

Inspection of Gilsland Church of England Primary School

Gilsland, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 7AA

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 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 are very happy coming to this small and welcoming school. Leaders encourage all pupils to 'love your neighbour as yourself', and pupils respond well to this belief. They care for each other and make sure that everyone is included in school life. Pupils told inspectors that they feel part of a family when they come to school. This helps them to feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are expected to try their best and behave in a positive way. Most pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave in a calm and sensible way. Older pupils help younger pupils around school, and at reading times and playtimes. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with successfully by staff.

Pupils appreciate the unique location of the school village on Hadrian's Wall. They enjoy learning about the history of the village and how it has changed over time. Pupils visit the wall and Roman forts such as Birdoswald regularly. They value being able to see this historical monument from their school. This helps pupils to develop a sense of time and place.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about how the curriculum can meet the needs of pupils, including children in early years, in a very small school. Leaders have considered the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should be taught. They have also ensured that pupils build knowledge in a logical way. Leaders place importance on developing pupils' language and vocabulary from early years. Pupils use technical language in different subjects confidently.

All pupils, including pupils with SEND, are supported well to learn the same curriculum. However, leaders have not ensured that staff have sufficient training to help them to identify effectively pupils who may have additional needs. This means that some pupils with SEND are not identified as well as they should be.

Leaders have ensured that subject leaders have had training to lead their subjects well. Subject leaders provide effective support to teachers so that they have the confidence and knowledge to deliver the intended curriculum successfully. Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check that pupils, including children in early years, know and remember more of the curriculum.

Leaders have prioritised reading from early years to Year 6. They have invested in new and diverse books for pupils to read. These books help pupils to understand the wider world. Pupils enjoy visiting the school library and reading cave. These spaces encourage pupils to read widely and often. Leaders have introduced a new phonics

curriculum. It is taught consistently well from the beginning of Reception Year. Teachers quickly identify, and then support, any pupils who may need extra help to build their phonics knowledge. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning in their lessons. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils are polite and friendly. They play nicely together and help each other. At times, pupils rely too much on an adult to help them to focus on their learning. This does not lead to disruption in lessons, but it means that some pupils do not work as independently as they should.

Leaders have provided opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils enjoy participating in festivals and competitions, such as for cross-country running and football. This helps to prepare them for secondary school as they meet pupils from other local, small schools. Pupils welcome local experts into school. For example, visitors have delivered workshops on animals in their habitats, volcanoes, felting and printmaking. This helps pupils to build links with the local community. However, leaders have not provided pupils with sufficient opportunities to discuss and debate their ideas in a respectful and considered way. This means that, at times, pupils do not listen to each other as well as they should.

Governors, members of the trust and school leaders know the school well. They have ensured that the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed. The trust has supported governors well and has ensured that governors understand their role and carry it out effectively. The trust and governors provide support and challenge to leaders. Staff feel well supported and valued by the trust, governors and leaders. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being, and have taken steps to reduce their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have training to help them to identify safeguarding issues. Staff know pupils well and are alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders have a clear system for staff to report any concerns that they may have. Leaders follow these up diligently and take appropriate and swift action. Leaders work with other agencies to secure help for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to be safe on their bicycles and near roads.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that staff have sufficient training to help them to identify effectively pupils who may have additional needs. This means that some pupils with SEND do not receive the support that they need. This limits their achievement at times. Leaders should ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to identify pupils' needs swiftly.
- The personal development curriculum has been reviewed and is being developed. As a result, pupils have not learned some aspects of the intended curriculum. This means that some pupils are not prepared well to be independent, resilient and respectful citizens. Leaders should ensure that the personal development curriculum is delivered consistently well and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.

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	138159
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10241178
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	23
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Clarke
Headteacher	Rob Blake
Website	www.gilslandcofe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of The Good Shepherd Trust.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

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 had 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 this inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders in the school and the trust. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a director and the chief executive officer of the trust and met with three governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered responses from staff to the Ofsted survey. There were no responses from pupils to the Ofsted survey.
- The lead inspector examined a range of safeguarding documentation. She checked how leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in place. The lead inspector checked records of staff's safeguarding training. Inspectors spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, in lessons and around school. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and art and design. They met subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils. They also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to trusted adults.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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