

Inspection of Galton Valley Primary School

Brasshouse Lane, Smethwick, West Midlands B66 1BA

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils respect others. They work hard and rarely miss school. In class, they listen and show interest in their lessons. Outside, they have plenty to do and enjoy one another's company. Any upsets are usually managed well. Bullying hardly ever happens because everyone knows it is unacceptable.

There is strong leadership. Staff and pupils understand what is expected and aim high. Academic standards are usually above average, and pupils enjoy success in many different subjects. Mathematics, reading and art stand out as strengths. Pupils do well in most other areas too, but aspects could be better, particularly in physical education (PE) and early years. Leaders know this.

Beyond the normal timetable, there are extra activities. Each week, pupils can take part in cookery, gardening and archaeology. In both key stages, pupils can go on overnight trips and even visit France. Musicians and authors come into school and pupils get involved in community projects. These activities open their eyes to the different things they can do and aspire to.

Pupils also learn to take responsibility. From litter-picking to running a school shop, pupils have a role in improving the school.

Pupils say they enjoy school because they get a fun education in a safe environment.

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

This good school is doing well. At the end of Year 6, most pupils usually reach the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. These and most other subjects are planned carefully, so teachers know what to teach and when. In art, for example, pupils learn about and from the work of different artists. They can talk knowledgeably about styles and what they learned in different lessons. As pupils get older, they use more complex techniques and draw on earlier learning to produce good-quality work. They enjoy it too.

Pupils also learn a lot in science, history and religious education (RE). They are well informed about different faiths and scientific concepts, although there is scope to strengthen some aspects further. In RE, for instance, pupils learn a lot of information but as they get older they do not necessarily have to think more deeply.

Reading sits at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils are immersed in stories and books, with a focus on storytelling from the very start. Authors visit the school, and there is always a class storybook on the go. Phonics teaching is well organised, and pupils can use what they know to make sense of new words. Leadership of reading is informed, ambitious and knows the right things to do next.

The same can be said about the new leadership in early years. Here, the school day is well planned, and classrooms are well-resourced, safe spaces for children to learn

and play. Excellent communication with parents assists a smooth start to school. However, communication between children and adults in the school could be better. Some adults make the most of every opportunity to speak and model positive behaviours to children. On the other hand, some do not. This means children do not make as much progress as they could. There is a similar picture in the resource base for pupils with special educational needs and/disabilities (SEND).

In PE lessons, pupils get plenty of exercise. This helps to reinforce the school's many messages about the importance of healthy lifestyles. Specialist teachers manage pupils well and keep them busy. However, progression in learning from one activity to the next and as pupils move up through the school is not clear. In addition, there are few opportunities for pupils to take part in team sports with other schools. Many leave primary school without learning to swim.

Outside lessons, pupils can take part in residential visits, and many do. On Friday afternoons, pupils can try different activities such as cookery, archaeology and gardening. Pupils look forward to these weekly sessions, which supplement classroom learning and add interest to school life.

The school choir has performed in different places. Pupils and staff clearly enjoy singing, and do so regularly. During this inspection, for instance, a recent visit from a rock group's drummer inspired some uplifting whole-school singing in assembly. Events such as the annual Galton Valley's Got Talent Show involve pupils in performing to an audience. Through such activities, and by taking on jobs around the school, pupils grow in confidence and maturity.

The use of exclusion is rare because behaviour is usually managed well. For their part, pupils understand expectations, and this helps lessons to run smoothly.

Parents, pupils and staff express high levels of satisfaction with the school. Community links are strong. Staff say that leaders set high standards but are equally mindful of their workload and welfare.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has thorough systems in place and takes advice from different agencies that work with children. Staff are informed about likely risks in the local area and know what to do if they have a concern. Staff act quickly when they need to.

Pupils are taught about responsible behaviour and sensible choices. They are kept safe in school. Leaders understand the importance of keeping medicines in the right place.

If a pupil is absent, then staff find out why. Similarly, if a pupil leaves during the year, staff check where they are.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Planning for progression in some foundation subjects, such as RE, PE and history, could be improved. Currently, pupils do different activities and learn different things in different year groups but do not build up their knowledge and skills as well as they might. This means they do not achieve as highly as they could. Leaders should continue to improve staff subject knowledge and curriculum plans in these subjects.
- In the early years and the SEND resource-base provision, different adults have different expectations of what is expected from the children. This shows itself in the different ways adults communicate with, interact with and manage children. Some do this very well; others less so. To improve this, leaders should provide clearer guidance and carry out more careful checks on what is happening in class.
- Some leaders are new to their posts. They are doing the right things. Senior leaders should continue to provide them with training and support so that they strengthen their leadership skills.

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

Unique reference number	135288
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10122494
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	507
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pam Randhawa
Headteacher	Sarah O'Boyle
Website	www.gvps.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides before-school childcare on site.
- The school has specially resourced SEND provision for up to 10 pupils with education, health and care plans for moderate to complex needs.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we focused on the following subjects: reading, science, RE, PE and art. In these subjects, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, examined teachers' plans and talked with pupils and staff about the way the subjects were taught. We also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were organised and taught.
- We examined external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum, SEND, governance, and school improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.

- We asked pupils, staff, leaders and governors about safeguarding arrangements. We examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. We also found out about safety procedures and routines at the school.
- We watched pupils' behaviour in class, in assembly and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, governors, teachers and pupils. We also talked informally with pupils, staff and parents to gather general information about school life.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 50 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and five free-text comments. We considered these and looked at the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Owen

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Leonard

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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