidance and advice to help them improve their work.
- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that the strategies recently introduced to improve the teaching and leadership of mathematics become firmly established and rigorously monitoring the impact this has on pupils' learning and progress
 - ensuring that revised procedures to assess the progress made by all pupils, from entry to exit from the school, become firmly established
 - using the information gained from all aspects of leaders' monitoring of the school's work to confirm that assessments are rigorous, accurate and illustrate clearly how well all pupils are progressing.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - evaluating accurately the impact that teaching, the wider curriculum and leadership have on the outcomes achieved by all pupils, and using this information to plan further improvement
 - adding greater rigour to the monitoring of teaching and leadership, and the impact they have on outcomes achieved by pupils, especially in mathematics
 - using the pupil premium funding much more effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In the past, leaders have not been sufficiently focused on the progress made by pupils of all abilities from their entry to their exit from the school. Expectations of pupils have not been high enough, and not all of them have made expected progress.
- Leaders have a wealth of assessment information showing the current progress pupils are making. They do not rigorously check its validity by systematically analysing the findings gained from their observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work to support their views about pupils' progress. Furthermore, these procedures do not monitor the progress of all key groups of pupils, particularly the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, across each key stage.
- Self-evaluation has not been sharp enough to highlight what the school does well, and what it needs to do to improve. In particular, leaders' monitoring of teaching and the impact it has on pupils' learning and progress lack rigour.
- Changes in leadership at all levels and new staff have led to some instability. The headteacher and her team of senior teachers currently lead the school in an acting capacity, until a substantive appointment is made.
- She has acted promptly to tackle many of the weaknesses revealed in her own monitoring, and shown in the results achieved by pupils in mathematics last year. She has raised expectations of pupils and staff. Improvement plans rightly prioritise improving mathematics through additional staff training, new leadership and revised approaches to teaching the subject throughout the school.
- She has quickly gained the commitment of her staff to make the improvements needed, and has the full support of her governors. Parents who responded to Ofsted during the inspection were overwhelmingly supportive of the improvements she is making, describing her as 'personable and approachable' and commenting that 'she is doing a marvellous job'.
- Middle leaders are developing their skills, but not all of them are involved in observing teaching and reviewing its impact on pupils' progress. Leaders of key subjects and key stages acknowledge the greater role the headteacher expects them to play in leading improvements. Interim arrangements to coordinate provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are working effectively.
- Pupils and their parent praise the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided. After-school clubs, cultural weeks and off-site visits enrich pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. However, the school's curriculum is dominated by English and mathematics, leaving much less time for science and other subjects. A review of pupils' topic books confirmed what some pupils said when they met with inspectors, that 'We don't do history or geography often enough.'
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Funding is used to pay for coaches to train teachers and give them more confidence to teach the subject. Inspectors noted pupils' enjoyment and engagement in two PE lessons taught by teachers during the inspection. Funding is also used to provide a wide range of after-

school sports clubs and teams which are valued highly by boys and girls.

- Leaders have forged strong relations with the local authority. This enables them to access additional staff training, and strengthen their monitoring of the school's work. Senior leaders and governors value the advice and support provided by the local authority.

