

# Inspection of Durham Gilesgate Primary School

Kepier Crescent, Gilesgate, Durham DH1 1PH

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Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

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

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Durham Gilesgate is a welcoming, inclusive school. There is a sense of calm and purpose from the moment pupils begin their school day, whether they begin in breakfast club or with friends on the school yard. This continues in the classrooms, corridors and communal spaces throughout the school day. Pupils are happy here, and staff do all they can to meet their differing needs.

Leaders are committed to curriculum development. They have developed a curriculum which is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils talk maturely and knowledgeably about recent lessons and some things that they have studied in the past. Leaders have made strategic decisions to support pupils to catch up on any learning they may have missed during the pandemic. However, the way the curriculum is organised in key stage two is complex, leading to pupils being at risk of missing out on some aspects of learning.

Pupils enjoy varied opportunities, such as a stargazing project, French club, and regular use of the school allotment. They particularly enjoy physical education activities, such as yoga classes and the recent 'colour run'. They learn about well-being and mental health through their personal, social and health education curriculum. This supports strong relationships between the pupils as well as with pupils and adults.

Pupils feel safe at school. When pupils fall out, it is dealt with quickly by staff. Pupils understand how to be a good friend. They can talk about the friendships they have developed over time. Pupils are proud of the caring welcome that new pupils starting their school receive.

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

Leaders have made reading a priority throughout school. It is visible everywhere throughout the entire school building. Leaders have recently introduced a new early reading programme. This has been implemented well. High-quality teaching of early reading is delivered consistently across school. Teachers use a range of strategies to effectively share new knowledge. This helps most pupils learn to read well. However, a small number of pupils find learning to read more complicated. These pupils are supported by carefully personalised interventions. Leaders have identified barriers for a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive high-quality teaching and access the programme at a different pace to their peers. Pupils enjoy taking books home to read. Phonics books are well matched with the sounds that pupils are familiar with. This helps pupils to read confidently, fluently and with a high degree of accuracy.

Leaders are committed to continuing to improve the school's curriculum. Checking what pupils are learning is a key area of development. For example, in mathematics, leaders use assessment information to address gaps in pupils' learning and check what pupils remember. However, in some subjects, this approach is not used as well.

In these subjects, teachers are less clear what pupils can do and what they need to focus on next.

Leaders have developed highly effective systems for pupils with SEND. Pupils are well supported in lessons, where appropriate this is through carefully adapted tasks. Pupils and children with more complex SEND are skilfully supported by specialist teachers. For example, sign language is used to support children to access the content of books during story time. Sign language is also used to share the contributions of other children. This ensures that all pupils receive a rich learning experience.

Leaders have ensured that subject leaders receive effective training. Teachers can access a wealth of training in core subjects. This includes personalised training in areas, such as early reading, for example. Leaders are mindful of the well-being of staff. The curriculum has been developed with the support of external advisors, so that staff workload is carefully considered. However, in some subjects, this work has not yet been evaluated. Older pupils are taught in different mixed-age classes. Each class covers different parts of the curriculum. This approach has not been evaluated to ensure that pupils do not repeat areas of the curriculum that have already been covered and miss new aspects of learning.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to this. They are attentive and follow instructions promptly in class. Pupils move around school and outside in a mature, calm manner. They are polite to each other and to adults throughout school. Adults take appropriate action to support the behaviour of pupils when this is necessary. A number of pupils have poor attendance. Pupils who are persistently absent are not able to learn as well as they should. Leaders monitor this. They acknowledge the importance of improving attendance further, so that all pupils are supported with every opportunity to learn.

In early years, leaders have designed a curriculum which builds on prior learning. Staff know children well. Any gaps in children's learning are addressed through the effective use of assessment. Additional support is provided for these pupils within different activities. Leaders plan the specific vocabulary they want children to learn. The learning environment supports this and adults interact well with children. Children manage their own feelings and emotions well. They learn happily alongside their peers.

Governance of the school is a strength. There have been several new additions to the governing body. They have quickly understood the school's strengths and weaknesses. They challenge leaders appropriately and are keen to play an active part in the school's ongoing improvement. Governors are alert to any gaps in their expertise. They are taking effective steps to remedy this.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training in safeguarding. This allows them to identify and report safeguarding issues promptly. Leaders and staff have detailed records of actions

they take to keep pupils safe. Concerns are acted on promptly and leaders ensure that pupils get the support they need.

Pupils say they feel safe, and are taught how to stay safe in school, online, and in the local community.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Teachers do not routinely check what pupils have learned in all subjects. This means that missed learning or misconceptions that pupils may have are not always identified. Leaders should use purposeful assessment to support pupils to achieve ambitious end points.
- In some subjects, pupils in the same year group access different aspects of learning depending on the class they are in. Leaders have not checked that this approach allows all pupils to access all parts of the school's curriculum. Leaders should ensure that pupils receive a consistent and equal curriculum offer in every subject, so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their educational journey.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114211
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255753
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	130
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kevin Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Turner
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.durhamgilesgate-pri.itss-durham.org.uk">www.durhamgilesgate-pri.itss-durham.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Durham local authority.
- The school offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school also provides education for children with hearing impairments.
- The school did not use any alternative provision at the time of inspection.
- There have been some changes to the governing body since the last inspection. This includes the appointment of a new Chair of Governors.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- 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 met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Meetings were also held with the early years leader, subject leaders, class teachers and pupils. Further meetings were held with an early careers teacher and specialist staff from the local authority's SEND team.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority and with members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics, design technology and music. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at books and samples of work.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance, including previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to staff, governors, parents, and carers. A range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults. The lead inspectors also met with the headteacher and the office manager.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school. As well as speaking to parents outside school, inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses received.
- Inspectors met with staff at various points during the inspection and considered their responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Paul Martindale, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jenni Machin	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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