

Goldbeaters Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101283
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	376538
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2012
Lead inspector	Clive Dunn

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Dane Batley-Gladden
Headteacher	Christopher Flathers
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2008
School address	Thirleby Road Edgware HA8 0HA
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Dunn

Additional inspector

Helena McVeigh

Additional inspector

Michael John Merva

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 36 lessons, observing approximately two thirds of these for 25 minutes or longer. This involved observing 17 teachers as well as groups taught by higher-level teaching assistants. Discussions were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of the school's records and policy documents, teachers' planning, pupils' work, and 187 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

Goldbeaters is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are from a wide range of ethnic minority groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average. The school has an above-average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school is part of a hard federation with The Orion Primary School. The schools share a headteacher and governing body. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is organised into a Nursery and two Reception Year classes.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. An extremely positive atmosphere permeates the stimulating learning environment. High expectations and a strongly shared ambition for every pupil to achieve their full potential have secured significant improvements since the previous inspection. However, some aspects, including teaching, are not sufficiently or consistently of high quality to raise the school's overall effectiveness to outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress at each key stage and achieve well and the school has identified the necessity to review their progress even more frequently. Those whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable thrive. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals do particularly well. Pupils' attainment rose significantly after the previous inspection. In 2011, the school's best ever end of Key Stage 2 results raised overall attainment in English above average for the first time.
- Lessons take pupils on 'a learning adventure', typical of imaginative and engaging teaching that motivates pupils well. Teaching is mainly good and sometimes outstanding. Though activities are typically challenging, sometimes they are not matched precisely enough to pupils' different starting, teaching is at times too teacher led and marking does not always outline what pupils need to do to improve or refer to their individual targets.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are overwhelmingly welcoming and courteous. Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is positive and effective, so behaviour seldom disrupts the flow of learning. Pupils feel safe at school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- Staff share the headteacher's exceptional drive, and passion for learning. This is crucial in the school's success. Senior leaders are strongly involved in the effective leadership of teaching and management of performance. Their impact on classroom practice is good but they do not always play a significant enough role in driving broader aspects of whole-school improvement, including the rigour of school self-evaluation. The role of middle leaders has developed well since the previous inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning at all key stages so that much is outstanding by:
 - refining teaching and tasks so they meet the needs of different groups more precisely and promote more rapid progress
 - shortening the amount of time spent in whole-class teacher-led activities so pupils have more time to learn independently or work with their peers
 - deepening pupils' understanding of the next steps they need to take to develop their skills, including ensuring teachers' marking is of consistently high quality.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by:
 - implementing plans to use the school's new computerised system for tracking pupils' progress to analyse the achievement of all groups of current pupils more frequently
 - increasing the precision and rigour of self-evaluation and school improvement planning
 - developing the role of senior leaders in driving improvement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The large majority of children entering the Nursery have skills below those expected for their age. They quickly develop positive learning behaviours, responding very well to adults and listening attentively when taught as a whole class. When working more freely, they cooperate well with each other. The good gains children make in their learning and development across Early Years Foundation Stage mean they enter Year 1 with just below average attainment. Pupils make good use of their developing phonics knowledge (letters and sounds) to read unfamiliar words. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is average.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers rightly recognise the good progress their children make. The school's previously strong focus on lifting the achievement of boys has paid off. From typically lower starting points, they often make quicker progress than girls do, and so Goldbeaters' boys attain levels above all pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils leave with above-average attainment overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching Level 5, the higher level at this age, has risen to be broadly in line with national figures. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress to attain above-average levels. The successful breaking down of potential barriers to learning for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs enables them to engage fully and achieve well.

The school's positive approaches successfully ensure that pupils typically bring much enthusiasm and a 'can do' attitude to learning. In an extremely supportive

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atmosphere, pupils feel confident enough to 'have a go', even if uncertain they are correct. This supports good language development for pupils who speak English as an additional language because they feel able to contribute verbally to whole-class lessons. Pupils are resilient when tackling challenging tasks. A Year 3 lesson particularly exemplified this. Although on reflection the teacher felt the challenge was perhaps too high, her timely adjustments to the activity and pupils' determination made the learning experience valuable. Pupils do not always have enough time to learn independently or collaboratively to make even more rapid progress at their own levels.

Pupils' positive attitudes translate into an impressive quantity of good quality written work in their books. Pupils are aware of their next step targets. They do not always have a strong enough understanding of what they mean, or how to use them more effectively, to promote more rapid progress.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are rightly almost unanimous in their view that teaching is good. The outstanding features in practice are similar across the school. Teachers' strong subject knowledge and infectious enthusiasm make a significant contribution to the clear sense of both purpose and enjoyment. Varied and imaginative teaching styles effectively sustain pupils' interest. This typically ranges from Year 6 pupils developing their reflection and literacy skills, learning about the First World War while working in makeshift trenches, to Year 1 pupils developing a wide range of skills researching a good place for a visiting pirate to moor their ship. These vibrant 'learning adventures', often requiring pupils to use skills from different subjects across the curriculum, promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Though most pupils are keen to contribute to whole-class discussions led by the teacher, sometimes teachers miss opportunities for pupils to be actively involved more regularly, for example through talking together in pairs and small groups. There is a tendency across the school to keep the whole class together for too much of the lesson.

