

Goffs Oak Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117243
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	358113
Inspection dates	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeremy Pearce
Headteacher	Christopher Tofallis
Date of previous school inspection	10 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons as well as small teaching groups out of class. Inspectors observed nine teachers. They met parents and carers, informally, on the first day of the inspection and held meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and safeguarding documents. In addition, inspectors took account of questionnaire responses from 94 parents and carers, 21 staff and 113 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How successful are the strategies selected by the school to improve pupils attainment in Key Stage 2, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of higher ability?
- How well are teachers using assessment information to consistently challenge all groups of pupils and is this leading to improved progress, especially in Key Stage 2?
- How well does the curriculum and extra-curricular activities contribute to pupils' achievement?
- Is monitoring and self-evaluation by leaders and managers, including the governing body, accurate and leading to improved achievement for pupils?

Information about the school

The majority of pupils who attend this average sized primary school are of White British heritage. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and a full-time Reception class. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to that seen nationally but is increasing annually. An average number of these pupils speak English as an additional language. Fewer pupils than nationally are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and none has a statement of special educational needs. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. The headteacher is new to the school and has been in post for four terms.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Goffs Oak is a happy school and provides a satisfactory quality of education. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they enjoy learning and relationships at every level are good. They behave well in lessons and when they are at leisure. The new headteacher has taken rapid action to improve many areas of the school's work. New initiatives to improve the progress pupils make are beginning to have an effect, especially in literacy. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 remains average. Progress has improved in English but further work remains to be done to improve progress in mathematics. Relationships with parents are good and parents and carers are pleased with the school's new welcoming approach. One parent wrote of the headteacher, 'His door is always open to parents. He has implemented some new things this year, which are working well and he appears to be constantly thinking about how to make the school a fun place for children as well as improving the teaching. I would like to think in the coming years the school will grow stronger.' Safeguarding arrangements are good, pupils say they feel very safe and they have a clear understanding of what is involved in leading a healthy life.

Children settle well when they join Nursery or Reception. Through Years 1 to 6 a good curriculum ensures pupils have a broad range of learning experiences. Carefully selected initiatives to improve the progress they make in literacy and numeracy are showing early signs of being effective but it is too early to see their full impact on raising levels of attainment at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for older pupils in Key Stage 2. Monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders and managers has contributed to the improving quality of teaching and learning but monitoring is not sufficiently regular or rigorous. Subject leaders are developing their roles and responsibilities. However, they are not sufficiently involved in monitoring lessons, lesson planning or reviewing the progress in pupils' books to help improve pupils' progress. There has been rapid improvement in tracking the progress pupils make across the school. This information is used by teachers to set clear targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. Progress data is not used in classes consistently to plan tasks which offer full challenge to pupils of different abilities, especially more able pupils in mathematics. Pastoral care is good and pupils' personal development is promoted well. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, both in class and in intervention groups, is flexible and effective and ensures good progress for these pupils.

The headteacher provides good leadership and has accurately prioritised important areas for development. Consequently, teamwork is strong and there are more opportunities for staff to develop their leadership and management skills. As a result there is an ambitious drive to move the school forward and improve attainment in Key Stage 2 especially. The governing body is supportive of the school. Through the links now established with subject areas, governors are extending their knowledge of the day to day work of the school.

