

Gildersome Primary School

Town Street, Gildersome, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 7AB

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2018

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to improve teaching have not led to it being of consistently good quality. Not all pupils make the progress they should to reach the standards of which they are capable. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they could across the school.
- Teachers do not routinely challenge the most able pupils with activities that will extend their learning, and this slows their progress.
- Outcomes for pupils overall have declined since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and too few pupils achieved at greater depth.
- The quality of teaching in the school, including in the early years, is not consistently good. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can, and should, achieve.
- While the teaching of phonics is good and pupils read well technically, their understanding is less secure when they progress to more complex texts and unfamiliar vocabulary.
- The teaching of writing and mathematics is too variable to secure good outcomes for all pupils.
- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils, but have an overgenerous view of its performance.
- Many middle leaders are relatively new to the school or to their roles. They have a secure knowledge of their areas of responsibility and are keen to make improvements. However, their skills in monitoring teaching and checking that teacher assessments are entirely accurate, are at an early stage of development.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account sufficiently for the impact of school improvement initiatives and the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils achieved in line with national figures in their Year 1 phonics screening checks in 2017.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. The school is a happy, safe place. All staff ensure that pupils are safe in school. Pupils, parents and carers agree that this is true.
- Staff know pupils individually and take good care of them. Pupils show kindness to others.
- As the new leaders become established, the school's capacity to improve is strengthening.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership, including governance, so that:
 - leaders check on teaching, learning and assessment across the school, including in the early years, to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged sufficiently
 - teachers' assessments are accurate and reliable to inform planning for additional support for pupils at risk of underachieving, particularly among the disadvantaged pupils and more specifically lower-attaining boys
 - subject and phase leaders new to their roles have the training and support they need to be more effective in leading improvements in their areas of responsibility and in their monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment
 - inconsistencies in provision across the classes are eradicated
 - governors more stringently hold leaders to account for the impact of school improvement initiatives, so that they can measure how well weaknesses are rectified and plan for next steps
 - governors check that the information they receive from leaders is accurate and reliable before they initiate further improvements
 - governors hold leaders to account for the use and impact of the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, including in early years, by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are increased so that the proportion of pupils exceeding the standards expected for their age matches that found nationally
 - teaching builds on what pupils already know, can do and understand to ensure that all pupils, but particularly the most able, are challenged to achieve more
 - teachers use their day-to-day assessment information to inform planning for the different groups of pupils in their classes
 - pupils apply the complex sentence structures, grammar and punctuation they have learned more confidently in all their writing, but especially at key stage 2
 - pupils have more opportunities to read with teachers in order to become more confident in tackling unfamiliar vocabulary and interpreting more complex texts
 - pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and lower-attaining disadvantaged pupils, mainly boys, have the level of support they need to make good progress
 - teachers encourage pupils to challenge themselves by attempting tasks that stretch and extend their skills in mathematics
 - children in the Nursery experience high-quality learning opportunities to help them make good progress when they start, especially in the areas where they lack confidence.

External reviews of governance and of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils but do not have an accurate view of the school's performance. They have been too slow to recognise and address the main areas of significant weakness and have an overly optimistic view of the school. For example, leaders did not anticipate the decline in outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017. The progress of current pupils is too variable to be good overall in reading, writing and mathematics because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- More recently, leaders at all levels are working with determination to bring about sustained improvement. However, many are either relatively new to the school and/or new to their roles, so they have not had sufficient time to bring about change. The headteacher now has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that require improvement. She has the tenacity to lead school improvement and now has the calibre of staff to support her. However, some need support and training to develop their skills and confidence to be more effective in their roles, particularly in monitoring teaching and learning and checking that teacher assessments are accurate.
- Leaders have not identified or tackled the current inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning are not precise enough. Their focus is more on teaching rather than learning. Pupils' progress is wholly dependent on the quality of teaching and the level of challenge they receive in any class. Leaders have introduced new systems for recording pupils' progress but the information gathered does not always accord with the work in pupils' books. It is, in some cases, overgenerous and so misrepresents pupils' true progress.
- Improvement plans do not address the most urgent areas for improvement with sufficient rigour. They are not focused sufficiently on ensuring that pupils make faster progress. Leaders and governors measure success by the actions they take, rather than considering how these actions have helped to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Senior leaders analyse pupils' performance information at an individual level but have not identified that some teachers' assessments are not accurate. Systems to track pupils' achievement, such as pupil progress meetings and work scrutiny, enable senior leaders to have a fair understanding of where shortfalls remain. However, the information is not always accurate or reliable to inform extra support to help pupils achieve well.
- The SEN leader liaises effectively with external agencies to facilitate support for pupils. She is not as confident in measuring pupils' progress and checking that pupils achieve well.
- Leaders provide teachers and support staff with good opportunities to undertake training to improve their practice but do not check that this results in higher outcomes for pupils. As a result, pupils' progress remains inconsistent and too variable.
- Leaders are not sharply focused on deploying and measuring the impact of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils across the school. These pupils do not always make the same rates of progress as the non-disadvantaged pupils in the school