Phonics teaching is effective because teachers reinforce learning through other activities. This is especially so in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Phonics teaching in Reception Year is particularly effective, as seen when children highly engaged and made outstanding progress in 'The Bingo Phoneme (sound) Game'. Throughout the school, knowledgeable and skilled teaching assistants support learning effectively, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, or those at the earlier stages of speaking English. This often involves using visual prompts or checking pupils' understanding during whole-class teaching, but does not restrict pupils' independence when set tasks.

Teachers' good questioning skills encourage pupils to reflect and make links in their learning. Teachers typically customise tasks to meet pupils' different needs, often by offering additional support or extension tasks. Occasionally this level of precision is

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missing to move on different groups of pupils even more rapidly. That said, teachers do carefully use pupils' responses during lessons, both verbal and written, to adapt their teaching in order to sustain a good pace of learning. Marking offers pupils great encouragement and regularly identifies what they have done well. It does not consistently show pupils how to improve, or relate to personalised targets enough. Where it does, pupils do not always have opportunities to respond and follow the advice.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Through the varied activities in a school day, pupils' behaviour is usually at least good and sometimes exemplary. Pupils are exceptionally polite, friendly and courteous to adults and visitors, and extremely supportive of each other. The overwhelmingly positive views of parents, carers and pupils indicate that this positive conduct is typical. When working independently or collaboratively, pupils' behaviour sometimes has a striking impact on significantly raising their achievement. On the rare occasions that teachers need to be more overt in their management of pupils' behaviour, their emphasis is on effectively reinforcing positive messages, motivating pupils to be productive and successful.

Bullying is rare, and records, parents, carers and pupils indicate that the school deals with it swiftly and successfully when it does occur. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as verbal or physical, or bullying related to race. They are aware of issues relating to cyber bullying and, as they move up through the school, develop a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils feel safe at school. Sustained improvement over several years means that attendance is now broadly average.

Leadership and management

Pupils' attainment, achievement and attendance have improved significantly since the previous inspection. This proven track record indicates the school is well placed to secure further improvement. The headteacher's dynamic leadership secures the confidence of the whole school community. Staff are strongly united in their shared ambition for pupils. The almost unanimously positive views of parents and carers exemplify the exceptionally strong links the school has with them.

A knowledgeable, experienced and dedicated federation governing body supports the work of the school well. Unafraid to question leaders, they share in equally high expectations. Leaders and staff ensure that promoting equality of opportunity and the best possible life chances for each individual pupil is at the heart of the school's work. The school community does not tolerate discrimination of any kind and racist incidents are rare. Leaders and governors make sure that safeguarding is prioritised through regular training to keep all staff up to date and meets statutory requirements.

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Tracking of individual pupils' progress is thorough. The school has recently introduced a computerised system, with leaders recognising how it will better support an analysis of the performance of different groups currently in the school. Without this more sophisticated analysis and evaluation, resulting plans for improvement have not always sufficiently been precise because they do not use measurable targets regularly to pinpoint where to lift achievement further.

Senior leaders play an important role in ensuring the smooth running of the school. Their support for teachers' continuing professional development, including a strong focus on individual coaching, contributes well to the good, improved and better quality of teaching. Good links between staff in parallel roles across the federation are utilised well to support this. However, senior leaders are not always as effective in shaping more school-wide initiatives for improvement or sharpening school self-evaluation into a more cutting edge tool. Middle leaders are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility. Effective monitoring and evaluation have given them a clear understanding of what they plan to do next to secure further improvement, such as making the links between mathematics and the rest of the curriculum stronger. Pupils already have good opportunities to apply their literacy skills across a broad balanced curriculum. Enrichment is a particular strength, both through daily lessons and the wide variety of extra-curricular activities, and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Goldbeaters Primary School, Edgware HA8 0HA

Thank you very much for giving us such an overwhelmingly warm and friendly welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you. You were so polite, always holding open doors or greeting us as we passed. We really appreciated this. Thank you especially to all of you who answered our questionnaire, talked to us, shared your work or read to us. You told us that you really enjoy school and we can see why. Goldbeaters is a good school.

You have such positive 'can do' attitudes as you go on your 'learning adventures' and you achieve well. This is because teaching is good, and sometimes outstanding. Your teachers are particularly skilled at making lessons exciting and fun for you. Everyone in the school wants the very best for you. Together, they have made what the school provides for you much better over the last few years.

Those responsible for running the school are always thinking what they can do next to make the school the best it can possibly be. To help with this, we have asked them to do some important things.

- Make teaching even better by always giving you activities that have exactly the right amount of challenge for you to make even quicker progress, giving you more time to work independently or in pairs or groups, and making sure you understand really clearly how to move on quickly in your learning.
- Checking how well different groups of you are doing more often (for example, whether boys and girls are doing equally well) to help the school in its drive to help you do the best that you possibly can.

You can all help by continuing to try to come to school as often as you can, keeping those wonderful attitudes, and trying your very best to always follow the advice your teachers give you when they mark your work.

Yours sincerely

Clive Dunn
Lead inspector

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