Governance of the school

- Governors have overseen the strategic development of the school as it grows in size. They have managed effectively finances to develop new facilities to accommodate new classes this year. They ensure that classrooms are well resourced. All of their statutory duties, including safeguarding, are met.
- Minutes of meetings show that governors receive a wide range of information about the school's performance, and that they use it to support and challenge leaders to make improvements. They acknowledge that long-standing issues in mathematics have not been dealt with fully, and that they need to challenge senior leaders further to remedy this.
- Governors have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils benefit from pupil premium funding. Results in 2016 showed widespread underachievement of this group of pupils. Spending on additional adults to liaise with families and provide counselling is making a significant difference to pupils' attendance and welfare. Other initiatives, such as special events and enrichment days, have had much less effect. A revised strategy is now in place to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This has not been fully evaluated.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All checks are carried out when recruiting adults to work with children.
- The school site is safe and secure; regular checks are made to maintain this.
- Procedures to protect children at risk of harm are well established. Child protection matters are recorded systematically and followed up with a range of local support agencies.
- Safeguarding training for staff, including their 'Prevent' duty, is all up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies widely. It is stronger in key stage 2 than in key stage 1. Several newly qualified and inexperienced staff recently joined the school. They bring vibrancy and fresh ideas to the school but also need more support to enable them to develop further. These staff value the tailored support provided for them, in addition to the training provided for all staff.
- In mathematics, pupils' books show that pupils are usually taught similar tasks, some of which are well within their capabilities. This is particularly notable in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are taught together in mixed-age classes. There are insufficient

opportunities for the most able pupils to deepen their learning by regularly having a go at very challenging work.

- School leaders have taken action to improve the teaching of mathematics. Staff have received training and additional resources to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills, areas that test results show require further improvement. More time is needed for this to accelerate pupils' learning and progress, particularly in Year 6.
- Some teachers are adept at engaging pupils in discussion. They use probing questions to test pupils' understanding and get them to answer in greater depth. This is not consistent in all classes. The school's marking policy asks teachers to provide pupils with good feedback about their work. However, at times, marking is cursory and provides insufficient guidance.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers plan learning together and present learning in a range of different ways to stimulate pupils' interest. In a Year 2 lesson about e-safety, the teacher used an animated video to capture and retain pupils' attention, and used incisive questions to find out if they knew what to do if they were at risk of harm. Teachers plan time for 'talking partners', to engage all pupils in learning and check that they all understand.
- Behaviour is managed effectively. Pupils respond positively to staff. They are eager to answer questions and contribute their ideas in lessons.
- The impact of teaching assistants is good. They are deployed to teach groups and provide one-to-one support for less-able pupils. High-quality personalised care and support provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to grow in confidence and self-esteem and engage fully in school life. Parents appreciate this high-quality care, one saying, 'My son who has learning difficulties has attended this school since nursery. Staff are always very supportive and go out of their way to make sure he has what he needs to continue to make progress.'
- Classrooms and other spaces are well resourced and include stimulating displays of pupils' work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel that the school is a safe, friendly place to be. They are taught how to respect and look after each other well. At lunchtimes, older pupils volunteer to help the youngest pupils to get their food and cutlery, and find a seat with their friends. They supervise at breaktimes, and keep an eye out for those who appear unhappy or lonely. They demonstrate great care and sensitivity when engaging with classmates who they know have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Parents comment that, 'This is a happy school that makes learning fun.' They value the school's inclusive nature, one parent saying, 'It is great that every member of staff, from teaching assistants through to the acting headteacher make every effort to learn something special about every child in their care. This makes all children feel they are part of the school community.'

- Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. School records show that attendance has improved steadily and persistent absence is falling. Effective liaison with the parents of disadvantaged pupils is leading to their improved attendance.
- Pupils engage in a wide range of learning and enrichment that promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. For example, during the inspection, pupils of all ages engaged fully in an Islamic workshop to help them understand life as a Muslim in modern Britain. Inspectors noted their enjoyment and fascination of the wider world. Off-site visits to the Houses of Parliament give pupils a clearer understanding of government and democracy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Inspectors found pupils to be well behaved and eager to learn. They are friendly, inquisitive and were keen to talk with inspectors. Throughout the inspection, pupils were pleasant, polite and, at times, quite charming.
- Behaviour in lessons is usually very good. Pupils display good attitudes and share positive relations with staff.
- Monitoring records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. Most of them that do occur do so in the playground. When asked, pupils told inspectors that bullying does happen at times, mostly name-calling and being unkind to each other. They all feel sure that if they experienced it, they would know who to approach to help them stop it.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because pupils say that a small minority of pupils regularly spoil the learning of others in some lessons. They feel that teachers deal with this in different ways, and do not always resolve it.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Results in 2016 showed widespread underachievement in mathematics. Attainment at the end of key stage 1 was above average, but the proportions of pupils meeting and exceeding age-related expectations by the end of key stage 2 was low. Disadvantaged pupils in both key stages underachieved in mathematics. School leaders have responded to this by prioritising the subject in the school's improvement plan.
- School leaders and governors acknowledge that too much emphasis has been placed on measuring attainment, rather than assessing the progress made by pupils from their different starting points. This led to too many pupils not making the progress expected of them last year.
- Revised procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in mathematics, reading and writing have been implemented since the start of this academic year. This enables leaders to gauge at regular intervals how well all pupils are progressing from their different starting points. At this stage, procedures do not measure the progress of the most able pupils, or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, throughout both key stages.
- Current assessment information indicates that most pupils are making good progress. Inspectors' observations, carried out jointly with senior leaders, and in particular a

