

# Gilsland CofE Primary School

Gilsland, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 7AA

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The headteacher's actions to improve outcomes for pupils have had a positive impact. However, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good and this slows the progress of some pupils.
- Leaders have not planned a curriculum which develops sufficient breadth and depth in pupils' skills and knowledge in some subjects such as history, geography and art.
- Recently appointed members of the trust and governing body share the headteacher's ambition and vision. However, they are still developing the skills needed to work effectively with leaders.
- Subject leaders are still developing the skills required to enable them to have an influence on teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- In key stage 2, leaders have taken actions to improve pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. These improvements are at an early stage.
- In key stage 1, work planned does not precisely match pupils' levels of ability, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- In the early years, staff do not plan enough engaging and interesting activities to develop children's skills, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The early years outdoor classroom is not used effectively to support children's learning and development.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's website meets statutory requirements.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have an accurate view of strengths and areas for development. The headteacher keeps a careful check on pupils' progress.
- Teachers plan support carefully to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils with medical needs.
- Pupils read regularly and with confidence.
- The headteacher has set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff teach pupils to be kind and thoughtful to others.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Safeguarding takes a high priority.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership by:
  - securing consistently good teaching across the school
  - planning the curriculum more rigorously so that pupils can develop their skills, knowledge and understanding more effectively in all subjects
  - developing the skills of middle leaders so that they have a greater impact on teaching and learning across the curriculum
  - ensuring that governors and trust members have the necessary skills and understanding to hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that the school's website makes available all statutorily required information for parents.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to raise pupils' achievement by:
  - ensuring that pupils develop their skills across the curriculum in subjects including history, geography and art
  - in key stage 1, using assessment information effectively to plan activities that match pupils' abilities and challenge them sufficiently, particularly in mathematics and writing
  - in key stage 2, build upon the actions already taken to improve pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years, so that children's rates of progress improve, by:
  - ensuring that teachers provide high-quality, challenging and frequent opportunities to develop and support children's learning and development, including in writing and mathematics
  - enhance the outdoor classroom area to develop children's learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how the school may improve this aspect of its work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across the school. The curriculum lacks breadth and depth in some subjects, including history, geography and art. As a result, pupils' do not achieve consistently well across all year groups and in different areas of the curriculum.
- The headteacher and the governing body have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement.
- Since her appointment in 2016, the headteacher has taken steps to improve teaching, learning and assessment. With support from the diocese, leaders have improved the accuracy and rigour of checks on pupils' learning. Staff work with other schools to share good practice and expertise. Leaders use their monitoring information to prioritise training for staff.
- Leaders have improved teaching by employing specialist teachers and coaches in drama, music and physical education (PE). However, in some subjects, the curriculum requires further development to ensure that teachers give pupils the right opportunities to develop their skills.
- Changes in staffing mean that some subject leaders are new to their role. The headteacher and governors recognise that the skills of middle leaders need to be developed in order to have a greater impact on teaching and learning.
- Leaders use the primary school PE and sport premium to build pupils' confidence. Pupils develop their skills in a wide range of sports and activities, including basketball, cricket and football.
- Leaders use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that staff quickly address gaps in learning and any additional needs these pupils have. Leaders carefully check the progress of disadvantaged pupils and plan additional support to help these pupils catch up.
- The headteacher is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). She uses additional funding effectively to provide well-planned and regular support to improve the progress of pupils with SEND. When needed, the school seeks effective external support from other professionals.
- Leaders plan many opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through lessons, assemblies and events, such as charity fundraising. Leaders promote the school's Christian ethos in daily worship and visits to the local church, St Mary Magdalene's. Staff teach pupils to develop values, such as honesty and courage. Pupils learn to be inclusive and to welcome and value all, including those with other faiths.
- The vast majority of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the changes that the headteacher has made and said that the school is improving. They were keen to praise her hard work in ensuring that pupils receive the right level of support and care.

- At the time of the inspection, the school's website did not contain the full range of information for parents which is statutorily required.

