

Inspection of Ellis Guilford School

Bar Lane, Basford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG6 0HT

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where everyone is given the chance to belong and succeed. Pupils learn in calm classrooms. They feel safe and cared for in school. They enjoy social times. Many older pupils comment on how much the school has improved since they started.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of everyone. Clear routines, rewards and sanctions help pupils to meet these expectations. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They do not worry about bullying. If it happens, they report it, and staff deal with it. A small minority of pupils disrupt learning or are disrespectful. Staff respond quickly, and learning continues. Pupils who need it get high-quality support to improve their behaviour.

Pupils study a broad curriculum. Most pupils take lessons seriously. They want to do well. They are inspired by past pupils who visit to tell them about their careers as engineers or in the media.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of clubs and activities the school provides. For example, any pupil in Year 7 can learn to play a musical instrument. They enjoy manga, debating and board game clubs. Leaders and staff are very proud of pupils' recent sporting success.

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

School leaders and trustees have worked with determination to make improvements. They want pupils to aim high with confidence. They have designed a curriculum to achieve this. Leaders encourage pupils to study a wide range of subjects, including humanities and languages in key stage 4.

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils will learn and when in subjects. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They model ways of working and thinking, and pupils apply these in their work. Leaders ensure that teachers make effective use of assessment to check learning and plan pupils' next steps. Teachers give pupils valuable feedback, which helps them to improve. However, in written work, teachers do not always spot pupils' errors and address them. Teachers need to make sure that pupils have the chance to discuss their learning in order to deepen their understanding and develop more confidence.

Leaders provide teachers with valuable information about pupils' learning and well-being needs. Teachers consistently use this information well to inform their planning. They adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs. This is beneficial for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils learn in the 'accelerated learning gateway', where they get effective support to keep up with their peers.

Leaders have developed an effective approach to the teaching of reading. They provide additional classes for pupils who need help to improve their reading. In lessons, teachers explicitly teach vocabulary, which pupils use to explain their learning clearly. Leaders have plans to further develop their approach to reading.

Pastoral care is prioritised at the school. All pupils know that they can talk to adults if they are worried. As a result of high-quality support and intervention, pupils' attendance has improved. Pupils also get effective help to improve their behaviour. This means they receive fewer suspensions or time out of lessons and learn more. Nevertheless, leaders remain determined to reduce absence and suspensions further to make sure that pupils are in school learning.

The vast majority of pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. They respond well to staff's reminders to do the right thing. However, sometimes, when they move around school independently, some pupils are boisterous or do not go to lessons quickly.

Leaders have carefully planned the programme for pupils' personal development. They ensure that pupils learn to recognise risks in the local area. Pupils learn the values of integrity, respect and democracy. They learn to treat everyone with equal respect. They get careers advice, visit universities and learn about a range of jobs and workplaces. They are more confident in making choices about their next steps in education, training or employment.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They challenge leaders and support them to keep improving the school. Most staff are happy and proud to work here. Most share leaders' vision to work with integrity and ambition for the pupils of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of care and vigilance at this school. They train staff well. Consequently, staff take their duties seriously and report any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders act swiftly to address these concerns. They work tenaciously with local safeguarding partners to get pupils the help they need.

Help is provided at the school for pupils to manage their mental health and well-being. For example, individual pupils receive counselling or join an anger management programme.

Leaders are highly alert to the risks pupils may face in the community. Pupils appreciate the way leaders teach them about these risks and how to manage them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to discuss their learning in lessons. As a result, pupils do not have the chance to fully develop their understanding. Leaders must ensure that teachers promote appropriate discussion so that pupils can deepen their understanding and apply this consistently and confidently in high-quality work.
- Pupils' conduct when they move around the school does not always meet the school's high expectations. Sometimes, corridors are noisy, and some pupils are boisterous until staff intervene. Leaders should persist in their work to ensure that pupils learn to self-regulate so that they do not disrupt the daily life of the school.

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	146539
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10290768
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,292
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Abbie Rumbold
Headteacher	Chris Keen
Website	www.ellisguilfordschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Creative Education Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider and three unregistered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, other leaders, staff and pupils. They met with the chair of the board of trustees and other trust leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, languages, mathematics, music, physical education and science. 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 visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times of the school day. They visited 'reflection' and the 'personalised gateway provision', which forms of the school's behaviour support provision. Inspectors spoke to representatives of the alternative provisions used by the school.
- To evaluate the arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined safeguarding policies and records and spoke to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents relating to the curriculum, the provision for pupils with SEND, behaviour, bullying and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff through the Ofsted surveys. They spoke with a range of staff and pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

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