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However, they do not have a close focus on monitoring new developments to enable them to play an active part in setting the future strategic direction of the school. Leaders and managers are not complacent and self-evaluation is reflective and ambitious. Issues from the previous inspection remain active work in progress and the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that effective use is made of assessment information to plan tasks in lessons to challenge all pupils, especially those of higher ability.
- Improve the quality of teaching by July 2011 so that more is good or better, by:
 - improving the frequency and rigour with which teaching and learning is monitored
 - involving subject leaders fully in monitoring lessons, lesson planning and the progress shown in pupils' books.
- Increase the participation of the governing body in setting a clear strategic direction for the school by improving their monitoring of all aspects of the school's work.
 - Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children make a good start to their learning in Nursery and Reception and enter Year 1 with skills and abilities similar to those expected nationally. Satisfactory progress continues through Years 1 to 5 and is good in Year 6. As a result of a recent drive to improve pupils' writing skills and develop more interesting vocabulary, attainment in English at the end of Year 6 has improved but remains average. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson on the use of rhyme and alliteration, a sensitive class discussion on creative words enabled pupils to produce reflective examples of adjectives to describe a golden mood in a poem. Inspection evidence and the school's own monitoring, indicates that the development of pupils' problem solving skills and making learning in numeracy more fun, is beginning to have an early impact on improving progress in numeracy, especially in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because well-planned support is provided for them in class and in a range of flexible intervention groups to accelerate their progress.

Pupils enjoy their lessons, work with enthusiasm and especially enjoy class and paired discussions. They behave well in lessons and around the school and this has a positive impact on their learning. One pupil said, 'Our teachers teach us in a fun way so we learn lots.' Pupils show the same enthusiasm and level of responsibility in the tasks they perform as monitors, buddies and school councillors. They participate in their local community and are especially generous in their fund raising activities. Pupils feel safe in school and know that they can confide their problems in adults who will help them. Good social and moral development is fostered through the school and underpins pupils' good behaviour. During the inspection, snow meant play and lunch breaks were in class and

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pupils mixed well, chatted or engaged in games with sociable good humour. There are good opportunities provided for pupils of all ages to reflect on their work, their behaviour and their own feelings. Less well developed, but nevertheless satisfactory, is pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures, including those within their own school community. The Activemark and Healthy Schools status is evidence of the good understanding pupils have of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Attendance is average. The school works consistently to ensure pupils and their parents and carers are aware of the importance of regular and punctual attendance. The good personal skills and satisfactory standards that pupils attain ensure that they are soundly prepared for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good teaching. Teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn in a lesson and targets are set in literacy and numeracy which pupils find helpful in identifying what they are to learn next. Although pupils' progress is tracked well through the school this information is not used consistently by teachers in planning. As a result, the tasks planned in lessons, do not ensure that all groups of pupils are sufficiently challenged and this limits progress, especially for more able pupils in mathematics. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils were considering dividing by half but the task provided for the more able was very similar to

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that for other groups, with no numeracy extension task planned for those who finished quickly. Teaching assistants use a range of strategies and resources to provide good support to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points.

The curriculum is good and adapted well to provide a broad range of interesting activities for pupils, including the opportunity to learn to play a variety of musical instruments. Clubs are well attended and visits out of school bring learning alive beyond the classroom. The initiatives in literacy and numeracy to help improve pupils' progress and raise attainment are showing early signs of success, especially in literacy, but are not yet securely embedded in numeracy. Theme days and opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in other subject areas are good. An Egyptian day, for example, enabled pupils not only to consider the historical aspects of an ancient civilization but also to develop their writing skills, and information and communication skills for both writing and research. The care, guidance and support pupils receive is good because all staff assign importance to their pastoral role. Good supervision ensures pupils always stay safe. The good care of the school for pupils also embraces their families and good use of agencies and local services extend the care provided in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked with enthusiastic determination to set in train a range of important improvements which are showing early signs of success in accelerating the progress made by pupils. Incisive leadership and a focus on developing relationships within the school has ensured that staff share the same vision for the school. There is a good partnership between the headteacher and deputy head. The skills and responsibilities of other leaders and managers are being developed rapidly and are supported by appropriate training. However, subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the impact of lesson plans and the quality of teaching through observation, on pupils' learning, progress and achievement. The needs and progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully assessed, monitored regularly and as a result, their progress is good. Although the school tackles discrimination effectively and ensures all pupils participate in school activities, it is providing satisfactory equality because of variability in pupils' achievement

The safeguarding of pupils welfare is good and supported by clear policies that are rigorously implemented and well integrated throughout all aspects of the school. The governing body is increasing its involvement in the school and developing skills to offer full

