

Gayhurst Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130303
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	364015
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	589
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Justin Shaughnessy
Headteacher	Hugh Vivian
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons and saw 19 teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, local authority reviews and a range of other school documents. The inspection team analysed questionnaires completed by 78 parents and carers, 172 pupils and nine staff. They also held discussions with several individual parents.

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

- The progress of able pupils in all subject areas.
- The effectiveness of the use of assessment information to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils.
- The effectiveness and rigour of school evaluation by leaders at all levels.

Information about the school

The school is twice the size of an average primary school. An above-average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. A large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with no one group predominating. Although the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is much higher than average, only a few are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who need support for their behavioural, language or physical needs is well above that typically found, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school holds a number of awards, including recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles. Since September 2010, the deputy headteacher has taken on the role of acting headteacher. He is being supported by an advisory headteacher from the local authority.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Gayhurst is a good school. It has many strengths which include the care, guidance and support provided, and exemplary pupil behaviour. The school is especially good at building effective partnerships with parents and carers as well as with visiting professionals. In this happy, stimulating and friendly school there is a genuine community feel. Pupils from a wide range of ethnic and religious backgrounds get on well together and they, and their parents, are really proud of the school. One spoke for many, commenting that 'Gayhurst is the rarest of things, an inclusive, caring school with great teachers, excellent ethos, great kids and a committed leadership.'

The good achievement found at the previous inspection has been maintained. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils reach average levels of attainment. They achieve well after a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, making good progress from below-average starting points. Pupils with disabilities and those who find learning difficult also make good progress through good quality support. Although most pupils make good progress as they move through the school, some pupils could make even better progress. This is particularly the case for more able pupils. Inspectors found teaching and support staff working well together as a team. Though good overall, there are pockets of less successful teaching and learning. Occasionally, teachers do not assess what different groups have learned in lessons with enough precision. Consequently, some activities do not provide enough challenge, especially for those who could do more difficult work. There is inconsistency, too, in the quality of marking. It does not always provide sufficient information about what pupils need to do to improve their work, and assessment data are not used well enough to support lesson planning.

The curriculum is good, with some very strong features. It is well organised and a wide range of very well-attended enrichment activities adds interest and variety to the provision. Pupils have an excellent approach to keeping fit and healthy. The Healthy School status and Activemark accreditation recognise the excellent impact of the school's work in promoting sensible eating habits and physical activity. Owing to the gourmet school lunches provided by the school chef, the take-up of school meals is high and increasing.

The inspection team focused on the effectiveness and rigour of evaluation by leaders and managers at all levels. Its findings were positive. The acting headteacher has a clear understanding of what needs to be improved and is working well with the advisory headteacher to implement the priorities for improvement. There is a clear vision and a focused educational direction, which is shared by the supportive and effective governing body. A strong team ethos between senior staff and governors is evident. Good leadership and management ensure that pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils say they are looked after well and feel safe and secure in school. Senior leaders carry out

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monitoring regularly, although subject leaders do not have enough opportunities to evaluate learning and support other staff in the delivery of the curriculum.

Securely underpinning all of the school's work is good quality teaching, a good curriculum and excellent day-to-day care. Steady progress has been made since the previous inspection and many aspects of the school's work have improved. This, together with effective procedures for self-evaluation, shows that the school has good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' learning in all lessons by ensuring that all teachers use assessment information effectively in order to:
 - provide activities, particularly for more able pupils, that match their ability at a consistently high level of challenge
 - show pupils what they need to do to improve their work through consistently good quality marking.
- Provide more opportunities for subject leaders to monitor and support the teaching of their subjects across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Reception class with attainment below national averages, and leave Year 6 with broadly average attainment. This represents good progress, taking account pupils' starting points. During the inspection, while pupils made good progress in the majority of lessons, there was a small minority where the pace of learning was too slow and pupils did not learn enough. This was particularly the case for those pupils, such as the more able, who could do more challenging work. Progress was good where pupils of different abilities were engaged in a variety of learning activities appropriate to their needs. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they, too, make good progress. Pupils are very proud of their school and know they are part of a caring community. Most pupils develop into mature and confident individuals. They show respect and consideration for each other and say they feel safe, and almost all pupils behave exceptionally well. Pupils enjoy learning at Gayhurst and take part enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils have a good range of responsibilities, including their work through the school council. They enjoy participating in a range of sporting, cultural and charity events.

Pupils have a very good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle through keeping fit and eating a healthy diet. They work with the chef to design menus for amazing school lunches. The award of Healthy School status is indicative of the school's commitment to encouraging this aspect of pupils' development. Their involvement in many activities such as the eco projects also makes a major contribution to pupils' personal development.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
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?

Relationships are good throughout the school, resulting in pupils who confidently ask and answer questions. Lessons are typically well taught. Learning was best during group activities, when teaching and good quality support staff worked effectively as a team. In the best lessons observed, teachers used searching questions to challenge pupils' thinking and motivate them to make good progress. This was noticeable in a lesson where pupils were discussing different writing genres. In the few lessons where teaching was less successful, learning and progress were held back because the pace of lessons was slow and teachers talked too much, which limited the time pupils spent actively learning. There is variation in the quality of marking, which does not always sufficiently guide pupils in their next steps. Teachers' assessment, while satisfactory overall, is not routinely used carefully enough to plan tasks that are appropriate for all ability groups. Consequently, activities do not always sufficiently challenge the more able.

