

Galley Hill Primary School and Nursery

Galley Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 3JY

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, governors and other leaders, have worked determinedly since the previous inspection to raise standards in the school. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness is now good.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are ambitious for all pupils and committed to, and capable of, bringing about further improvement.
- Improvements in teaching, learning and assessment have led to better outcomes for pupils, particularly at the end of key stage 2. In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well over time. In 2018, the proportion reaching the required standards by the end of Year 6 was higher than that seen nationally.
- Relationships with the majority of parents and carers are very good. However, a few expressed concerns. This is because they do not receive clear enough or frequent enough information about some of the actions the school takes.
- The large majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are confident, self-assured, polite and friendly. Relationships between adults and pupils are highly positive and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attendance has improved as a result of leaders' concerted efforts and their effective support for individual pupils. However, there are still a few pupils who do not attend school as regularly as they should.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children learn in a rich environment and make good progress from their starting points because of the exciting curriculum and teachers' high expectations.
- Leaders make rigorous checks on all aspects of school life, including on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They are aware that a few inconsistencies remain, for example in the quality of learning environments. Also, occasionally, writing tasks do not extend or deepen learning as well as they could.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and prepares them effectively for life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the quality of communication with all stakeholders to ensure that they understand the rationale behind the programmes the school implements to support all pupils.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that all classroom environments maximise support for learning
 - developing more opportunities for pupils to develop independence within their writing
 - continuing to address any residual inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Continue to improve attendance by:
 - supporting and encouraging parents to bring their children to school regularly, so that overall attendance increases to be at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and other senior leaders, has worked decisively to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, in a relatively short period of time, leaders have moved the school forward so that its overall effectiveness is now good.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, they are in a strong position to improve the school still further.
- Effective and thorough systems are in place to allow leaders to gather detailed information about the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and progress. This information enables leaders to provide the right support for staff when necessary. Working with the local authority, leaders have ensured that staff have access to high-quality specialist training. This has helped to improve teaching, learning and assessment.
- Middle leaders have attended training that has equipped them with effective strategies to improve standards for pupils in their subjects. For example, the mathematics subject leader has attended training to implement a new approach to the teaching of mathematics. He, in turn, has provided training for all staff. This has ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics from the Reception class upwards and has led to a rise in standards in mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and passionate about the subjects they lead. They have been involved in developing the curriculum, which is broad, balanced and well planned. It ensures that pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively in English, mathematics and a wide range of other subjects. Pupils also benefit from interesting enrichment activities.
- Pupils take on additional responsibilities, such as being peer mediators and members of the school council. All pupils belong to houses, which include pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. These are split into family groups and Year 6 pupils lead regular activities with these groups. This enables younger pupils to get to know and work with older pupils. These activities, alongside the taught curriculum, promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and help to prepare them effectively for life in modern Britain.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good. There are clear processes to identify these pupils and ensure that they are appropriately supported. Most pupils with SEND make good progress. There are a small number of pupils who have complex needs. These pupils have bespoke timetables and behaviour plans to ensure that their needs are met. Individual staff work effectively with these pupils to ensure that they are included in school life.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to support pupils' learning and experiences is effective. Pupils enjoy a variety of sports, some of which are delivered by specialist coaches, and their participation in sporting events and clubs is monitored. The school

has implemented all recommendations from a review of how effectively it uses pupil premium funding. This grant is now effectively targeted to overcome disadvantaged pupils' barriers. Consequently, most disadvantaged pupils make good progress and some make excellent progress over time by the end of key stage 2.