### **Governance of the school**

- Since the school opened, there has been considerable turbulence in governance. Recent appointments have been supported by the diocese and have strengthened the governing body and the trust board and have greatly improved relationships between leaders and governors.
- Governors and trust members, including the recently appointed chair of governors, share the headteacher's determination and ambition to improve teaching and learning so that pupils achieve well across the curriculum.
- Governors know the school well and have an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, a strategic plan for governors is not in place and governors and trust members would benefit from further training and guidance to improve their skills and effectiveness.
- Governors have worked with the headteacher to improve safeguarding. A new school porch and door locks in the school have enhanced security.
- Governors actively sought the views of parents and have shared the findings of a parental survey with the school community.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory checks are in place to ensure the suitability of adults working in the school. Appropriate checks are made on visitors when they arrive at the school.
- Leaders make sure that staff receive regular and appropriate training to identify any signs of possible danger or potential abuse. Pupils feel confident that they have someone to talk with if they are worried and say that they feel safe. In safeguarding assemblies and lessons, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online and in the wider community. Older pupils learn how to cycle safely on roads.
- The pupils spoken to during the inspection said that bullying does not happen in the school. They report that staff deal quickly with any misbehaviour.
- The procedures for reporting any incidents or concerns are very clear and understood by staff. Around the school, leaders display useful safeguarding contact details and information. Leaders and staff work well with parents and other agencies to make sure that pupils are safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good across the school. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan activities that precisely match pupils' abilities and develop their skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and discuss their learning. In key stage 2 lessons, staff use questioning effectively to check pupils'

understanding and quickly address any misconceptions.

- In mathematics, pupils develop a secure knowledge of number, including place value and written calculations. In key stage 2, staff plan a number of opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils learn to be resilient and to 'have a go' at tricky problems. In key stage 1, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. Work does not precisely match pupils' abilities. This slows the progress that some pupils make.
- Across the school and in different subjects, pupils' handwriting is neat and well formed. Pupils show pride in their work and are keen to do their best.
- Teachers use a variety of high-quality texts to improve pupils' reading skills and to inspire their writing. Pupils read regularly and across different subjects. They develop confidence and skill in reading aloud for an audience.
- In the infant class, pupils develop their phonics skills and read with confidence and fluency. In phonics sessions teachers and teaching assistants check pupils' learning regularly to ensure that activities are matched to pupils' abilities. Staff provide effective additional support for pupils who need to catch up with their peers in phonics.
- In key stage 1, pupils do not have enough opportunity to write at length to practise and develop their skills, including using interesting and varied vocabulary and writing for different purposes.
- Leaders have taken steps to improve the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling in key stage 2. These improvements are at an early stage but are beginning to have an impact.
- In key stage 2, pupils write for a range of different purposes to develop their skills. Staff plan engaging topics so that pupils are keen to write. The junior class used their reading of Roald Dahl's 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' to inspire their descriptive writing about chocolate designs, which they then presented to their class. Pupils use ambitious, well-chosen vocabulary to make their writing interesting to read.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils have developed skills in mathematics and English which prepare them well for the next stage in their education.
- In science, teachers plan engaging practical lessons which give pupils plenty of opportunity to develop their subject knowledge including scientific vocabulary.
- In other subjects, teaching is not consistently good. For example, in history, geography and art, teachers plan engaging lessons. Staff use vocabulary precisely to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in these subjects.
- Staff provide valuable support for pupils, including those with SEND. They know these pupils well and support individuals and small groups with their learning.

**Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In this small school, all pupils are known very well to each other and to staff. As one pupil said, 'We all know each other like a family.' Nurturing relationships between adults and pupils are evident across the school.
- Leaders put in place appropriate support for vulnerable pupils, including those with medical needs. Parents were keen to share their appreciation of staff for their hard work to ensure that these pupils get the support that they need.
- In lessons and assemblies, staff teach pupils about the school's values, including courage and honesty. Pupils develop a secure understanding of how to apply these values to their own behaviour.
- Pupils value philosophy lessons. Staff use these opportunities to develop their thinking skills and to teach them about important issues, including caring for the environment. Pupils spoken to during the inspection described how these lessons help them to deepen their understanding of challenging topics.
- Older pupils care for younger pupils, taking on roles such as reading partners. Junior pupils play with younger pupils at playtime and model good behaviour. The members of the active school council take part in decision making, such as on improving playground resources and purchasing the school hamsters, 'Cake' and 'Willow'. Through such opportunities, pupils learn to be caring and responsible.
- Staff teach pupils how to stay safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from possible harm on the internet.
- Staff encourage pupils to be welcoming. Pupils new to the school settle quickly and make new friends. Staff teach pupils to value other cultures and religions, including Hinduism and Islam. In the infant class, pupils have recently learned about Diwali, reading stories, making cards and painting attractive Rangoli patterns.
- Through the curriculum, pupils develop a clear understanding of how to choose a healthy lifestyle. During the inspection, pupils at the school's breakfast club were learning about a healthy diet and making fruit smoothies. In their science lessons, pupils learn about the importance of choosing a balanced diet. They enjoy using the 'mile-a-day' running track which they say has improved their daily activity.
- Staff teach pupils to be thoughtful and considerate. Pupils take part in charitable fundraising events in the community, including the bishop's harvest appeal. Through such opportunities, they learn about developing communities overseas and how they can offer support.
- Staff plan valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their independence. Key stage 2 pupils greatly enjoy their annual adventurous outdoor residential trip. They described how they relish new experiences such as raft building, climbing and canoeing, which help to develop their teamwork and resilience.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The headteacher and staff provide a warm and

nurturing environment so that pupils enjoy being in the school and value their friendships with each other.