or pupils nationally. Governors do not hold leaders to account for the impact that this funding has on raising outcomes for disadvantaged pupils with sufficient challenge.

- The use of the sports premium funding is effective in raising pupils' engagement in physical activities in school and with other schools. Pupils' well-being is treated as a high priority here.
- Leaders have clear oversight of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils receive a variety of experiences to enhance their knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects. For example, pupils learn about various cultures, traditions and faiths from around the globe and the more immediate locality. The curriculum encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning, explore ideas and undertake research to deepen pupils' understanding of the world in which they live.
- The school seeks the support of the local authority and partnership schools to appraise its performance and offer advice and guidance to staff and governors to secure school improvement.
- Most parents are very happy with the school and particularly positive about the school's care arrangements. One parent said that, 'the school is a calm, friendly place where all children are supported to achieve well and are happy and well looked after at school.'

Governance of the school

- Governors do not provide senior leaders with sufficient challenge over the attainment of pupils and the progress they make or the quality of teaching in the school. Governors do not do enough to check that what the headteacher and senior leaders tell them is entirely accurate, and thus reach their own view of the school's performance.
- Governors do not have a clear understanding of how well pupils are achieving in the school, or of why pupils underachieved in 2017. They have not taken enough notice of independent sources of information, such as the published data about pupils' progress.
- They do not ensure that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to help these pupils make good progress throughout the school. Nor do they check sufficiently the impact of the actions that leaders take to make improvements.
- Governors, particularly those relatively new in post, are unclear about how to fulfil their duties effectively. They have not had the training needed to enable them to fully understand their responsibilities and carry them out thoroughly.
- Governors fulfil other aspects of their role effectively, including ensuring that general finances are well managed. They understand their duty of care responsibilities fully and ensure that pupils are kept safe by carrying out regular checks on all aspects of safeguarding, making sure that only suitable people can work in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils are safe in school because leaders have created a culture where everyone understands and fulfils their role in keeping pupils safe. Pupils' safety, health and well-being are regarded as high priorities by the school. Leaders take every precaution to keep every child in their care free from harm at all times. Any concerns that arise are dealt with promptly and are recorded meticulously. Leaders are particularly vigilant to keep the most vulnerable safe and free

from harm at all times. Senior leaders alert outside agencies if a pupil is potentially at risk. Leaders make sure that pupils learn about how to stay safe and discuss with them the school's anti-bullying strategies, including cyber bullying and internet safety.