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challenge to leaders and managers. However, members of the governing body are not fully involved in monitoring and are still dependent on the headteacher to provide them with information to evaluate the effectiveness of school developments and plan for the future. Community cohesion is satisfactory. There has been careful evaluation of the school based on its involvement in the local community. Insufficient work has been done in developing pupils understanding of their role as future national and global citizens through planned initiatives to extend their awareness of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom or the variety of ways of life in other parts of the world. Important and rapid improvements have been made in a short time to help parents and carers feel more involved with the school and their child's learning and progress. Parents and carers are increasingly informed about their child's targets. They have regular opportunities to learn about the work their children are doing and how they can help at home. As a result the school's engagement with parents and carers is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well taught and have an interesting range of activities. As a result they enjoy their time in Nursery and Reception. Stimulating activities in the classroom and outdoor learning area ensures that all six areas of learning are covered well. Children develop their skills and abilities well in both Nursery and Reception. This is especially true of some areas of communication, number, and emotional development where, children are weaker on entry to school. Good opportunities are planned for them to extend their vocabulary by building sounds into words, improve their speaking skills, and explain their ideas and feelings. In a class story time, for example, children were encouraged to explain how they thought the teddy bear felt when he discovered he had been left behind by the boy who owned him. One child explained clearly, 'Poor bear! He was so sad and he cried because he was left behind. Poor, poor bear!'

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Children are encouraged to share, to think about the feelings of others and also to be independent. During the snow, activities outside required children to dress warmly and wear boots and they changed into their outdoor clothes sensibly. There is a good balance of teacher led activities and opportunities for children to develop their own games. Staff interact with children well and encourage them to develop their ideas and promote their development in a variety of activities. Links with parents and carers are good and the careful monitoring of children's development is used to provide regular, detailed information for parents and carers. The staff work as a close and united team. Planning is good and links with playgroups and with Year 1 ensure that transition into and out of the Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers returned the questionnaire and a very large majority of these parents and carers, and those who spoke to inspectors, were pleased with the school. They value the fact that their children enjoy school and are safe. One parent wrote, 'My child enjoys attending school and there is a wide range of activities that keep him interested in learning'. They also appreciate that they are helped to support their child's learning and think the school is managed effectively. A number of parents and carers commented positively on the recent changes in the school brought about by the new headteacher. One said simply, 'Since Mr Tofallis has become headmaster of the school I feel that it is being run much more with the children in mind.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Goffs Oak Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	70	28	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	70	28	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	51	54	41	44	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	59	38	40	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	57	40	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	56	41	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	52	43	46	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	49	52	37	39	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	51	41	44	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	45	46	49	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	44	47	50	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	61	36	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	66	31	33	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



2 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Goffs Oak Primary School, Waltham Cross, EN7 5NS

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We were very impressed with your good behaviour, especially when you could not go out to play during our visit because of the snow. We also enjoyed hearing your rehearsal for your Christmas production. You told us that you feel safe in school and you know a lot about how to keep healthy. You also learn lots of interesting things during your time in school and we think your teachers take good care of you. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body, are working hard to help you do the best you can. We think that Goffs Oak is a satisfactory school. This means it does some things well, but also needs to make some things better.

We have asked your teachers to make sure they use what they know about how well older pupils are learning, to plan lessons for them that always gives them work that is a good match to their ability, especially in mathematics. This will help them to achieve their best.

We have asked that a close check be kept on all of your lessons to make sure that they are as good as they can be and you are learning more and more.

To make sure the checks on your lessons are more frequent, we have suggested that the teachers who are responsible for different subjects help the headteacher and other senior staff with visiting lessons. They should check that the work planned for you by your teachers is interesting and helping you make progress.

Finally we have asked the governing body to make sure that they know as much as possible about your school. We want them to keep a close check on all the new things that are happening and to make sure that they are helping to plan for the future so you go on making better and better progress.

You can help by working hard and always doing your best. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead inspector

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