

Gayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121071
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380159
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Mellor
Headteacher	Rachael Greenhalgh (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2007
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

Inspection team

Nick Butt

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 12 lessons taught by five teachers and a cover supervisor. Meetings were held with parents, carers and pupils, two members of the governing body and members of staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including self-evaluation documents, strategic plans and other development plans. The inspector scrutinised 40 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Gayton is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or who receive help from outside the school is high. There are four classes, some of which contain pupils from more than one year group. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The school is moving towards taking year groups up to and including Year 6 in September 2013 and is anticipating a major building project to accommodate the additional pupils. In September 2011, Year 3 pupils stayed on to become Year 4 rather than move to another school, as had happened when Gayton was a first school.

The acting headteacher joined the school in January 2012 after a period of uncertainty at senior level. This appointment has been made permanent from September 2012.

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

- Gayton Primary is a good school. Pupils achieve well and parents and carers are delighted with the friendly ethos established by the acting headteacher. The school is not yet outstanding because teaching is not outstanding and there are weaknesses in outdoor provision for children in the Reception Year.
- Achievement is good across the school. From starting points that are below expectations for their age, pupils make good progress in every class. While there are variations in attainment with very small cohorts, pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4, and in some other year groups is above expectations. The teaching of writing is inconsistent, as the school has identified, and teachers have begun to share good practice in setting individual targets and to create exciting opportunities for writing across different subject areas. The range of reading material for basic readers is somewhat limited.
- Teaching is good in all classes. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations, setting work that is well matched to pupils' needs. They share objectives with pupils but do not routinely involve them in setting steps for success in their learning.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils know all about different types of bullying but confirm that it has no place at Gayton. They are friendly and considerate towards one another, and have positive attitudes to learning, which contribute to their good learning in class.
- Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher's positive and purposeful approach has had a profound influence on the morale of the whole school community, energised staff and enthused pupils. Good management of performance has brought improvements to teaching and caused attainment to rise. The leadership of teaching is rigorous, practical, and encourages staff to try out new ways of working to engage and interest pupils.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - consolidating steps to enliven and extend pupils' writing across different curriculum subjects
 - spreading the good practice in setting individual writing targets from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 1
 - involving pupils more in setting steps for success in lessons
 - expanding the range of reading texts available to pupils at an earlier stage of learning to broaden their experiences of reading.

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by enabling children to have free access to a secure and rich outdoor environment that promotes all areas of their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well at school. One pupil said, 'It's a lovely place to come and learn and they help you to improve on your work.' In lessons, pupils apply themselves to tasks with enthusiasm and cooperate well. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 2 pupils formed a human number line and slotted into place according to the multiplication solution they had to find. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed working together to find out whether or not their predictions for lighting up electrical circuits were accurate.

Children join the Reception Year with a wide range of abilities that are often below those expected in all areas of learning. They make good progress because of the imaginative and stimulating activities they enjoy and the focus on teaching basic skills well. Outcomes are broadly average by the time they start Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stages 1 and 2 from their starting points. Small cohorts mean there are some fluctuations in attainment. For example, attainment in Years 1 and 3 is currently above national expectations. The present Year 2 joined the school with low attainment, but their good progress means that their attainment in reading is broadly average and attainment in other subjects is improving rapidly. Year 4 pupils are on track to meet challenging targets and their attainment is in line with expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents and carers agree that their children achieve well.

The school identifies the requirements of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs early so that a wide range of interventions are provided to ensure they make good progress. Skilful support from teaching assistants helps pupils to keep up with their peers. There are no underachieving groups in the school, as all pupils achieve well.

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Quality of teaching

Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn, and use technology well to enhance learning. The use of computers was an issue at the time of the last inspection that the school has tackled well. Pupils make regular use of laptops in their classrooms to research information or produce good-quality work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were designing advertisements for a magazine, having conducted extensive research into the features of good advertising. This subject raised interesting moral dilemmas and produced an illuminating discussion on the honesty of advertisers' claims, which made a good contribution to pupils' moral development.

The teaching of reading is good, with a clear focus on a systematic approach to teaching phonics (the sounds that letters represent). Pupils articulate sounds correctly and use a wide range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. However, the range of reading material available to pupils at the earlier stages of learning to read is somewhat limited to one main commercial scheme and lacks variety to broaden their experiences. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from good teaching that is matched precisely to their level of capability and receive very effective support from an experienced team of teaching assistants who ensure that they are fully included in all class activities.

