

# Gospel Oak Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100025
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	367352
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Narinder Dohel

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	472
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Dann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Seymour
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mansfield Road London NW3 2JB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 19 lessons and 15 teachers. They met with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and some parents and carers to gather evidence to support the making of judgements. They scrutinised: work in pupils' books; tracking information showing pupils' attainment and progress; and the school's development plans and monitoring records. The responses of 290 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire were also analysed, together with responses submitted by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Does the teaching offer sufficient challenge, particularly for boys, higher-attaining pupils and those new to learning English?
- How well do all pupils across each Key Stage achieve currently and, in particular, White British pupils?
- What is the school doing to raise standards in English and how effectively do cross-curricular links impact on this?
- How accurate is the school's judgement that all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good?

## Information about the school

Gospel Oak is an oversubscribed inner-city school which is larger than most primary schools. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language are higher than in most schools. About one third of the pupils are of White-British heritage. The largest minority ethnic groups are Kosovan/Albanian, Bangladeshi and Black or Black British-African. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; they have a broad range of needs. The school has achieved several national awards, including Healthy Schools status and the Primary Geography Quality Mark Gold awarded by the Geographical Association.

**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

Gospel Oak Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. The key strengths of the school are its commitment to inclusion and pastoral care demonstrated through an enriched curriculum. Many pupils say that they 'love coming to school'. One pupil said, 'I've been to other schools, but this is the one that has helped me to stay.' The overwhelming response from parents and carers is that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. The school works successfully at ensuring that the most potentially vulnerable pupils are well supported and thrive. The school is increasingly effective at engaging the support of parents and carers, for example, through parents' groups and through regular and productive contact with school staff.

Children join the Nursery classes with a range of skills and capabilities, but are generally below what is expected for their age. From a low start, most children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although records of observations are made in the Nursery, these are not undertaken as often as they should be. Consequently, planning does not always build on what children know already. Children are well supervised and relationships are warm and caring. Whilst many aspects of provision are good, adults do not always extend children's learning through discussion and questioning; moreover, tasks are not always purposeful and challenging.

Teaching and learning throughout the rest of the school is at least good, with some outstanding, and provides sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils. Pupils make steady progress through Key Stage 1, which accelerates during Key Stage 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average and rising strongly in all core subjects. That represents good progress. Attainment and progress in reading is particularly strong and supported confidently by additional adults. The school has plans to develop the role of additional adults further across other areas of the curriculum. Improvements in English have begun already, including in writing, although progress here is slower than in reading. That is evident in the work seen in lessons and books during the inspection across Key Stage 2 and in Year 6, in particular. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are motivated to do well because teachers plan interesting work for them to do. The many trips, creative and sporting groups and residential opportunities are highlights of the outstanding curriculum on offer.

Marking and target-setting in writing, combined with the use of success criteria, are clearly demonstrating to pupils how to improve their work and move to the next level, although this is not so apparent in mathematics. Older pupils are encouraged to assess each other's work and suggest improvements. As a result of perceptive self-evaluation and rigorous monitoring by the highly effective headteacher, governing body and all senior and subject leaders, the school has a thorough understanding of its strengths and areas for development. The school has good capacity to sustain improvement.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement to outstanding by:
  - accelerating progress in writing to match that in reading
  - raising standards of marking and assessment in mathematics.
- Improve outcomes at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring that provision, including teaching, is consistently good across both Nursery and Reception classes
  - undertaking more regular targeted observations of children to inform planning for next steps in children's learning, especially in the Nursery classes.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children, typically, enter school below average and, by the end of Year 6, are leaving with broadly average and improving levels of attainment. Pupils enjoy their learning greatly and achieve well as a result of good teaching. There is now clear marking and target setting in English, which ensures that pupils know how to improve and this is having an impact on rates of progress for pupils of all abilities and for boys and girls equally well. The majority of teaching is lively and fast paced and tasks are clearly explained. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher's effective questioning enabled pupils to draw on their previous knowledge and experience of shape and angles to demonstrate turns using their bodies, identify right angles using the interactive whiteboard and go on to measuring and identifying angles around the classroom. Pupils used subject-specific vocabulary confidently and felt comfortable about taking risks in their learning. In many lessons, additional adults were used to good effect to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils at early stages of learning English are also given good support in small groups. Consequently, those and all other groups of pupils, including those from different ethnic backgrounds, make good progress in line with their peers.

Behaviour observed in lessons and around the school is good, a notable achievement given that the school admits many pupils who have been excluded or who were at risk of exclusion from other schools. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and report that, if there is a problem, it is resolved quickly and effectively. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of being healthy and engage in a wide range of sporting activities, both in and outside of school. All pupils represent the school in some aspect of sporting activity. Pupils also make consistently healthy choices at lunchtimes; this reflects well the Healthy Schools award. Average attendance, broadly average and improving attainment, but limited opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of workplace skills mean that pupils' preparation for adult life, including their economic wellbeing, is satisfactory. Pupils take on responsibility readily, for example, through the school council, fundraising and buddy systems. However, opportunities to develop skills of enterprise other than through fundraising are sometimes missed. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a great deal of knowledge and understanding about the background of their peers, adults around the school, as well as the local and global communities. Pupils are typically polite, welcoming and curious about the world.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Inclusion is clearly a strength of the school and this contributes strongly to making care, guidance and support outstanding. The committed work of learning mentors and the inclusion manager ensures that pupils are supported well in lessons and at transition points throughout the school and into secondary school. The Achievement for All and White Working Class projects are targeted specifically at groups of potentially the most-vulnerable pupils and the detailed planning shows that these initiatives are having a marked impact on pupils' attendance, progress and attainment. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and enjoy their work in pairs and groups. In one lesson observed, the level of discussion about Britain since 1948 was mature and informed by the learning that had been going on. Additional adults make a valuable contribution to good learning. However, in a small minority of lessons, the number of adults can occasionally be a barrier for pupils to work independently.

