

Inspection of Gillingstool Primary School

Gillingstool, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2EG

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

The relationships between staff and pupils at Gillingstool are warm and encouraging. Pupils are confident, curious and respectful in lessons. They enjoy learning in the caring environment adults create. Pupils say the school has a positive atmosphere. They feel safe at school.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), attend a range of clubs and activities, including 'Gillingstool Guardians'. Older pupils enjoy their responsibilities as buddies and to help pupils new to the school. They learn to be thoughtful and appreciate others.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They make sure all pupils know right from wrong and how to improve their behaviour. Bullying is rare and there is little disruption to learning. Pupils are confident that when they report a problem, staff deal with it quickly. Pupils play well together at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Parents value the open access to staff before and after school. They praise the school's work. Parents are positive about the caring staff and how well the school supports children to thrive emotionally and academically. One parent comment, typical of many is, 'Gillingstool is going from strength to strength. I look forward to what next year brings'.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. There is a well-planned and considered curriculum in place. Pupils can recall in detail what they learn and when. For example, in mathematics, pupils build on their secure knowledge of number to solve problems. In the early years, children have a real interest in learning and settle to work quickly. Their replies are thoughtful and they are calm during discussions. Staff have high expectations of the language and vocabulary children use. They use questioning effectively to develop pupils' depth of knowledge and understanding.

In phonics and mathematics, staff spot pupils who fall behind swiftly. More support and targeted support is in place to help pupils catch up. Staff and the special educational needs coordinator support these pupils to work well independently. The curriculum is adapted to meet their needs, when necessary. As a result, pupils with SEND are well prepared for the next steps of their education.

In some subjects in the wider curriculum and early years, leaders do not always make use of their assessments well enough. As a result, they do not always have a clear view of what has gone well and what pupils need to learn next.

Reading is a priority in school. There is a strong reading culture in the school community. Staff have high expectations of children. There is a sharp focus in the early years on phonics. Children learn the sounds that letters make as soon as they

start in the Reception class. Pupils put the sounds together to read well. Books match the sounds children know. If anyone finds reading difficult, they get extra help to catch up. Children learn a wealth of new vocabulary through the school's oracy programme. Leaders use assessment well to check the progress pupils make. Older pupils read widely. They listen to stories from a range of classic books. One said, 'Listening to stories brings our imagination to life.'

Pupils' positive attitudes to school start in the early years. Children are enthusiastic about their learning, curious and keen to talk. They gain confidence and independence through secure routines. Staff build on this. As a result, children make a strong start. Relationships between children, staff and parents are supportive and caring. Most children who need support move on quickly.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. Leaders track attendance in detail. They follow up on any issues. Consequently, most pupils come to school regularly.

Leaders place as much importance on pupils' wider development as they do on their academic work. Many pupils understand what it means to be 'different'. They enjoy a range of experiences that help them learn and broaden their horizons. Pupils show tolerance and respect. They learn about what makes a positive relationship and about physical and mental health. Pupils value the support and opportunity they receive to talk through problems. They say the support they get is a strength of the school.

Staff work closely as a team. They appreciate leaders' efforts to consider their workload. Governors make sure that everyone in the school feels included. They share an ambitious vision for the future of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant. They know it is everyone's responsibility to keep pupils safe. Leaders make sure staff are alert to signs pupils may be at risk of harm. Record-keeping is thorough. Staff use the school's procedures to report concerns. Staff take part in training to help recognise pupils at risk of harm. There are suitable checks in place to ensure staff are appropriate to work with pupils.

Leaders work quickly with pupils and a range of agencies when families need help.

Pupils understand the dangers of sharing personal information. They learn about risks and how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leadership in some curriculum subjects and the early years is not developed well enough. Subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of how effectively the curriculum enables pupils to build knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are equipped with suitable subject knowledge and pedagogy.

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	109126
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10227488
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Llewellyn
Headteacher	Caroline Carter
Website	www.gillingstool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2018

Information about this school

- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and curriculum leaders and governors. Inspectors also held discussions with the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and science. In each subject, inspectors discussed the curriculum with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and at breaktimes.

- Inspectors reviewed responses to the online survey Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered responses to the survey for staff and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Richard Vaughan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sandra Woodman

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