

Inspection of Gillespie Primary School

Gillespie Road, London N5 1LH

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since January 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders ensure that all pupils receive an exceptional education. They have extremely high expectations of pupils, which ensures all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve very well.

Pupils are hard-working, confident and highly motivated to learn. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to develop their resilience. As a result, pupils enjoy being challenged during lessons and are excited to acquire new knowledge.

Staff know pupils very well. Working relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. As a result, pupils are safe in school. Behaviour in the school is exemplary. Pupils' attitudes to learning in the classroom are extremely strong.

Pupils contribute to the school community in many ways, including through the student council, the 'eco-committee' and the 'travel ambassadors'. These opportunities also help pupils to develop their leadership skills.

There are a wide range of clubs and extra activities for pupils to take part in. These include sports clubs, a choir and street dance club. Pupils also take part in the 'science for life' programme, which involves many workshops, experiments and outings.

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

Leaders have developed an extremely ambitious curriculum for all pupils in the school. They make sure that pupils build knowledge over time progressively. This helps pupils to learn and remember new concepts quickly. Leaders' curricular thinking embeds subject-specific vocabulary, which pupils use confidently.

Teachers have extremely strong subject knowledge. Highly effective training is in place to ensure staff have expertise across all curriculum areas. Teachers present information clearly and make adaptations to ensure pupils with SEND access the curriculum effectively.

Teachers check for pupils' understanding systematically and address any misconceptions quickly. This helps pupils to produce work of extremely high-quality. In Reception, teachers are highly skilled at ensuring children develop their communication skills. This includes regularly checking of and developing the children's use of new vocabulary.

Leaders have placed a sharp focus on the teaching of early reading. All staff are well trained in delivering the phonics programme, which ensures it is taught to a consistently high standard. Staff are highly skilled at identifying any pupils that fall behind the pace of the programme. Effective support is put in place for these pupils to ensure they catch up and keep up.

Staff enable pupils to have a strong passion for reading. They make sure that pupils read every day at school. Pupils read a wide variety of books, both in school and to take home. Leaders make sure that books for pupils at the early stages of reading are well matched to their phonic ability. Leaders have run workshops for parents and carers to support them with strategies for reading with their children at home.

Pupils are highly focused during lessons. They consistently demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. In early years, children are motivated, share and cooperate well with each other. The attendance of pupils in school is extremely high. Leaders work effectively with parents and have robust strategies in place to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders have thought carefully about the pupils in the school when designing the personal development programme. This helps pupils to understand how to stay safe and healthy. Staff assess and address any gaps in pupils' understanding of these topics with great expertise.

All pupils attend a range of outings each year. These include visits to museums, places of worship and workshops, including with creative arts organisations. The school also welcomes a variety of external speakers to deliver sessions to pupils. These include a poet and an electrical engineer.

Leaders prioritise the health and welfare of their staff. They are conscious of the pressures of workload and explore strategies to minimise this, where possible. The governing body understands the strengths and priorities of the school and carries out its role effectively. It has a clear strategic vision and provides appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	100405
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10267911
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dan Hamilton
Headteacher	Mark Owen
Website	www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	01 February 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and a range of staff. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, discussed with pupils, and

looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils, and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Simon Conway, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Neary

Ofsted Inspector

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