Marking of pupils' work is generally good and shows them how to improve. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have individual targets to improve their writing, and this has helped to raise attainment. This good practice is not widespread in other classes. Teachers plan work that is practical and involves pupils in their learning, and this promotes team-building skills and cooperation. For example, Year 1 pupils enjoyed working together as they used computer technology to superimpose complex sentences onto photographs of their activities. Teachers sometimes involve pupils in setting steps for success in lessons, but not consistently.

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed that their children are taught well. Teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as, for example, children in the Reception Year learnt about African cultures and made their own masks, as well as finding out about African wildlife.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is typically good over time. All the parents and carers who responded confirmed that in their opinion behaviour is good and that their children are safe at school. Pupils agree with them. While pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying including name-calling and cyber-bullying, they are adamant that it does not occur at Gayton. They have every confidence in the headteacher and staff to deal with any worries they may have. Pupils are considerate of one another and polite to staff. They are very keen to discuss their learning and to

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share their achievements with visitors. In Reception Year, a child wanted the inspector to see a booklet he had written called 'Simba and the Dragon' which began 'Once upon a time' and was colourfully illustrated. These positive learning behaviours support pupils in their good progress. Pupils commented on how much more friendly the school feels since the acting headteacher arrived and particularly appreciate the additional play equipment they can use. One pupil summed this up by saying, 'She's a brilliant headteacher: she goes and gets our balls for us when they go over the fence!' On the confined playground, pupils play together harmoniously and sensibly. They have a good awareness of safety and how to avoid unnecessary risks. Above-average attendance and punctuality reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

Leadership and management

Parents and carers welcome the changes brought about by the acting headteacher and believe this is making a positive difference to their children. One, reflecting the views of many, said, 'There has been a huge improvement to the school following the arrival of Mrs Greenhalgh. There is a positive friendly atmosphere which has helped my son to be more encouraged with his learning.' Since her arrival, the acting headteacher has conducted a thorough audit of the school and identified the right priorities for improvement. High-quality professional development has improved the teaching of phonics and supported teachers in introducing curricular changes. Rigorous performance management holds staff accountable for the progress pupils make and the introduction of meetings about individuals' progress has increased their awareness of how each pupil is achieving. Subject leaders take an active role in leading learning, for example through implementing a new calculation policy to raise attainment in mathematics. They have a good appreciation of how to make their subject areas even more effective.

The governing body has strengthened considerably since the last inspection and provides a good level of challenge and support to the school. It undertakes intensive monitoring, such as an extended study examining the impact of teaching on improving reading. Governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and that the school is a safe working environment. The acting headteacher has ensured equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and that discrimination is tackled robustly. She has championed treating all pupils as individuals and ensured that where any pupils are not reaching national expectations, the gap in their attainment is narrowing rapidly through timely and appropriate intervention. As a result of achievements to date, the school is well placed to improve further.

There is a strong team spirit among staff, which is characterised by enthusiasm and a commitment to become outstanding. Teaching is now consistently good, with particular improvement in the learning of children in the Reception Year in their well-resourced and attractive classroom. However, the school has accurately identified that the outdoor learning environment for children is not clearly defined. This means that a member of staff has to accompany children at all times, and so limits them in moving freely between the classroom and outdoors, as well as restricting the variety

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of activities they can undertake.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and has a focus on being creative and relevant to pupils, with a whole-school topic this term on the Olympic Games. Staff are identifying more opportunities for pupils to write at length across different subjects on matters that interest them, as not all pupils were motivated to write with enthusiasm. Pupils have been thinking about their vision for a new primary school and answering the question, 'If you could be the best that you could be, what would you be like?' This work promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The introduction of many new clubs and the participation of the school in local sporting tournaments and competitions has also enriched the curriculum further.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



30 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, King's Lynn, PE32 1PA.

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently, sharing your views with me and filling in the questionnaire. I agree with you that Gayton Primary is a good school and that it is improving all the time. You told me how much you like your new headteacher, and I agree that she is making a real difference to the school. There is a happy atmosphere, and everybody is working together really well to make it the best place it can be. Here are some particular strengths.

- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching is good and makes learning enjoyable for you.
- You behave well and have a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- There are plenty of clubs for you to enjoy.
- Your attendance is above average.
- The headteacher is bringing about changes which are helping the school to do even better.

In order for the school to improve even more I have asked staff to:

- give you lots of opportunities to write in different subjects
- involve you in saying how you could succeed in lessons
- give you all individual targets to improve your writing
- provide a wider range of reading books for you to enjoy
- develop the outdoor area for the children in Reception Year so they have somewhere safer and more interesting to learn.

You all can help by sharing how you could do your best in lessons and continuing to take a full part in your learning.

My best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Lead inspector

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