

# Inspection of a good school: Gamston C of E (Aided) Primary School

Gamston, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 0PE

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Inspection dates:

21 January 2020

## **Outcome**

Gamston C of E (Aided) Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They are polite, well behaved and confident. They know there is always an adult available to support them when they need help. Pupils are not concerned about bullying. They say there are very few incidents of poor behaviour.

A range of pupils' work is prominent around the school. There are eye-catching displays showing what pupils have been learning across the curriculum. Pupils and their families value the Friday assembly, where pupils' achievements are celebrated. Parents praise the school's family and close-knit atmosphere. One parent said: 'It is a wonderfully supportive environment that my children have loved being a part of since day one.'

While teachers are supportive of pupils, their ambition for what pupils should be able to achieve is not always high enough. In several curriculum subjects, what pupils will learn is not well planned. This means pupils do not learn everything they need to know. Pupils then need to attend extra booster sessions to fill these gaps in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not always supported well enough to help them achieve.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The executive headteacher is very new. She has quickly identified what needs to be done to make the school better, building on the work of the previous interim executive headteacher.

Pupils are excited to learn new things. They are articulate and inquisitive. However, often in lessons this enthusiasm for learning goes untapped. Sometimes pupils are compliant during lessons rather than fully engaged with their learning.

The school's curriculum is not as well developed as leaders would like it to be. They intend to ensure that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Some teachers lack the subject knowledge to teach everything the national curriculum says they should. Leaders have begun to plan what they want pupils to know in each subject. However, this is at a very early stage of development.

In reading, there is not a consistent approach to how pupils are taught phonics. Staff have received recent training in how to teach early reading. The books that pupils are given to read are often too easy for them. The school's high outcomes in the phonics screening check have been due to pupils receiving intensive support to fill gaps in learning. However, this masks some underlying issues in how reading is taught.

The reading curriculum is not well organised to build on what pupils have learned before. Teachers use a variety of different approaches to develop pupils reading. There is no consistency between classes. This causes confusion. It does not help pupils to remember different reading techniques, such as inference and prediction.

Leaders have identified the pupils with SEND. Where necessary, they have sought external funding to give these pupils extra support. However, leaders have not checked if the support pupils receive is helping them to achieve what they intend. The ambition for some of these pupils is not high enough. The curriculum is not always adapted well enough to enable these pupils to achieve as well as they might.

In the early years, children are well cared for. However, the curriculum is not ambitious enough. Staff do not expect enough of children. They are not challenged to achieve well. Sometimes, the activities staff give children to complete are limited or too simple.

In the past year, leaders have developed the school's curriculum for mathematics. This is now well sequenced to develop pupils' knowledge as they move through the school. The clear curriculum plan shows what pupils will learn in each year group. They can explain what they have learned before and how this is helping them to understand new concepts. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development is woven through the curriculums for religious education and personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils know the school's values and understand equality and diversity. Pupils take on additional responsibilities. The school council helps to make some decisions about the day-to-day life of the school.

Staff say that recently their workload has lessened. This has been due to more opportunities to work together and share responsibility. They know that there is work to do to make improvements. However, they are keen to make the changes to the curriculum to revitalise learning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that staff know their responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Staff have received recent training in the signs of abuse and are aware of the risks to pupils. Staff know that they should pass on any concerns as soon as they are identified. Leaders use the school's online system for reporting concerns conscientiously in order to record and follow up incidents. When appropriate, they seek external help for pupils and families. This includes finding bespoke support to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have made sure all the right checks are made before adults begin work at the school.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's approach to teaching phonics and early reading is not consistent. Staff have not received enough training to know how to teach phonics well. Leaders must ensure that staff have received up-to-date training in how to teach phonics and early reading and check that the school's approach is being followed.
- The curriculum for reading is not well sequenced to develop pupil's knowledge as they move through the school. The ambition for what pupils should be able to achieve is not high enough. The books that pupils read do not match their reading ability. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum for reading is ambitious and builds pupils' knowledge as they move through the school. Leaders must check that all teachers follow the school's curriculum.
- The curriculum in some subjects is not well developed. Leaders have planned what they want pupils to learn. However, this has not been implemented across the school. Leaders must continue to develop the school's curriculum to make sure pupil's acquisition of knowledge is well sequenced. They must check that its ambition and scope match that of the national curriculum.
- The curriculum in the early years is not ambitious enough. Staff expectations of what children should be able to achieve are too low. The implementation of the school's curriculum does not provide children with enough opportunities to develop their learning. Leaders must ensure the school's curriculum for the early years is ambitious, and that staff provide pupils with high-quality learning opportunities.
- The support for some pupils with SEND is not monitored carefully enough to make sure it is helping these pupils to achieve. Staff do not effectively adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of some pupils. Leaders must check that the ambition for these pupils is high enough and that the support they receive is helping them to achieve well.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or

the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Gamston C of E (Aided) Primary School to be good on 22–23 March 2016.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122801
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121254
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	112
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Lucy Vernon
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Helen Thomas
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gamstonschool.com">www.gamstonschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22–23 March 2016

## Information about this school

- The school's last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) took place on 18 September 2017.
- The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2020.

## Information about this inspection

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. This included lesson visits and discussions with teachers. We talked with pupils about their learning and looked at examples of pupils' work in these and other subjects.
- We held meetings with the executive headteacher, inclusion leader, senior teacher, subject leaders and teachers. We also spoke with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and the governor responsible for safeguarding. We met with the school's improvement adviser. We considered the 36 responses to the online parents' questionnaire, Ofsted's Parent View. There were no responses to the survey for staff or the pupils' survey.
- We looked at a range of documents, including: the school's curriculum plans; plans for improvement; the most recent published information on the achievement and progress of pupils; and information relating to the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

## **Inspection team**

Helen Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Moira Dales

Ofsted Inspector

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