The curriculum is rich and provides many opportunities in and out of school. High levels of participation in a wide range of good quality enrichment opportunities support pupils' enjoyment of school. Together with numerous educational visits, this makes good provision to promote personal development. The curriculum meets most pupils' needs well. However, subjects tend to focus on developing knowledge, with fewer opportunities for pupils to develop essential skills of learning for themselves. The school recognises the need to develop this aspect of provision further.

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The school is an exceptionally supportive community where the care and welfare of all pupils is a very high priority. Pupils thrive socially and academically. Very strong links with outside agencies ensure the school is able to offer the most appropriate support. Individual pupils facing challenging circumstances and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given excellent pastoral support which contributes substantially to their social, emotional and physical well-being and to their willingness to learn. They are fully involved in the life of the school because the school environment has been sensitively adapted to meet their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a high level of confidence from parents and staff in the leadership of the acting headteacher. He is a daily visible presence around the school and in the classrooms. The management and monitoring of teaching and of assessment practices are largely dependent on senior staff. So far, the rigour and frequency of monitoring have not yet extended fully to all staff with leadership responsibility, such as subject leaders, leading to some unevenness in provision.

Leaders at all levels promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination vigorously. This is reflected in the positive ethos around the school and the good progress made by all pupils. Even so, more challenge could be provided for gifted and talented pupils. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good, especially at school and local community level. This is because the school knows its pupils and context well. Leaders and managers are keen to put the school at the heart of the local community. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures in Great Britain and elsewhere.

There are outstanding partnership arrangements with outside professionals who come into the school. Procedures for safeguarding are good because they are rigorous and meet government recommendations for good practice. Adults working with pupils are appropriately vetted and recruited. Good governance, systematic in its approach, provides effective challenge and support. The governing body comes from a wide range of professional backgrounds. They are well informed, hold the school to account for standards and the quality of provision, and play a key role in the development of the school. The school fosters a very strong partnership with parents and carers. Consequently, they almost all feel well informed about their child's progress, are happy with the school's provision and support its work. Given pupils' good progress combined

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with mostly good and some outstanding aspects of personal development, the school gives good value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skill levels below those expected for their age. The staff provide an interesting environment where children make good progress towards the learning goals in most areas of learning. Children's starting points are assessed in partnership with parents and carers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and given the support they need. There is a good balance of activities chosen by the children and those that are adult-led. These well-planned activities effectively support children's personal development, as well as encouraging the development of number, communication and writing skills. The effective and consistent use of praise and encouragement helps children to develop positive self-esteem. This was seen in all classes during the inspection and children were keen to share the fun they were having. Most children were challenged through exciting, interesting and fast-moving activities. An example of this was the end of the morning session in the Nursery class when the children performed an action song. They had great fun seeing who could accurately time the snap of the crocodile.

Arrangements to promote children's health and safety are robust. All welfare requirements are met, which ensures that children feel safe and are happy in school. Staff work well together as a team and relationships between adults and children are good. This has a positive impact on the progress children make. However, the quality of teaching is variable across the provision. There is recognition that the valuable assessment information is not always used with enough precision to match activities to the needs, interests and abilities of individual children. The Foundation Stage leader is new in post and is already

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influencing and guiding the strategic development of the provision, which is well led and managed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

The vast majority of the parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire expressed high levels of support for the school. A very small minority registered concerns, for example, about the way the school meets their child's needs and the help the school gives parents and carers to support their child's learning. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils generally make good progress but agrees with comments from parents and carers, that some pupils could do more challenging work. The partnership with parents and carers was found to be an outstanding feature of the school's work. Inspection evidence generally supports parents' positive views. There is strong agreement that children enjoy their work, make good progress and that the school is well led and managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gayhurst 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 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 533 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	51	34	44	2	3	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	46	59	28	36	4	5	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	36	43	55	6	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	29	46	59	4	5	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	30	38	44	56	2	3	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	42	34	44	10	13	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	50	34	44	4	5	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)	31	40	39	50	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	29	40	51	10	13	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	37	38	49	4	5	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	31	35	45	9	12	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	33	42	33	42	6	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	53	33	42	1	1	2	3

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.



12 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gayhurst Primary School, Hackney, London E8 3EN

Thank you for making the team of inspectors welcome and for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you play so well at lunchtime. We agree with you that your school lunches are really good! We know that your school is providing you with a good education. Here are some of the good things we found.

- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You work hard in lessons and make good progress in your learning.
- Teaching and learning and the curriculum are good and the lessons are interesting.
- The school looks after you especially well when you need help.
- The school is led well, and all the adults work hard to support you.

There is still some work to be done to make Gayhurst the best school it can possibly be. This is what we have asked the headteacher and staff to do.

- Make sure teachers always know exactly what you have already learned so that they can plan work for you that is just right, as well as marking your books so you know how to improve your work.
- Make sure teachers who are in charge of subjects have the chance to work together more effectively to help them decide what they need to improve to help you progress even more.

You can help by continuing to work hard and enjoying your learning.

Thank you again for your help with the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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