Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Gloucester Road Primary School

Gloucester Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 8PB

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 February 2025

Outcome

Gloucester Road Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The personal and academic development and welfare of pupils is at the heart of Gloucester Road Primary. The school ensures that the needs of each pupil are considered in everything they do. There is a calm and nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and can thrive. The school vision of 'be confident, love learning and respect for all people' shines through. Pupils are happy and safe. They are proud of their school and attend regularly.

The school has high expectations. It aspires that every pupil will experience success in their learning. Pupils are keen to learn and most achieve well. The school makes checks to find out what pupils know and can do. This supports pupils to build on their previous learning.

There are high expectations for pupils to behave well. Pupils and staff follow the school's approach to behaviour which reflects the core values of 'relationships, ambition and responsibility.' The school supports pupils to show tolerance, empathy and to become considerate young people who have the skills to avoid and resolve problems independently. As a result, pupils behave well in lessons and in social situations. When pupils struggle with their emotions, staff take effective and supportive action. This enables pupils to re-engage with their learning quickly.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. The key knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils need to know and remember across all subjects has been identified.

This enables pupils to build their knowledge well in most subjects. For example, in geography pupils learn about the impact of flooding. They are able to explain how heavy rain can cause rivers to burst their banks and lead to flooding and how this differs to coastal flooding. However, the school acknowledges that more work is needed to ensure that pupils can remember what they have learned term by term, and year by year. Some pupils cannot recall their learning over time which can limit the depth of knowledge they gain.

The school was quick to analyse why the published outcomes in 2024 for pupils in the multiplication tables check and in writing were lower than they had hoped. As a result, prompt action has been taken. There is clear evidence that current pupils' progress through the mathematics and the English curriculum is improving quickly. Nonetheless, the school are aware that the new writing curriculum needs further work to ensure pupils become confident writers across all subjects.

The school is ambitious for pupils to develop a love of books and become fluent readers. Children begin their reading journey from the moment they start in the Nursery. Staff are skilled in the teaching of phonics and early reading. They carefully select books to ensure they precisely match pupils' phonic knowledge. Those pupils who have fallen behind, quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent reader**s** Children and staff enjoy their daily story time.

The school works closely with other agencies, such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the right support and adaptations. This ensures equal opportunity to enable pupils to develop a broad body of knowledge.

Personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils talk eloquently about how the school promotes diversity, 'accepting you for who you are.' The school welcomes and celebrates pupils from all cultures. The role of 'young interpreters' helps to support new pupils to become part of the school community.

Pupils speak knowledgably of what it is like to live in modern Britain. They talk confidently about democracy and the need to have mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils proudly describe the many roles and responsibilities on offer such as pupil governors, eco ambassadors and attendance councillors. These roles develop their organisational and leadership skills. Pupils become responsible and active citizens who show empathy and respect for those around them.

Clubs, such as karate, dance and young voices, are open to all. Trips and visits are well considered. Residentials to adventure parks develop pupils' confidence, resilience and team building skills. Trips to the theatre, train journeys and the cinema provide pupils with experiences that they may not otherwise have.

Pupils understand the importance of staying fit and healthy. They exercise and actively participate in lunchtime activities such as hockey, basketball and football. Younger children enjoy playing on their scooters.

Governors hold the school firmly to account for the quality of education and care that pupils receive. Staff appreciate the support of school leaders, saying they 'want us to be the best we can be.' They welcome the consideration of workload and steps taken to ensure this is manageable. Staff are extremely proud to be part of this school 'family.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for writing is less well developed than in other subjects. Some pupils do not yet secure the fundamentals of writing that they need to be ready for later work. The school should ensure that the new writing curriculum is fully embedded so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes in writing, including their handwriting.
- In some subjects the school has not yet established rigorous systems to check how well pupils remember the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, pupils' recall of some prior learning is not secure. The school need to ensure assessment is used effectively in order to check what pupils know and remember across all subjects.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 outstanding for overall effectiveness in July 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' 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	115585
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10307250
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sophie Johnson
Headteacher	Caroline Parker
Website	www.gloucesterroadprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to post.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, heard pupils read, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff.
- The inspector met with a school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- The inspector met with governors.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector considered key documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. She met with school leaders to discuss and review how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. She considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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