

Inspection of a good school: Gunthorpe CofE Primary School

Dauids Lane, Gunthorpe, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG14 7EW

Inspection dates: 6 October 2021

Outcome

Gunthorpe CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where the aim, as described by the school's motto, is one of 'Feeding minds, touching hearts'. Leaders want pupils to learn well in a school that is friendly, loving and safe. Leaders are achieving these goals. Gunthorpe is a happy school. Pupils missed their friends and teachers during the periods of COVID-19-related lockdown. They are delighted to be working and playing together once more.

Pupils are kind to one another. Arguments, let alone bullying, are rare. If there are disagreements, adults sort these out quickly. Right from the early years, pupils are keen to learn. They listen closely to their teachers and try their best when set tasks. Pupils love talking about their work and sharing their achievements. Older pupils enjoy reciting poems that they have learned by heart.

Pupils leave Gunthorpe ready to succeed at their next schools. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They say that staff went above and beyond to help their children during the lockdowns. One written comment was typical: 'The teachers and head were brilliant. Very accessible, supportive and truly interested in what pupils had achieved when learning at home. This is a fantastic school which has the interests of all pupils at heart.'

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

Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for all pupils to succeed. They have put in place a curriculum that meets the pupils' thirst for knowledge. In most subjects, it is clear what pupils will learn and should remember. Pupils build up knowledge and skills, step by step, as they move through the school. This helps pupils to achieve well.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Teaching develops reading skills across the range of subjects. Children in Reception start learning phonics in their first week. Adults teach phonics well. They keep a close eye on how each pupil is getting on. They give extra teaching to pupils at risk of falling behind. This extra help does not stop at the end of Year

2. In key stage 2, regular reading to adults helps less confident readers become fluent readers. Pupils love the books they read as a whole class. They are thoughtful readers. Older pupils spoke with insight about a book that tells the story of a Jewish child during the Second World War.

In most subjects, teachers are clear about how their teaching builds on what pupils have learned before. Teachers connect new learning with earlier work. They check carefully on how well pupils are achieving. This enables them to spot any problems, give pupils extra help and decide if they need to make changes to the curriculum. When this happens, for example in subjects such as mathematics and science, pupils deepen their knowledge and achieve well. This is not the case in all subjects, however. In French, music and design technology, for example, what pupils should learn and remember is not so clear. Pupils struggle to recall earlier learning in these subjects. Checks on how well pupils are achieving are not in place. Pupils do not achieve as well in these subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully involved in school life. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet their needs. However, so far this term, leaders have not checked on the difference the extra help for pupils with SEND is making to their learning.

The school's Christian ethos supports pupils' personal development. Leaders ensure that the curriculum extends far beyond the academic. The curriculum includes experiences and activities that inspire pupils and raise their aspirations. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about different cultures and societies.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel valued. Governors and trust representatives are knowledgeable. They are supportive of leaders and staff. Their actions are always focused on making things better for the pupils at Gunthorpe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their pupils and families very well. They are quick to pick up on any concerns. They receive regular training and know the risks their pupils face. Staff work closely with families and other agencies to ensure that the right support is provided. Their focus is always on the well-being of pupils. Record-keeping, including recruitment checks, is well organised. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Pupils value the skilled support they receive if they are anxious or suffering from other emotional issues.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most curriculum plans are ambitious and identify what knowledge pupils should learn and when. This enables teachers to assess how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. However, this is not the case in French, music and design technology.

Pupils' knowledge and skills are not built up as successfully in these subjects as they are in others. Leaders do not check how well pupils are achieving in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity in these subjects about what pupils will learn and when and about how and when teachers will check pupils' understanding, so that pupils achieve well.

- Leaders have not yet checked the effectiveness of the extra help that pupils with SEND receive. This means that, currently, leaders do not know how successful such help is in meeting these pupils' needs. Leaders should ensure that they gain a clear insight into the effectiveness of the support that pupils with SEND receive, so that they can adapt or replicate such support as appropriate.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Gunthorpe CofE Primary School, to be good in November 2013.

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	144534
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10199535
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	99
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Tara Cook
Headteacher	Claire Bills
Website	office@gunthorpe.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special education needs coordinator, subject leaders, members of the governing body and the chief executive officer of Aspire Multi-Academy Trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors discussed curriculum planning, implementation and outcomes in a range of subjects with senior leaders.

- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors reviewed the 19 responses that were submitted by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 20 free-text responses. They also considered the nine responses to the staff survey and 25 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Anthony O'Malley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rebecca Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

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