

Inspection of a good school: Glenfall Community Primary School

Glenfall Way, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 6XZ

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

Outcome

Glenfall Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Enjoyment is everywhere in this school. It shows on pupils' faces when they chat over lunch, play outside or smile in lessons. It shows on the faces of staff when they talk about how much they like coming to work. Pupils speak fondly of the 'enjoyable' experiences they have on trips, in sporting activities and in the school's clubs.

Pupils enjoy school because teachers work hard to make that happen. Pupils' faces light up when they talk about their teachers. They feel very well cared for. Whether they need help with their work or have fallen out with a friend, they know that staff will help.

Pupils behave well because they know that staff expect it of them. Staff make it clear that poor behaviour, such as swearing or bullying, is unacceptable. They act swiftly when it happens.

Teachers expect pupils to work hard and achieve well. They find ways to capture pupils' fascination to make learning memorable. For example, Zak the chameleon played a big part in helping pupils to learn about how living things adapt to their environment.

Leaders' aim is for pupils to 'Enjoy, Enquire and Excel' from coming to school. They have succeeded.

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

The curriculum is ambitious. Leaders systematically review and update it. Subject by subject, leaders are adding depth and richness. As a result, pupils' learning is moving beyond the requirements of the national curriculum.

Leaders' work on science is furthest along that journey. Pupils develop deep understanding about the subject. They can think and work scientifically. This prepares them very well for secondary school.

The other subjects are well on the way to this quality. For example, the developing art curriculum is ambitious, wide-ranging, vibrant and relevant. Pupils learn to select and use techniques appropriately. They learn about the work of significant artists and can critique their own pieces.

The curriculum helps pupils to apply knowledge to different subjects. This fact was evident when pupils in Year 5 talked about their artwork. They had made accurate botanical drawings of grasses collected in the school grounds and had labelled them using genus and species, written in Latin. They had learned this in science.

Teachers keep checks on what pupils know. The science curriculum is cleverly designed to make this happen without placing undue burden on pupils or staff. Pupils do not know when the work they are doing is an assessment task. Teachers do not have to spend time marking tests. Assessment in some foundation subjects is not as seamless. It can be less helpful to teachers.

Leaders have transformed the teaching of reading. Pupils now begin to learn phonics as soon as they arrive in the Reception class. They rapidly master the links between letters and sounds. Teachers give pupils lots of practice so that they become fluent at decoding. Those who struggle to keep up with the programme get lots of support and extra practice. As a result, pupils become confident readers. A few older pupils have less secure phonic knowledge than the younger ones. The clarity, structure and rigour of the new programme is helping these pupils to catch up quickly.

Leaders ensure that the teaching of mathematics gives pupils in Reception and Year 1 a secure basic understanding of mathematical concepts. This lays the foundations for them to achieve well by the end of Year 6.

In addition to the academic curriculum, pupils experience many trips and activities that help them to learn about wider society. These support pupils to become culturally aware, reflective, respectful and compassionate.

Leaders invest much in developing staff expertise. This gives teachers the confidence to try out teaching approaches that get the best from pupils. Teachers value the training they receive. They also value the respect, care and support that leaders show towards them.

The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and an education, health and care (EHC) plan is high for the size of the school. Leaders go to substantial lengths to make sure that pupils achieve their targets and make the progress of which they are capable. However, there are challenges for leaders to maintain the high quality of provision for pupils with SEND. For example, there is limited space to provide the individual sessions required by the EHC plans. This makes it difficult for the school to keep fulfilling its legal requirements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take safeguarding very seriously. They have rigorous processes in place to screen the suitability of prospective staff before they join the school. They carry this rigour through all aspects of safeguarding practice.

Leaders train staff to be confident about spotting risks to pupils. Staff record any issues promptly. Leaders follow concerns through tenaciously to be sure that they provide the help pupils need or involve other agencies as appropriate.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment systems are not embedded in some foundation subjects as well as they are in the core. Consequently, teachers do not know as precisely as they could whether a pupil has learned what they need to at each point. As the programme of curriculum development continues, leaders need to make sure that useful and manageable assessment approaches are built into all foundation subjects.
- The proportion of pupils who have EHC plans is high and growing. Capacity to meet the statutory requirements of these plans alongside providing a high quality of education for all pupils is at risk of becoming stretched. Leaders need to work with the local authority to ensure that both the provision to meet the pupils' EHC targets and the overall quality of education remain high.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2014.

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	115577
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10268599
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Tanner-Tremaine
Headteacher	Anthony Mitchell
Website	www.glenfall.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 October 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average mainstream primary.
- The proportion of pupils with EHC plans is well above average. It has risen in each of the last three years and will be higher again next year.
- Pupils' EHC plans are for moderate learning difficulty, social, emotional and mental health needs, speech, language and communication needs, physical disability, autism and other difficulties/disabilities.

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 the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other school staff, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science and art. 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 spoke to a leader about the curriculum for early mathematics for pupils in Reception and Year 1.
- The inspector scrutinised the single central record of staff and recruitment procedures; discussed the arrangements for safeguarding with the headteacher and deputy headteacher; spoke to staff and governors about the training they have received; and scrutinised records of actions taken to identify and act on child protection concerns.
- The inspector met with three groups of pupils and spoke with other pupils in lessons and in the playground.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers as they brought their children to school and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspector met with groups of staff and took account of the online survey of staff views.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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