

Inspection of Gorse Hill Primary School

Avening Street, Gorse Hill, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 8BZ

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 September 2022

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this inclusive and diverse school. The school's CARE values of courage, appreciation, respect, responsibility and excellence lie at the heart of the school's work. This helps pupils make the right choices on how everyone should treat each other. It also raises pupil aspiration and develops their confidence and resilience.

Leaders have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning. Staff provide strong pastoral support. They work together to create an environment in which all pupils feel wanted and respected. Pupils enjoy learning. They gain a strong understanding of tolerance.

Pupils build effective relationships with adults and their peers. They behave well in lessons and around the school site. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils understand what bullying is. They are adamant that bullying does not happen. They know it would be dealt with quickly and sensitively if it did.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about the care and support their children receive. One parent commented that leaders and staff are 'very supportive to all children; they talk to them with respect and treat them as equals, which is very refreshing to see.'

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff appreciate the collegiate approach and culture shift in the school since the appointment of the current principal. Those new to the profession value the guidance provided.

Leaders prioritise reading. From the moment they start in the Reception Year, children learn phonics. In Nursery, adults support children's language development through the use of rhymes, stories and songs. Books match the sounds pupils are learning. Staff use their phonics training well to take every opportunity to support and check pupils' phonics knowledge. Careful assessment ensures that those who are in danger of falling behind receive the necessary support to catch up quickly. Most older pupils enjoy reading. Investment in a wider range of texts is beginning to enhance pupils' enjoyment of reading for pleasure.

The mathematics curriculum is sequenced well to ensure pupils build effectively on previous knowledge over time. Adults model the use of mathematical vocabulary across all year groups. This starts in the Nursery where adults use repetition to support children's understanding of key mathematical words. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They talk knowledgeably about what they have learned.

Leaders have thought carefully about what knowledge they want pupils to know in most subjects across the wider curriculum. In history and physical education (PE), pupils can explain and recall their prior learning, showing how their understanding has developed over time. However, in some other subjects such as design technology, the curriculum does not build sequentially on what pupils have learned before. As a result, pupils do not develop the same level of knowledge over time. Some teachers do not use assessment well enough to identify where pupils may have gaps in their learning. Consequently, they do not always have an accurate picture of what pupils already know and can do.

Staff know pupils well. They have a strong understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND. Careful identification of pupils' needs enables staff to provide tailored support. Learning is adapted, so that pupils with SEND receive the same curriculum as their peers. Those pupils with more complex needs benefit from effective specialist support.

Pupils behave well. They understand what is expected of them. Pupils are polite and well mannered. As a result, the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn. Pupils of all ages play well together in unstructured times. Where some pupils struggle with their behaviour, staff deal with it appropriately.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities beyond the curriculum to extend their broader development. Pupils understand that everyone is equal and that it is alright to be different. They can talk in detail about the school's values and how they should treat and care for others. The taught curriculum supports pupils in developing a good understanding of how to stay safe and the importance of healthy relationships.

Governors and the trust share the ambition of school leaders. Staff speak highly of the training and support the trust provides. Teamwork is a strength of the school. Leaders are mindful of teachers' workload, and staff know decisions are made in the best interest of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure there is a strong culture of keeping children safe. Staff are knowledgeable and have regular up-to-date training. Consequently, staff are confident in reporting concerns. Leaders actively engage with external agencies to support vulnerable children.

Leaders carry out the necessary employment checks on staff to ensure they are safe to work with children. Pupils and parents agree the school is a safe place to be. Pupils know who to go to if they are worried. Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' understanding of risk, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects within the wider curriculum are not as coherently designed as others. As a result, pupils do not develop the same level of knowledge that they should across the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that the key knowledge pupils need to know is identified clearly and sequenced effectively across all subject areas, so that pupils know more and remember more over time.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, systems to assess what pupils know and can do are underdeveloped. As a result, some pupils do not consistently build on prior knowledge, which can lead to gaps in learning. Leaders need to secure the use of assessment, so they know how well pupils are learning the curriculum in all subjects.

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.

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	144500
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10227496
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	440
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ninna Gibson
Principal	Luke Graham
Website	www.gorsehill.swindon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 – 27 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Gorse Hill Primary School a larger than average-sized primary school which includes a Nursery. The school is part of the White Horse Federation multi-academy trust.
- There have been some leadership changes since the previous inspection. The current principal took up his post in April 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.

- Inspectors met with the principal, assistant principals, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leads, groups of staff, representatives from the multi-academy trust and members of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and PE. 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 and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects including art and design technology.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Year 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They reviewed how well the designated safeguarding leads act upon concerns about pupils' welfare. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff, trustees and governors about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors considered the 27 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 17 free-text responses and 30 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Hansen	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Greenwood	Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022