

Inspection of Gunthorpe Primary School

The Pentlands, Hallfields Lane, Gunthorpe, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE4 7YP

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at Gunthorpe Primary School. They respect and show tolerance towards each other, and they are accepting of each other's differences.

Pupils are kind to one another and say bullying is rare. Pupils say adults are quick to help if incidents happen.

Generally, pupils are motivated to learn. However, in some lessons, low-level disruption disturbs the learning of others. When this happens, pupils do not learn as much as they should.

Opportunities in the curriculum provide pupils with memorable learning experiences, such as 'Take One Picture' in the art curriculum. Pupils learn to play a range of musical instruments. However, pupils do not benefit from a fully developed wider curriculum. This results in pupils having gaps in what they know and remember in some subject areas.

Pupils enjoy the variety of clubs, trips and activities that staff organise for them, such as exploring nature in the school biodome and local area visits. Pupils also attend various sports clubs. Pupils contribute to the life of the school by joining the eco club, taking part in debates in assemblies and performing in school musical events. These opportunities contribute towards helping them to become responsible, active citizens.

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

Leaders have a well-considered plan for what they want pupils to learn. However, leaders and the trust do not have a shared vision for making the improvements that are needed. This means that some aspects of the curriculum are not prioritised as much as mathematics and English.

There has been a focus on improving the English and mathematics curriculum. While work has started to improve the wider curriculum, these changes are not fully implemented to ensure pupils achieve well throughout the curriculum.

Early reading is important to leaders. The books pupils read are carefully matched to the sounds they have learned. Pupils enjoy the stories that teachers read to them. However, some pupils, particularly pupils who struggle with reading, do not progress as well as they should. This is because adults supporting weaker readers are less confident about how to develop early reading skills. There is a range of support in place for pupils who need to catch up, but this is not having the impact that leaders intend. As a result, there is a significant proportion of older pupils who are not being prepared well enough to access the wider curriculum.

In mathematics and early reading, assessment systems are timely and useful. However, assessment systems are not in place for the wider curriculum. Currently,

leaders assure themselves that the wider curriculum is being taught but have not developed and implemented a way of assessing what pupils know and remember in all subjects. As a result, pupils are not well enough prepared for, and able to access, new learning.

Leaders have ensured that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified and have plans in place to meet their needs. Adults support pupils with SEND well. Leaders have effective systems in place to provide additional guidance and support for those working with pupils with SEND if it is needed. Classrooms are inclusive. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers, accessing the same curriculum as everyone else.

In early years, leaders have carefully chosen themes and topics to motivate children with their learning. Staff teach children songs and rhymes to help them learn important knowledge, such as mathematical facts. Leaders have considered how the early years environment can support children to learn and reflect. However, in line with the rest of the school, the curriculum that the children access is not fully implemented to ensure children are ready for Year 1.

Leaders are very aware of the challenges faced by some pupils which impact upon their behaviour. Recent changes made by leaders to behaviour management is reducing the number of incidents that occur. Pupils are becoming more reflective and resilient. However, low staff expectations around low-level disruption are affecting pupils' ability to concentrate and learn.

School leaders are innovative and seek opportunities for pupils to have experiences they would not ordinarily have in their lives. For example, pupils have met an explorer, reindeers and members of a horticultural society. Pupils learn about different peoples, cultures and religions. This helps the pupils to understand diversity, equality, tolerance and respect for all. These experiences alongside the curriculum choices prepare pupils well for the wider world.

Trust leaders and governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. However, because there is not a shared vision for school improvement, and in particular curriculum development, school improvement work is progressing too slowly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Rigorous recruitment checks ensure that all adults in the school are safe to work with children. Effective training means that adults know what action to take if they are concerned about a child. Leaders act swiftly if incidents are reported.

Pupils and families who need additional help are well supported by the school. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that families get the help and support they need.

Pupils know how to stay safe. They can talk about safe spaces in school and have trusted adults to talk to if they have a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils who need additional support are quickly learning to read. As a result, too many older pupils are significantly behind their peers. Leaders need to work with teachers and support staff to build consistent methods of reading interventions, so that pupils quickly become confident, fluent readers.
- In some areas of the wider curriculum, the current systems in place for checking what pupils have learned are only able to give leaders assurance of what content has been covered. Leaders do not have information about what pupils can remember in the long term, or that informs leaders about how well the curriculum is being implemented. Leaders need to establish an efficient means of checking what pupils remember in all areas of the curriculum so that they can identify gaps in pupils' learning and areas of the curriculum that need improving.
- Currently, curriculum development has focused on improvements needed in mathematics and English. These subjects have been prioritised by the trust, despite a need for developments in the wider curriculum as identified by school leaders. As a result, there is a lack of support, resources and expertise from the trust to facilitate a shared vision and plan for developing the wider curriculum. Trust leaders and governors must work with school leaders to develop shared values, policies and practice that meet the needs of this school and facilitate the improvements that are needed for the wider curriculum.
- In too many lessons and for too many pupils, behaviour expectations are not high enough and low-level disruption is widespread. As a result, pupils cannot concentrate, and therefore do not learn as well as they should. Leaders have begun to take action to address behaviour challenges by implementing a new policy and training all staff. However, there is not enough consistency with how routines, rules, consequences and rewards that would enable leaders and teachers to hold pupils to account are being implemented. Leaders must embed a consistent approach so that routines, rules, consequences and rewards help pupils to develop a respect for authority and for each other's right to learn, so pupils are able to concentrate, listen and work hard in lessons.

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

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| Unique reference number | 145268 |
| Local authority | Peterborough |
| Inspection number | 10227586 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 405 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Claire Spooner |
| Headteacher | Fran Rhodes |
| Website | www.gunthorpeprimary.org.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 27 and 28 March 2014, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Gunthorpe Primary School converted to academy status in January 2018. The school became part of The Soke Education Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils daily.
- The school makes use of a registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders. This included the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with three members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. Inspectors met with four trust members, including the chief

executive officer and the chair. Inspectors looked at governor monitoring and minutes of local governing body meetings.

- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history, design and technology and physical education. They met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. They visited breakfast club, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at the arrangements for safeguarding. This included scrutinising the single central record and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead to review other safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 23 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, and 67 responses from pupils to Ofsted's survey of their views.

Inspection team

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