

Inspection of Gig Mill Primary School

The Broadway, Norton, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 3HL

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

'Together we care, together we succeed' is more than just a motto at Gig Mill Primary. It drives exciting lessons and interactions that enrich the lives of pupils. Pupils love to learn, and staff expect the very best outcomes from them. Leaders, staff and pupils work together to aim for a community where pupils matter and thrive.

High expectations and nurturing relationships mean that pupils develop into successful, independent learners. Trips to places such as Severn Valley Railway bring classroom learning to life. A broad range of school clubs helps to develop sporting and artistic skills.

Behaviour is exceptional. Staff and pupils care for each other. When a pupil is unhappy, support is always close by. From peer supporters to 'junior police constables', pupils take on a range of responsibilities to make a difference to their school. As a result, this is a kind and respectful environment where pupils feel safe and are safe.

Bullying is rare. Leaders work hard to make sure that everyone acts if bullying ever does occur. Leaders investigate any incidents and act swiftly. Pupil anti-bullying ambassadors make sure that no child is left out.

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

Leaders and governors want the very best for all pupils. Inspirational leadership and caring staff continually drive improvements. All are determined to make sure that every child gets the very best from their time at Gig Mill.

Children make an exceptional start in early years. Teachers work hard to understand the needs and abilities of the children when they join the school. Well-planned and exciting lessons inspire the children to start powerful learning journeys. Children quickly learn the communication, personal and physical skills they need to be successful in school. They play nicely together and build lasting friendships.

Leaders have worked hard to make sure that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 learn from a wide variety of different subjects. Many of these subjects, such as mathematics, are strong in developing the skills and knowledge of the pupils. Leaders are now looking to make sure that other subjects, such as history, geography and physical education (PE), are as strong.

Pupils quickly learn to read because teachers prioritise this from the very first days at the school. All members of staff have completed suitable training to teach phonics effectively. Pupils learn the phonics they need to be able to read a range of books. Exciting storytelling by teachers develops a love of reading. When pupils fall behind, teachers act swiftly to make sure that they get the right support to catch up.

Pupils' writing is developing well. Recently, leaders have improved the way pupils learn to write in early years and key stage 1. From a very early age, children develop clear handwriting and write sentences accurately. From this secure start, pupils develop as confident and fluent writers.

Mathematics is a strength. Teachers prioritise problem solving and reasoning. Teachers work hard to make sure that pupils learn and remember such skills as addition, multiplication and division. Teachers encourage pupils to talk about how they have solved problems. Pupils often compete successfully in local and regional mathematics competitions.

In subjects such as history and geography, pupils develop their understanding of the world around them. Local historians visit the school to teach about the history of Dudley's canals. PE provides a range of opportunities to build healthy lifestyles. Leaders are now working hard to make sure that learning in these subjects always builds on what the pupils have successfully learned in the past. The school swimming pool is used well to ensure that most pupils are confident swimmers by the time they leave Year 6.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress. All staff understand pupils' additional needs well. This means that pupils get the support they need. Skilful teachers match learning to the ability of the pupils. The classroom base for pupils with autism spectrum disorder is a real strength. Caring and skilled staff help pupils to overcome their barriers to learning. Well-planned opportunities integrate the pupils into the main school so that they can achieve alongside more able peers.

Positive mental health is a priority. Leaders know pupils learn best when they feel safe, happy and confident. When behaviour does not meet the high expectations of staff, leaders act. Caring staff make sure that all pupils get the support they need to be calm and purposeful learners. 'Pupil well-being warriors' take on responsibilities to support their friends and classmates.

Pupils access a broad range of opportunities to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Regular visitors, such as nurses and the police, develop an understanding of the community. Leaders are now working hard to make sure that all pupils have a more robust understanding of the British values of democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect for, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that staff have had the training they need to keep pupils safe. Staff act quickly to raise concerns when they are worried about a pupil. Leaders investigate these concerns swiftly to make sure that pupils are safe. When needed, leaders work with services such as the local authority to make sure that pupils get the support they need.

Pupils learn quickly how to stay safe in the real world and online. Leaders are now working to make sure that all pupils learn how to deal with risks they might face in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the curriculum has rapidly improved over the last few years, some subjects are not yet as strong as others. For example, while mathematics, reading and writing are well developed, others such as history, geography and PE are not as well structured. This means that learning does not always precisely build on what learning has happened before. Leaders need to continue to enhance these subjects to make sure that learning in these subjects is well sequenced and builds on prior learning.
- Teachers provide many opportunities to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. However, these opportunities are not always planned in a well-ordered manner. As a result, pupils' awareness of British values and safeguarding risks relevant to the local context is not as good as it might be. Leaders need to build on the good work already started in this area, so that these important learning experiences build on what pupils already know and enable pupils to extend their awareness and deepen their understanding.

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	103822
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10122495
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	637
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dominic Edgar
Headteacher	Angela Hannaway
Website	www.gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an enhanced resource provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. Pupils attend the provision when they have been allocated a place from the local authority. The provision can cater for up to eight pupils. Pupils spend some time in the centre and some in the main school.
- The school has a swimming pool. All pupils have frequent opportunities to learn how to become confident in the water.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club, which operates on the school site. This provision is managed by the school.

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, English, mathematics, PE, geography and history. In these subjects, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, examined teachers' plans and talked with pupils and staff

about the way these subjects are taught. We also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they are planned and taught.

- We examined external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- We asked 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.
- We observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, governors, teachers and pupils. We also talked informally with parents, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.

Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Leonard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Lewis

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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