

# Inspection of Gastrells Community Primary School

Kingscourt Lane, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3PS

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils demonstrate real interest in their learning at Gastrells School. However, leaders have not thought carefully enough about what they want pupils to learn in some subjects. This makes it hard for pupils to build their knowledge successfully over time, especially in mathematics.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are keen to learn and say that their teachers make learning enjoyable and interesting. Parents and carers agree, saying that the school is 'inspiring, fun and dynamic' and 'a great place to be a child'.

Pupils behave well. They feel safe in school. If disruption occurs, teachers address it quickly. Pupils who find it hard to behave well are given strategies that help them improve. Pupils know what bullying is. They say that it happens rarely. They are clear that adults would help them if it did happen.

Gastrells is a friendly school. New pupils are made to feel welcome. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), play a full part in school life. They join in the many extra-curricular opportunities that leaders provide. Every pupil has the chance to represent the school in sporting and other competitions. The school has a reputation for sporting success.

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

Leaders have considered the curriculum they want pupils to experience at Gastrells School. However, they have not identified clearly enough the essential knowledge they want pupils to know in every subject. Where they have done this in more detail, for example in reading and physical education, pupils build knowledge over time with success. However, for some subjects, including mathematics, this work is not complete.

The design of the curriculum does not always help pupils to remember their learning. For example, in science, although pupils remember the experiments they have carried out, they remember less about the underlying scientific knowledge they need to know. Leaders have begun to think about how the sequence of the curriculum helps pupils revisit key information and build on prior knowledge so that they can grasp new concepts successfully.

The mathematics curriculum is not clear enough about the key knowledge pupils should learn and by when. For some pupils, this means that they do not have the knowledge they need to build successfully on their prior learning. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders have recognised this problem, but changes to rectify it are new. Children make a good start in Reception, but in some other year groups, learning does not meet pupils' needs well enough. The mathematics curriculum is not implemented consistently well across the school. Teachers have not received the support they need to do this effectively.

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil to learn to read well. Pupils love to read. They read regularly from carefully selected, increasingly demanding texts. Adults read aloud to pupils frequently. Leaders have changed the school's approach to phonics. This has increased the urgency of phonics. Pupils enjoy phonics lessons and keep up with the pace of the programme. Children in Reception, including those with SEND, remember the sounds they learn and use these in their early writing. They make a strong start to early reading. Leaders make sure that the books that all early readers have are suitable for their reading ability. This helps them to gain confidence and fluency.

Provision for pupils with SEND is skilfully led. Pupils with SEND learn well. Their needs are accurately identified and reflected clearly in their individual plans. Accurate assessment means that teaching is appropriate to their needs. Leaders plan effective support for pupils' social and emotional development. This means that pupils with SEND, including those with communication and interaction needs, learn to regulate their behaviour and have positive attitudes to learning. Parents are positive about the progress their children make. Most pupils attend school well. Where attendance is low, including for medical reasons, leaders work closely with families to improve it.

Pupils leave Gastrells School as confident young people who understand their place in the world. The curriculum, and the school's considerable nurture, mental health and well-being programme, give pupils, including those with SEND, the knowledge they need to be healthy, to lead an active life and to stay safe. Pupils enjoy the opportunities that leaders provide. These include regular sporting competitions, dance, music and drama performances, and residential and other visits. Pupils show understanding and respect for one another. Older pupils talk about how discrimination is wrong, including on the grounds of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Governors provide support and challenge to school leaders. They share the same vision and values. Staff say that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. Parents firmly agree. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a key priority. Staff know how to keep pupils safe. Leaders provide regular and relevant training. This helps staff to identify and report concerns swiftly. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to secure the necessary support for pupils and families. Staff recruitment checks are thorough. Governors monitor the school's safeguarding culture regularly.

The curriculum helps pupils keep themselves safe. They receive information on issues such as how to have a healthy lifestyle, staying safe when online and reporting sexual harassment.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified with enough precision the key knowledge that pupils should gain in every subject. This makes it difficult for pupils to build knowledge well. Some pupils fall behind with their learning. Leaders should make sure that, particularly in mathematics, the key knowledge that pupils need to know in every year group is clear. This will enable teachers to use this information to make sure that pupils catch up quickly.
- Curriculum design does not always help pupils to recall learning. This means that pupils can struggle to remember learning over time. Leaders have begun to think about how the curriculum helps pupils to recall key knowledge so they can access new concepts successfully. They should ensure that this is in place for all subjects.
- In mathematics, teachers have not received the training they need to help them deliver new curriculum programmes well enough. This makes it harder for pupils to grasp new learning securely. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the training and support they need to implement effectively the new mathematics plans with consistency.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115573
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228018
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Richard Castle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Merriman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gastrellsprimaryschool.co.uk">www.gastrellsprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Gastrells Community Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school, with six mixed-age classes and a specialist resource provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for SEND is higher than in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school at times other than in their Reception Year is higher than in most schools.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- Inspectors spoke with school leaders, members of the governing board and a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. 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 a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils from Reception to Year 3 reading.
- Inspectors considered how well the school keeps pupils safe. To gather this information, they spoke to school leaders and governors and met with groups of staff and of pupils. Inspectors examined the school's safeguarding documentation, including the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day. They considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the findings of the school's own parent survey.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah O'Donnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jen Edwards	Ofsted Inspector

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