- Parents agree that their children are safe in school. One parent wrote, 'Staff really know each child as an individual; they make them feel very safe and secure.' Staff are fully trained and kept updated with any new information about child protection matters. They know the school's safeguarding procedures well and act accordingly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders' monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment has not been precise enough to identify the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, across the school and among groups of pupils, that still prevail. As a result, the progress of current pupils remains too variable in reading, writing and mathematics in some classes.
- Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of their pupils. In these instances, teachers do not use the information they have about what pupils know, can do and understand to challenge them effectively. Pupils in different classes but from the same year group and same starting points sometimes receive inconsistent provision. As a result, some pupils, mainly the most able, make insufficient progress over time.
- Recent actions to improve pupils' mathematical skills are beginning to have a positive impact in some classes and among some pupils, but practice is still too variable. While pupils are gaining greater fluency in number and reasoning skills, some do not make the progress they could if guided to more challenging tasks.
- The picture is similar in reading and writing, in that pupils have the basic skills to read and write confidently, but they falter when reading more complex texts containing unfamiliar vocabulary or turns of phrases. This leads to weaknesses in their writing when they try to incorporate words or phrases they have heard or read but have not understood fully. In addition, errors in spelling, punctuation and accurate sentence structure impede higher outcomes.
- Some teachers' questioning does not routinely deepen pupils' understanding sufficiently to apply the basic skills they have with confidence and accuracy. For example, to work faster, pupils sometimes take shortcuts when calculating multi-step problems or forget rules of grammar and spelling in their writing or their word-building strategies when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary. These failings restrict the progress pupils make.
- These inconsistencies have a significant impact on the progress of all pupils but the most able and the disadvantaged pupils are affected most. The most able are held back at times by having to start with easier tasks before moving to work that challenges them sufficiently. More confident learners, who complete work quickly, sometimes run out of work. The disadvantaged, who sometimes have gaps in their learning or are less confident learners, do not always challenge themselves sufficiently if left to choose tasks.
- Some lower-attaining pupils, or those who have SEN and/or disabilities, cannot always access some of their tasks when not supported sufficiently. With effective guidance they often make good progress against their starting points, but practice is too variable. Occasionally, teaching assistants are not deployed to maximum effect. As a result, if

pupils find their learning difficult, or it is not well matched to their needs, they lose focus and concentration and their progress slows. This also happens when the most able finish quickly, though they busy themselves more readily by reading, for example.

- The teaching of phonics is effective in early years and key stage 1. This enables pupils to decode unknown words well. They acquire secure skills to read well technically and most enjoy reading. It is the more challenging aspects of reading and understanding of words that hold pupils back from achieving more. The school is addressing this urgently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They have an age-appropriate understanding of the potential dangers when online and explain clearly how to avoid these. They know not to divulge personal details to strangers. Parents appreciate all that the school teaches their children about road and fire safety.
- Pupils trust all staff to look after them and listen to them if they raise any worries about school or home. Pupils are well cared for at school, with staff particularly vigilant in safeguarding the most vulnerable who might face complex challenges in their lives.
- Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable in any form and know to raise any concerns they might have with staff promptly. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between bullying and falling out and say that bullying in school is rare. Any incidents reported are dealt with firmly and effectively.
- Staff provide many opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility in school, including as prefects and school councillors. They contribute to 'pupil voice' to influence changes that benefit pupils. They are very kind to others through their fundraising activities, for example for victims of the Grenfell fire. Older pupils understand and embrace their responsibility to take care of younger pupils and are good role models.
- Pupils respect racial and religious diversity and discuss global issues and British values regularly at school. While generally very sensible in their understanding of wider issues, older pupils particularly are less knowledgeable about radicalisation and extremism.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. They try their best, behave well and work with others sensibly. Classrooms are typically calm, orderly places where pupils feel valued.
- Pupils behave well around school, in the dining hall and in the playground. They open doors for others and show courtesy and politeness at all times. They are friendly and welcoming, and enjoy talking about why they love school and what they are learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good, even when learning does not engage them well. A

few do lapse if they cannot access their learning fully or the level of challenge is too low. Pupils understand the school's behaviour rules and most abide by them fully.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well catered for and included in the life of the school. Exclusion of pupils from school is used sparingly but appropriately.
- Levels of attendance for most are high and few pupils are persistently absent. The attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than that for other pupils and is not showing signs of improvement. Senior leaders have convincing evidence that a very small number of pupils have a disproportionate impact on these figures. Overall attendance is in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils have declined since the last inspection in 2013. At that time, pupils at the end of key stage 2 achieved above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, the percentages of pupils who achieved the expected standard in writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 were below those seen nationally.
- Pupils' progress in 2017 across key stage 2 overall was below that found nationally. The school's performance in reading and mathematics was in the lowest 10% nationally. The combined figure for reading, writing and mathematics fell from 80% in 2015, to 48% in 2016 to 35% in 2017. The national figure in the latter two years was 65%. At both key stages, too few pupils achieved at greater depth.
- Conversely, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics rose from well below average in 2016 to broadly in line with the national averages in 2017. But too few achieved at a greater depth of learning in these subjects.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils at all phases fared less well than non-disadvantaged pupils. The lower-attaining disadvantaged boys made insufficient progress from their starting points. This put disadvantaged pupils behind all pupils nationally. Similarly, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made good progress if supported well, but not so otherwise.
- Overall, therefore, pupils' progress is inconsistent largely because teaching is still not consistently good, as was indicated in the school's previous report. A high turnover of staff has not supported effective school improvement over time.
- The current picture remains the same. Pupils' progress is still too variable to be good because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. A significant number perform less well than they should in some classes for progress to be good overall. Too few, at any key stage, are working at a greater depth.
- The most able pupils typically make slower rates of progress than other pupils because they are not always challenged sufficiently. Some of these pupils are making strong progress, but in some year groups and classes they achieve less well and make much slower progress in reading, writing and mathematics than they should.
- On regular occasions in mathematics pupils are left to select tasks from among all that are on offer. Less-confident learners veer towards tasks they know they can complete comfortably before venturing on to more demanding activities. This is mainly because