- The majority of parents are very supportive of the work of the school. One typical comment was: 'The staff and pupils at Galley Hill have always made me feel welcome. My children have flourished here, and I am very happy with all aspects of the school.' However, a few parents expressed concerns regarding interruptions to learning that had happened historically. These were as a result of the challenging behaviour of a very few pupils. Communication with parents has not always been as effective in explaining the school's approaches and rationale to meeting the needs of all groups of pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a strong commitment to the school. They have responded well to the outcomes of the previous inspection and worked closely with senior leaders and the local authority to bring about improvements. They have ensured that the school has the capacity to improve still further.
- Members of the governing body bring a range of skills to their roles. They visit the school frequently and receive regular reports from the headteacher. Consequently, they know the school well and have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for further improvement. Governors use their evaluations to challenge leaders and hold them firmly to account.
- Governors check the school's use of additional funding and ensure that it is used appropriately to improve pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all legal requirements with regard to safe recruitment are met.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive regular and appropriate training. This enables them to be fully informed and maintain a high level of vigilance for any possible signs that pupils may need additional support. Staff know what to do if they have a concern.
- The electronic recording system used by the school allows all information to be kept together efficiently in one place. Any concern about pupils' welfare or safety is dealt with effectively and in a timely manner. Leaders and staff act quickly to ensure that pupils get help and support when they need it.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. The majority of parents agree that the school is a safe place. Inspection evidence confirms this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Warm relationships exist between pupils and their teachers. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute well to their good learning.

- Pupils enjoy their learning because the majority of teachers use their good subject knowledge and effective assessment to plan interesting and stimulating learning activities for them. These develop and consolidate pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Classroom environments are mainly bright and colourful and provide useful support to help pupils learn. However, there remain a few inconsistencies across the school in the quality of teaching and learning environments, and how well they support pupils' learning.
- Pupils enjoy the topics covered within the wider curriculum. Topics begin with 'wow' days, which immerse them in the new topic and give them the chance to discuss what they already know and what they would like to find out. Careful planning by subject leaders ensures that learning is developed sequentially. These topics also provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.
- Teachers consistently provide useful feedback to pupils, in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils also give each other feedback on the quality of their work and how it could be improved. Work in books shows that pupils act upon advice from both their teachers and peers. Additionally, they edit and improve their own work independently.
- The new approach to teaching mathematics has improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in this subject since the previous inspection. There is an appropriate balance of the teaching of mathematical skills and the development of pupils' reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Consequently, pupils can discuss mathematical concepts confidently and are making good progress.
- Phonics teaching is well planned and taught from the Nursery upwards. It gives pupils a solid foundation in the development of their early reading skills. Improving reading has been a whole-school priority. As a result, outcomes in reading have improved at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils read with increasing confidence. They say they enjoy reading and were keen to discuss favourite books and authors with inspectors.
- The quality of pupils' writing has improved across the school since the previous inspection. This is because teachers provide pupils with well-structured systems to support their writing and to develop their vocabulary. As pupils move through the school, they develop growing confidence to write at length. Occasionally, teachers do not provide writing tasks that challenge pupils as well as they could and this limits the quantity and quality of their writing.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils, both within and outside the classroom. This enables these pupils to make stronger progress. Teaching assistants receive good-quality training and, as a result, some have progressed to gaining qualified teacher status.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has prioritised developing pupils' well-being to ensure that they are

emotionally, as well as physically, healthy. Pupils participate in daily 'mindfulness' activities, which help to ensure that they are ready for learning.

