

Inspection of Gunter Primary School

Gunter Road, Pype Hayes, Birmingham, West Midlands B24 0RU

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Senior leaders have high expectations of what pupils will achieve and how they should behave. However, not all adults across the school share these expectations. At times, some pupils behave inappropriately. This affects the learning of those around them.

Leaders and governors have started driving improvements to achieve their vision. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because there are weaknesses in the curriculum. Pupils are experiencing a better grounding in some subjects. However, some curriculum areas do not help pupils learn and remember the important knowledge as well as they should.

Pupils say they feel happy and safe at school and generally get on well together. They attend regularly and enjoy coming to school. They learn about the wider world and can talk about how to treat each other with respect. They enjoy attending the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school. Pupils enjoy the opportunities given to debate various issues.

Leaders prioritise pupils' emotional well-being. The pastoral support pupils receive is a strength of the school. Pupils say that bullying is uncommon. If it happens, they say leaders sort it out.

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

The school has been through a considerable period of change. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed recently. The new senior leadership team are ambitious and committed to improving the school for all pupils.

Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They have started to design a curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some curriculum subjects, such as science and computing, have been well thought out. The curriculum for these subjects makes sure pupils' learning builds on what they already know. As a result, pupils remember more of what has been taught in these subjects.

In other subjects, such as art, history and geography, this is not the case. Curriculum design is still in the early stages. Leaders have started to think about what they want pupils to remember. However, subject leaders have not thought carefully about the design and content of the curriculum. The curriculum is not sequenced well enough to help pupils build on their previous learning. For example, some pupils are not able to recall when, why or how the Second World War came to an end.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics curriculum. They have provided staff across early years and key stage 1 with appropriate training. Phonics is taught as soon as children start in the Reception Year. However, teachers across early years and key

stage 1 do not effectively check which letter sounds pupils do not know. As a result, some pupils read books that are too hard and do not match the letter sounds they know. This means they do not read with fluency and confidence.

The reading curriculum for key stage 2 is not well developed. It does not ensure that all pupils learn the skills they should. Consequently, several pupils are not able to explain the key language linked to reading skills such as inference and retrieval.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Pupils learn the importance of keeping themselves healthy and how to appreciate and respect differences. Pastoral support is strong. This is because adults are sensitive and care about pupils' needs.

Some pupils behave well and are courteous to their peers and teachers. However, in some lessons and around school, not all pupils behave as they should. This is because some adults do not always address poor behaviour or follow the school's behaviour policy consistently.

Early years staff provide a range of activities. They follow a well-thought-out curriculum. However, while children play happily, they do not always learn as well as they should. For example, several children do not develop their language skills well enough. Leaders know that adults require further training on how to support children to develop their language.

Governors are supportive of the school and have an understanding of the main issues affecting the school. They have the expertise and skills they need to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and governors have received training on safeguarding and understand their roles and responsibilities. They know how to identify a child who might be at risk of harm and what action to take. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe and can talk about the different ways to stay safe.

Senior leaders identify whether pupils need additional support linked to their well-being. They liaise with families and outside agencies to provide appropriate and timely support.

All appropriate checks are made on adults regularly in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have introduced a new phonics curriculum for early reading. However, teachers do not securely know what letter sounds the pupils do and do not know.

This means that some pupils read books that are too hard for them. Leaders should ensure that teachers accurately assess the letter sounds pupils know, so they can address gaps in learning and ensure pupils have the right books that allow them to practise their learning.

- Leaders have not yet ensured that the reading curriculum for key stage 2 is clearly planned or sequenced. The curriculum does not fully consider the skills pupils should learn to become better at reading. This means that several pupils do not build on their reading skills over time. Leaders should ensure that the reading curriculum is well thought out and covers all the reading skills.
- Some subject leaders are not secure in how to select the key knowledge pupils should learn in their subject. The curriculum is not yet designed well enough to help teachers teach some subjects. The curriculum in some subjects does not develop pupils' knowledge and skills in a logical order. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, do not remember or build on their previous learning. Subject leaders should ensure that the curriculum is organised in a way that helps pupils build on their previous learning and helps them know and remember more.
- Not all adults follow the school's behaviour systems or uphold senior leaders' behaviour expectations. At times, some pupils' inappropriate behaviour is ignored. This leads to some disruption in lessons and around school. This interrupts learning and limits what some pupils can achieve. Leaders need to ensure that all adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and consistently follow the school's behaviour policy.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	103208
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10211133
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Harris and Edward Lawrence (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Christy McConnell
Website	www.gunterprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes to staffing since the previous inspection.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2021 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2022.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including one of the co-chairs of governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, writing, history, geography and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and considered documentation relating to how the school keeps pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers shared through Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. This included the comments received via the free-text facility. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stuart Evans

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