- Leaders monitor behaviour carefully and put in place effective measures to address the needs of any pupils with behaviour difficulties.
- Staff, pupils and parents agree that pupils behave well. In lessons, pupils listen respectfully and attentively to each other and to adults. They work cooperatively. They are keen to do their best and their work is neat and well presented. Staff teach pupils to have a positive and resilient attitude to their learning and not to give up when work is tricky or to be afraid of making mistakes. As one pupil said, 'Failure is an opportunity to learn.'
- Pupils enjoy school and they attend regularly. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and keen to learn. Leaders know pupils very well and have put in place measures to address any worsening of their attendance quickly. Leaders have raised the profile of good attendance and strongly discourage term-time holidays.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In key stage 2, pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics and are working at a standard expected for their age. The most-able pupils are challenged to make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling are below the level of those of pupils nationally. Leaders have taken action to improve pupils' skills. These changes are at an early stage of development, although they are beginning to have an impact.
- Last year, pupils achieved well in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, current workbooks show that some pupils, including the most able, are not consistently challenged to reach their full potential. This is because the work planned is sometimes too easy or too difficult. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. For example, in writing, pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their skills by writing at length. In mathematics, pupils do not develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- By the end of Year 1, pupils' attainment in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is in line with national averages. Pupils read regularly and with fluency and they use their phonics knowledge accurately to read unfamiliar words. Staff provide those pupils working below the expected standard with additional support to help them make good progress.
- In other subjects, pupils' outcomes across the school vary. In science, pupils develop their skills and knowledge and achieve well. However, in some subjects, including history, geography and art, the curriculum lacks breadth and depth. This means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Recent improvements to teaching and learning in music, drama and PE are having an impact. For example, in PE, pupils develop their skills in a range of sports and activities. In drama, pupils in key stage 2 enjoy specialist teaching and read and perform play scripts with enjoyment and skill.

- Disadvantaged pupils are known very well to staff in this small and nurturing school. In English and mathematics, leaders plan additional support to ensure that these pupils make the progress of which they are capable, which is at least in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND receive carefully planned teaching to make sure that they make appropriate progress from their varied starting points.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Provision in the early years requires improvement. This is because staff do not use their checks on children's learning to plan activities which closely match their skills, particularly in writing and mathematics. Staff's expectations of what children can achieve are sometimes too low. This means that some children do not make good progress across different areas of learning.
- Leaders have enhanced and improved the range of reading resources available in the Reception class. Children read regularly and staff have an accurate understanding of their phonics skills. They plan activities and teaching which match children's abilities.
- The outdoor area is used to enhance children's physical development; for example, they ride bikes in the playground area. They enjoy activities such as collecting autumn leaves to inspire their art work. However, staff do not routinely plan learning activities in the outdoor areas, including for reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers do not make effective use of this area to develop children's skills.
- Staff ensure that children starting the Reception Year settle quickly. Nurturing relationships mean that children feel safe and enjoy school. Through visits to homes and to nurseries, teachers get to know children before they start school. Children visit school in the summer term and staff use this time to check their skills across different areas of learning. Teachers quickly build up an accurate picture of each child's level of development.
- Through parents' evenings and useful home-school diaries, teachers and parents share information about children's learning. Staff encourage parents to support their children's learning at home, for example through regular reading.
- During the Reception Year, children work alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. This means that transition to Year 1 is smooth.
- Children are safe and well looked after by staff. The school meets welfare requirements, which includes making risk assessments for the outdoor area.
- Teachers plan a curriculum which promotes children's understanding of diversity. Children learn about different cultures and religions, including Hinduism. In school, and through visits to the village church, children develop their understanding of Christianity.
- Staff work well with colleagues from other schools. For example, teachers meet to check that assessments of children's learning are accurate and in line with those of other schools.



## School details

Unique reference number	138159
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10083793

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Chris Kearns
Headteacher	Lesley Winter
Telephone number	01697747302
Website	<a href="http://www.gilsland.co.uk">www.gilsland.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@gilsland.cumbria.sch.uk">admin@gilsland.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in June 2012 as an academy.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2016.
- There has been considerable turbulence in governance and membership of the trust since the school opened.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- All pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average.
- The diocese has provided support to improve leadership, including governance.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in both classes. Sessions were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke with a member of the trust.
- The inspector met with four pupils from key stage 2 and talked with pupils in classes and around the school.
- The inspector listened to a small number of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- A range of pupils' books and tracking records were scrutinised with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents to seek their views.
- The inspector scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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