

Inspection of Galley Hill Primary School and Nursery

Galley Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 3JY

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Galley Hill is a caring and inclusive school. Everyone receives a very warm welcome. Pupils enjoy learning here. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should conduct themselves. Many pupils meet these expectations consistently well.

Pupils know and follow the well-established routines. These help the youngest children in the early years to settle quickly. Pupils are respectful to staff and each other. Staff care deeply about supporting pupils and take time to get to know them well. This helps pupils feel safe and confident to share any worries they may have.

At playtimes, there are many activities for pupils to take part in. The school has ensured that these activities develop pupils' social skills. When friends fall out, adults support them to use their feelings journals. They help pupils to explain why they are upset.

The school supports pupils' wider development through a range of experiences. For instance, a recent visit from a planetarium helps pupils learn about the solar system and space travel. Pupils have mature attitudes and respect each other's opinions. They learn about a range of faiths and understand that people and families can be different to themselves.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a strong focus on reading. Pupils develop a love of reading. Everyone understands the school's approach. Staff are well trained and teach phonics with confidence. Children in the Reception Year learn to read right from the start. Adults regularly listen to pupils read. They give precise support. This helps pupils use their sounds and knowledge to read books accurately and fluently. There are regular checks to see if pupils are remembering the sounds they have learned. Additional reading support is quickly put in place for anyone at risk of falling behind. This helps most pupils to keep up with the reading programme.

Across all subjects, curriculums are well designed. Leaders have thought carefully about the content. Learning builds cumulatively and logically from the early years to Year 6. Many pupils remember what they have learned. In most subjects, teachers use their strong subject knowledge to share important concepts with pupils clearly. Pupils pay close attention and learn well. When teachers do not have secure subject knowledge, explanations are not as clear as they need to be. Teachers do not pick up on pupils' misconceptions quickly. Some pupils do not understand the task and struggle to stay focused.

Some subject curriculums are new. In these subjects, the school has not yet identified what pupils should learn and by when. Therefore, it is not always clear what the most important learning is. Some teachers do not routinely check that pupils have understood the learning. Sometimes the learning moves on before some pupils are ready.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. The curriculum is well organised and sets out what children are expected to know and remember. It prepares children well for their move to Year 1. Children are happy and well looked after. They play cooperatively and learn to focus on an activity. Staff are skilled at helping children to improve their communication and language skills.

Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life. They have their needs quickly identified. This helps them learn new information and build their knowledge. They are well supported to work alongside their peers. Leaders ensure that timely advice is sought to meet pupils' needs. This is then quickly put into practice across the school.

Pupils benefit from a well-structured programme of personal development. They learn about themselves and the world they live in. There are many opportunities for pupils to engage in a variety of clubs such as drawing, choir and gardening. Pupils are proud to hold leadership roles. House captains and school councillors contribute positively to the life of the school.

Pupils, and children in the early years, behave well. The school's behaviour policy is effective in encouraging positive behaviour. The school is working very hard to remove barriers to attendance. Although attendance is an improving picture, some pupils do not attend as often as they should.

Leaders, including governors, are committed to improving outcomes for all pupils. Clear and ambitious plans are in place. All staff share in this commitment. They feel well supported by leaders. Staff benefit from training and consideration of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not being delivered to the high standard of other subjects. This means some pupils are not learning the curriculum for these subjects as well as they could. The school must ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge to deliver the curriculum to a high standard. This will ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education in these subjects.
- Assessment in some subjects is not as precise as it needs to be. At times, this means that pupils develop misconceptions without their teachers knowing. Sometimes, pupils move on to new learning before they have fully understood. The school must put assessment systems in place that are understood and used by all staff. This will help identify any gaps in knowledge much more quickly so that teachers can adapt teaching to address these gaps.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135224
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345290
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracey Hunter
Headteacher	Emily Birch
Website	www.galleyhill.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school operates a before-school childcare provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at work in pupils' books. They also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They also spoke to subject leaders, teachers, support staff, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors met with governors and the education adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement and minutes of meetings of the local governing body. They also looked at a range of pupils' workbooks from each year group.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during lessons, around the school, in the lunch hall, during assembly and on the playground. They looked at behaviour and attendance records and considered leaders' analysis of these.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents during the inspection. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Karen Stanton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynda Walker	Ofsted Inspector
Laura Hewer	Ofsted Inspector

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