- Pupils value and benefit from the positions of responsibility available at the school. Older pupils actively support younger pupils by modelling good play on the playground and within the house families.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were confident that they could talk to an adult if they are worried about their relationships. They understand what bullying is and are aware that it does happen occasionally. However, they are confident that any issues will be dealt with quickly by adults.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well-mannered and friendly towards each other and adults. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils told inspectors that most pupils behave well and that adults deal effectively with any rare instances of poor behaviour. Inspection evidence confirms this view.
- A very small minority of pupils whose behaviour can be challenging at times are well managed by trained staff. This approach reflects the inclusive nature of the school.
- During breaktime and lunchtime, there is a high level of adult supervision and plenty of activities to enrich pupils' play. Staff and peer mentors are skilled at helping pupils to manage any disagreements that arise during these times.
- The number of pupils who are persistent non-attenders is reducing over time. Leaders monitor the attendance of all groups of pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable. They work closely with parents to support them in ensuring that their children attend school regularly. However, leaders recognise that there is further work to be done because a few pupils still do not attend school as regularly as they should. Consequently, the current attendance for all pupils is slightly below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress and attainment by the end of key stage 2 have shown marked improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, in 2018, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 was in the top 10% nationally. Pupils made excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points at the end of key stage 1. The proportions of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who met and exceeded age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics separately and combined were well above averages.
- The school's own assessment information and work seen in current pupils' books indicate that the majority of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders make regular checks on the progress that pupils make, discussing both individuals and groups. Prompt and targeted support is put in place for any pupil or group who is identified as falling behind. This ensures that differences in their progress

and that of other pupils diminishes.

- The effective teaching of phonics ensures that the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is consistently similar to the national average. Pupils who do not achieve the expected standard are well supported to catch up and most achieve this by the end of Year 2.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 dipped slightly but remained broadly in line with that seen nationally. However, these pupils made good progress from the end of the Reception Year, when a lower than average proportion reached the expected good level of development.

Early years provision

Good

- Over the past three years, the outcomes for children at the end of the early years have improved from well below average to being in line with the national average.
- Strong leadership of the early years ensures that all staff work together effectively to create rich, stimulating learning environments, both inside and outdoors. Both are well organised and are bright and attractive, enabling children to learn well.
- During the inspection, Nursery children were excited when they found a footprint in the classroom, which suggested that there had been a visit from the troll in the book they had been reading. Reception children were engrossed in activities themed around 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. This included reading and writing about the story and making and tasting porridge.
- Many, but not all, children attend the Nursery prior to entering the Reception Year. Those who do so get off to an excellent start to their education. Consequently, there is variation in the skills that children exhibit at the start of the Reception Year. Nevertheless, staff have designed a curriculum that enables all children to make good progress from their starting points.
- Adults know and support children very well. They assess children's individual needs effectively and plan learning activities that are well matched to their academic, social and emotional needs. This includes extensive opportunities to develop children's early speech and language.
- Learning journeys that record children's progress and their English and mathematics books show that children in the Nursery and Reception classes are making good progress from their starting points. Some Reception children are impressively writing at length.
- Children with SEND are well supported by adults to ensure that they make good progress. Those who need it receive specialist support to overcome barriers in the development of their speech and language.
- Leaders work hard to promote strong partnerships with parents to ensure that children get the best start to their education. During the inspection, a group of parents attended a mathematics session with their children to help them understand how to support their children's learning in this subject.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff are appropriately qualified to meet

the legal requirements for ensuring children's welfare.

School details

Unique reference number	135224
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10088670

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	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr B. Robins
Headteacher	Mrs Emily Birch
Telephone number	01442 406000
Website	www.galleyhill.herts.sch.uk
Email address	admin@galleyhill.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 February 2017

Information about this school

- Galley Hill Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of children with SEND is below the national average. The proportion that have an education, health and care plan is also lower.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced changes in leadership, teachers and other staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes, including jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They reviewed, in detail, work in pupils' books across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read. They spoke to many pupils while visiting classrooms and when pupils were on the playground at breaktime and at lunchtime. Inspectors also spoke more formally to several groups of pupils from year groups across the school to ascertain their views of the school. Additionally, the views of 99 pupils who completed the pupil questionnaire were considered.
- A range of meetings were held, including with governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders and subject leaders. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority and considered her reports on the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised various documents and information provided by the school. These included information relating to pupils' progress and the school's view on how well it is doing. Inspectors also reviewed the school improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding, the school's monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The views of parents were gathered when they were delivering their children to school and inspectors took account of the 71 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. They also considered 65 written responses. Additionally, responses from the school's own parental surveys were considered.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Shân Oswald	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019