The school works extremely well with outside agencies to secure the support that pupils need and its efforts are highly praised by parents and carers and by pupils. The curriculum is reviewed frequently and revised to ensure that cross-curricular links are made stronger and this has had a marked impact on raising achievement in English, in particular, and on increasing rates of progress generally. In one geography lesson seen during the inspection, pupils used internet research, persuasive writing and made posters to encourage their audience to visit a European country. Physical education is a strength of

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the school and the playground equipment and facilities, such as traverse walls, climbing frames and balancing ropes, reinforce this. The wide variety of visits to museums and residential centres, creative stimuli, such as the mysterious appearance of a nest on the school roof or being invaded by an alien from outer space, bring the curriculum to life. The experience is beginning to have an impact on the quality of writing. The curriculum is enriched by the extensive programme of African drumming, the school's brass band, drama, art and cooking. There is every expectation that all pupils can experience enjoyment and success through a wide range of provision that caters for all needs and interests. The school works increasingly successfully with parents and carers to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Rigorous and well-coordinated systems are in place and these are contributing to a rapidly improving attendance trend.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school leadership team is highly effective in communicating the values and ambition it has for its pupils. Parents and carers and the governing body agree that morale is high. Priorities for development are clearly identified and addressed successfully to bring about improvement and embed ambition well. As a result, teaching is at least good at Key Stage 1, with some outstanding at Key Stage 2. Ambitious but realistic achievement targets are set. Promotion of equality is at the heart of the school's work. The headteacher, staff and governing body work extremely effectively to recognise and overcome barriers to learning that different groups of pupils have. The highly effective Achievement for All and White Working Class programmes demonstrate the concerted effort with which the school is rapidly closing the gaps in achievement across the school. Consequently, the promotion of equality and the highly successful way in which the school tackles discrimination are outstanding.

Senior and subject leaders play a full part in securing improvement. They are rigorous and systematic in their monitoring of all subject areas and consistently seek pupils' views in tailoring the curriculum to meet needs. School leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are good and training is regularly reviewed and of consistently high quality. The governing body makes an exceptional contribution to the work of the school. It is well organised, perceptive and keeps the work of the school under close review. It engages effectively with parents and carers and takes a lead in reviewing how the school gathers their views. Community cohesion is a strength of the school and is integrated well across the curriculum. Effective links are maintained with schools in Devon and Morocco, which broaden pupils' cultural horizons significantly. Plans to extend the schools' activities are

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thoroughly planned and carefully evaluated; the role of the governing body in this process is, again, significant.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy and form positive relationships with adults and other children. They work and play together appropriately and share equipment cooperatively. A stronger focus on letters and sounds in the Reception classes means that there have been better outcomes for children in the area of communication and language skills recently. However, outcomes overall are limited because activities do not always meet the full range of needs and abilities. Planning does not always use the information from assessments to plan further activities tailored to the specific needs of children so that they make swift gains in their progress across all areas of learning. Adults ensure that the welfare needs of children are met, but they are not always used effectively to support children's learning. That has been identified by the school already and is part of its plan of improvement. The recent investment in resources and the outdoor play areas means that provision in the Reception classes is better than in the Nursery. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. There have been a number of changes to the staffing in the last year, which has slowed down the progress and impact of improvements made previously in the areas of planning and tracking children's progress. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has securely identified areas for improvement and developed a sound plan by which to achieve this.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

School leaders and the governing body enjoy the confidence of parents and carers, as demonstrated in the high number of positive responses to the inspection questionnaire. Almost all affirm that their children are happy, that the school is led and managed effectively, that their children are safe, healthy, and enjoy school and that the school deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour. The overwhelming majority agree that they are informed about their children's progress, their children's needs are met and, as parents and carers, they are listened to by the school. This strong endorsement supports the inspection team's view that the school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gospel 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 290 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 472 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	192	66	92	32	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	169	59	111	38	6	2	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	147	50	128	44	10	3	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	149	51	124	43	10	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	163	56	119	41	5	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	139	48	129	44	14	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	134	46	142	49	7	3	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)	136	47	125	43	8	3	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	127	43	135	47	13	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	136	47	130	45	7	3	5	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	111	38	146	50	17	6	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	157	54	120	41	2	1	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	168	58	115	40	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



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17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Gospel Oak Primary School, Mansfield Road, London NW3 2B**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you and finding out about all the good things you can do. You attend a good school, which is improving. I am writing to you to tell about some of the main strengths we found.

- You enjoy and like coming to school.
- Your teachers and adults take very good care of you.
- You behave well around the school and in classes and get on very well in the playground.
- You make good progress and many of you are excellent readers.
- Those of you who need additional help are exceptionally well supported and make good progress.
- You have a very exciting curriculum and teaching that keeps you interested.
- Your work is marked in very clear English, especially about writing, and you know how to improve your work.
- Your teachers, headteacher and the governing body know what they need to do to make sure your school continues to improve.

We have asked the headteacher and the governing body to do the following to improve the school further:

- Make sure that most of you make excellent progress by the time you leave in Year 6 by doing as well in writing as you do in reading
- Make sure that teachers tell you about next steps in how to get even better, especially in mathematics.
- Make sure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes make as good progress as the older pupils in the school.

You can do your bit by continuing to work hard and be enthusiastic in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely,

Narinder Dohel

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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