

Inspection of a good school: Gilmour Junior School

Whitehedge Road, Garston, Liverpool, Merseyside L19 1RD

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2023

Outcome

Gilmour Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Gilmour Junior School care strongly about each other and their school. They value their time in school and embody its motto of 'learning together, growing together'. Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They told the inspector that they had lots of friends and thought that learning was fun.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils live up to these expectations. As a result, the school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils can learn. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have positive attitudes to their learning and they take pride in their work. They achieve well.

Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. On the rare occasion when bullying occurs, leaders deal with it effectively.

Pupils have access to a range of activities and experiences, which allow them to develop their interests. They told the inspector about playing in football teams and learning to play an instrument. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Leaders have established a well-ordered curriculum which is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND.

In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge that pupils must learn. This is delivered in a logical way so that it enables pupils to build their subject knowledge over time. In this way, pupils are provided with the opportunity to learn and remember important knowledge. As a result, pupils across the school, including those with SEND, are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.

In a few subjects, leaders have not, as yet, identified what important knowledge they want pupils to learn. This makes it difficult for teachers to design learning that helps pupils gain the knowledge that they should. It also makes it difficult for teachers to check what pupils have learned and to identify what areas need to be revisited.

Leaders have ensured that teachers have access to appropriate subject-specific training to help them deliver the subject curriculums. Subject leaders monitor their areas of responsibility to ensure the intended curriculums are being delivered.

Reading is prioritised by leaders. Staff are well trained to support those pupils who have not secured their phonics knowledge. Leaders have provided a broad and diverse range of reading materials to capture pupils' interest and foster their love of reading. Pupils are competent and confident readers by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is very positive. They are polite and respectful. Low-level disruption is rare. This allows pupils to learn in an environment free from distractions.

Leaders provide an array of extra-curricular opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences. For example, a range of sporting and music clubs help pupils to develop their talents. However, leaders do not provide enough opportunity for pupils, across the different year groups, to take on responsibilities. This restricts some aspects of their personal development, such as gaining leadership skills or learning to work as part of a team. Leaders have carefully considered the support for pupils' mental health and well-being.

Leaders have ensured that staff are well supported in understanding the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and they receive appropriate support and help when it is needed.

Leaders have developed a positive team culture among staff. Staff recognise and appreciate the efforts of leaders to minimise workload and support their well-being. Staff feel valued and trusted by leaders and are highly committed to the school and its pupils. Governors have a knowledgeable and accurate understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. They provide leaders with the appropriate challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a detailed understanding of the pupils and how to keep them safe. Leaders have ensured that staff have regular training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities. As a result, staff know how to respond if they have concerns about a pupil. Leaders respond swiftly and appropriately to any concerns.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in school and in the wider community. For example, pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and how to report any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified what they want pupils to learn. This hampers pupils from learning all that they should. It also makes it difficult for teachers to know what they should assess to make sure that pupils' knowledge is secure. Leaders should identify the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to take up a range of responsibilities in school. This impacts on their ability to develop some aspects of the personal development fully. Leaders should review how they enable pupils to take a greater role within the school community.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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	104543
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10256149
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Burnell
Headteacher	Chris McDonald
Website	www.gilmourjuniors.com
Date of previous inspection	31 October and 1 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not place any pupils in alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school club at the school, which are managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered the response to Ofsted surveys by pupils and staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector heard pupils read.

- The inspector talked with pupils, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and as they moved around the school.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leaders and checked how leaders record and respond to safeguarding concerns. The inspector checked the safeguarding policies and leaders' records of checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils. The inspector spoke to the headteacher, leaders and other staff about safeguarding procedures and training. The inspector also spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Iain Sim, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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