scrutiny of pupils' work does not support this view. Inspectors found that pupils develop a secure understanding and meet age-related expectations, but teachers do not provide the most able with enough opportunities to learn at a higher level. The expectations teachers have of pupils in mathematics and English are not always high enough.

- Current progress in science and some foundation subjects is steady, rather than good, because pupils are not taught these subjects regularly enough.
- Outcomes achieved in reading and writing in 2016 were above average in both key stages. The proportions of most-able pupils exceeding expectations were also high. Effective teaching of phonics throughout the early years and key stage 1 gives pupils a good grounding in reading.
- Pupils develop a love of reading. Inspectors found that they read regularly in school and, in general, at home, which aids their fluency and understanding. Those who read aloud to inspectors were able to explain why they chose their books, and describe the story. They read fluently and knew what to do to when confronted by unfamiliar words.
- Teachers encourage pupils to develop their writing in a range of styles from an early age. Marking highlights common spelling and grammatical mistakes, but pupils are not expected to respond to this, so many of them continue to make errors in their work. Older pupils commented that they would like more help from staff with their use of grammar and spelling.

Early years provision

Good

- Children joining the Nursery get off to a flying start. Parents enthuse about the communication they have with staff, and the quality of this provision, one stating, 'My child has settled wonderfully, he is always happy to go in and comes out telling me all of the subjects he has learnt. It's amazing how he has grown in such a short time.'
- Experienced Nursery staff are adept at enabling pupils to settle quickly and learn routines. They know children well and ensure that they are fully prepared for the next stage.
- Pupils join Reception from the Nursery and from a range of other childcare settings. Some begin with little experience of socialising with others or have limited speech and language skills.
- These children catch up quickly. By the end of Reception, the majority of them make at least typical progress from their different starting points, and are fully prepared for key stage 1. The proportion achieving a good level of development last year was lower than average, but this reflects the very low starting points of a significant proportion of children.
- Teaching is developed effectively by sharing the knowledge and experience of established and effective teachers with new staff, and monitoring the impact of their work on pupils' progress. Phonics is taught systematically and effectively. A wide range of resources, including computers, are used to develop children's counting skills.
- Children enjoy a good blend of teacher-led learning and child-initiated play. Indoor and outdoor facilities are safe, stimulating environments, enriched by a wide range of resources to stimulate children's interest.

School details

Unique reference number	135224
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10023504

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Robins
Acting Headteacher	Emily Birch
Telephone number	01442406000
Website	www.galleyhill.herts.sch.uk
Email address	admin@galleyhill.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 January–1 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- An acting headteacher has led the school since May 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons. They carried out two learning walks to observe pupils' learning and behaviour, and scrutinise their work.
- They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, a group of recently qualified teachers, a group of pupils, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and other information provided by senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books, and during lessons. They considered 84 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 82 free-text responses sent by parents and carers, and one letter sent by a parent. They also considered 32 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff, and 42 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mandy Short	Ofsted Inspector
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Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector

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