they want to succeed. When this selection process is allowed to continue, pupils do not achieve as well as they might if teachers steered their learning more effectively.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making similar rates of progress to others. However, a number of these pupils have benefited from additional support, which has helped them to make strong progress. Lower-attaining learners frequently make the best rates of progress because they receive good support. This is not always so for lower attaining disadvantaged boys who sometimes lack confidence in their learning.
- Nevertheless, in a number of classes and year groups, pupils are making good progress, because teachers plan effectively to build pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Pupils' performance in phonics in 2016 and 2017 was in line with the national average. However, outcomes in reading remain below average because pupils do not always understand fully what they read when texts become more complex.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. In the last three years the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of the early years was slightly below the national average, with too few children exceeding expectations. Teaching over time has not been as good as it needs to be for children at the end of early years to be always well prepared for Year 1.
- The quality of the learning environment in the early years is well resourced and well maintained. It is highly popular among the young children to explore and discover for themselves, and they do this with confidence and excitement. Teachers plan for their learning effectively, but the level of challenge, particularly in the Nursery, is frequently not high enough for children to make more rapid gains.
- The effectiveness of teaching in the early years is mixed. Children typically make better progress when teachers or teaching assistants work with them, rather than when they work on their own. This is because children enjoy the short bursts of learning teachers introduce to them through lively songs, actions and words. Phonics is popular because it incorporates all these three elements in a fun way that children repeat with delight.
- Progress overall requires improvement. At times, particularly in the Nursery, the level of challenge is not high enough to extend the skills of the most able learners. This is because teachers' assessments of children's starting points are not entirely accurate, being too low for some. As a result, learning opportunities are missed and children do not get the maximum benefit from the provision available to make good progress. While children like free-choice activities and physical play, they also enjoy the calmer, more structured time to listen and learn. This is generally more plentiful in the Reception classes, where the level of challenge is markedly higher to support good progress.
- Children are beginning to use their developing phonics knowledge in their writing. For example, a group of children were observed working with their teacher writing simple sentences, sounding out the spelling in the words as they wrote. However, most-able children are not making the rapid progress in writing or in phonics that they are

capable of because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.

- The early years leader, who joined the school this year, has made a good start in making improvements. She has engendered effective teamwork among staff and ensures that parents are well informed and feel involved in their children's learning at school and home. A typical comment from one parent was: 'My child settled so well because teachers made school fun. I can't keep her away, even when she is ill.'
- Relationships between staff and children in the early years are positive. Behaviour is typically good. Children are well cared for and learn and play together happily. Children who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress.
- Staff ensure that children in the early years are well cared for. The learning environment is safe and secure and welfare requirements are adhered to fully.

School details

Unique reference number	107848
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10045480

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

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	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian White
Headteacher	Caroline Hoyle
Telephone number	01132 012450
Website	www.gildersomeprimary.org.uk
Email address	head@gildersomeprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive SEN support is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is at the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a high number of staffing changes, including among senior leaders. Many middle leaders are relatively new to

their roles.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, with senior leaders joining them on a number of occasions. They also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors considered the 95 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and talked informally with parents at the start of the school day. They also took into consideration the 38 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors met a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also had discussions with staff in the school, including the leader responsible for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, the leader for the early years and the leaders for English and mathematics.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and records of monitoring visits by other providers. They also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Tull	Ofsted Inspector
Lynda Johnson	Ofsted Inspector

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