

Gilbertstone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103201
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376844
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2012
Lead inspector	Martyn Groucutt

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	465
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Hall
Headteacher	Ceri Crosskey
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2009
School address	Clay Lane Birmingham B26 1EH
Telephone number	0121 4644664
Fax number	0121 4648648
Email address	office@gilbertstone.bham.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	19–20 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt

Additional Inspector

Tracey Kneale

Additional Inspector

Nick Asker

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. All 15 teachers were observed, accounting for seven and a half hours of inspection time. Meetings and discussions were held with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body, members of the inclusion team, the School Improvement Partner, parents and carers, and pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, curriculum planning, schemes of work, as well as a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding. The inspection also took into account the views expressed in the 111 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary. The proportion of pupils believed to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The majority of pupils are White British, but the proportion with minority ethnic heritage is above average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. The governing body provides breakfast- and after-school clubs. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which represent the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

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

Inspection judgements

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. It demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion, so that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are able to make good progress as full members of the school community. It is not yet outstanding because the overall quality of teaching is not outstanding and assessment information is not always used effectively enough to adapt learning to the full range of learners' needs to ensure they fulfil their highest potential.
- Individual pupils and groups make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average.
- Teaching is good overall, and much is outstanding. Where teaching is no more than satisfactory, learning does not fully match learners' needs, and sometimes pupils do not understand what their next learning steps should be to take them towards achieving outstanding outcomes.
- Behaviour is good. Attendance has risen since the last inspection to above the national average. Pupils really enjoy their learning and respond positively. They say they feel safe in school. There is positive rapport between everyone in the school community.
- The school is well led and its performance well managed. The development of the roles of middle leaders and the governing body has had a positive impact on raising standards. The leadership of teaching is strong, supporting the needs of the school and the professional development of staff. The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in outstanding displays throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, improve the quality of teaching and learning, by:

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- using existing good practice in use of assessment in English, so teachers always adapt work to meet pupils' differing learning needs across all subjects
- ensuring all pupils know and understand their next steps of learning in all subjects to help them achieve outstanding outcomes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

When children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills vary year on year, but are broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress in Reception and enter Year 1 often above nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. They continue to sustain good progress to the end of Year 2, when many are becoming fluent readers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly gain effective use of English from the helpful support they receive. Good progress is maintained to the end of Year 6, where attainment is usually above average. Reading is above average in both Years 2 and 6. The large majority of parents and carers rightly believe their children are making good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The school is justifiably proud of its commitment to sustain the effective education of all pupils, whatever their personal needs or circumstances. The progress of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, and that of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is particularly good and better than that made by similar groups nationally as a result of the good provision they receive. Where the performance of individuals is identified as not as strong as that of others, targeted support is very effective in helping them to narrow the gap.

Progress is strongest in English where the most effective practice is found in providing pupils with challenging targets and matching work to learners' needs so every pupil is fully challenged. That said, pupils' work in mathematics, science, and information and communications technology (ICT) is often impressive, and pupils confidently apply these skills to other areas of the curriculum. For example, a Year 4 class produced graphic design work in ICT that was of a standard normally expected of older pupils. Similarly, in a Year 4 history lesson, pupils demonstrated their ability to make effective notes and then, in role play, asked questions of classmates who took the part of Victorian factory workers, so promoting a range of wider learning skills.

Attainment is rising and in most areas is significantly above average. Even in year groups with less well-developed skills on entry, pupils are making good and, sometimes, outstanding progress from their starting points and, supported by specific initiatives where needed, are closing the gap in attainment very effectively to be at least in line with national averages by Key Stage 2.

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Pupils' written work is extremely well presented and reflects the progress they have made over time. Their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills are good. Lessons provide good opportunities to develop these essential skills across a range of subjects. Pupils' work is displayed prominently around the whole school, creating a vibrant learning atmosphere where pupils respond with enthusiasm and pride.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good with much that is outstanding, an evaluation shared by the vast majority of parents and carers. As one of them put it, 'Every child is given the opportunity to shine.' The best lessons demonstrate high expectations, good pace of learning and challenge to which pupils respond positively. Such lessons also demonstrate pupils' ability to think and answer probing questions effectively. Many teachers use their interactive whiteboards to stimulate effective learning – such as in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils had filmed video clips of classmates role playing the parts of famous people from the 1966 World Cup, interviewed as part of a lesson on 'fact or opinion'. Where teaching was no more than satisfactory, there was too little focus on individuals' learning and activities did not fully match pupils' abilities and learning needs.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved its systems for marking and assessment. Teachers can better see the progress made by their pupils and use this information to maximise learning challenges. There is a uniform approach to marking, which combines praise with support for continued improvement. Pupils discuss and assess their work with each other in a mature and reflective way. Where teaching is less effective, pupils did not always know or understand their next steps of learning.

The teaching of reading is very effective, and pupils are helped and encouraged to reinforce this skill across the whole curriculum, resulting in their above-average standards. Teachers' use of creative work in music and art, for example, provide good opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities to reflect in a positive way about other cultures, creeds and lifestyles are seen throughout the school, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage project on life in Australia which really engaged the children.

A highly effective inclusion team supports pupils and teachers in seeking to ensure the best outcomes for each individual learner. The team forges links with professionals whose expertise supports those individual pupils who have additional needs. As a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught consistently well and receive effective help that promotes their good progress. Teaching assistants are well trained and supported and work closely with teachers to ensure the good progress of each learner. Pupils needing special help in learning to speak English or those whose circumstances make them vulnerable and who struggle to achieve their potential are given effective support so they make good and, often,

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outstanding progress in narrowing the achievement gap.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are well behaved around school and during lessons. They demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning and a real sense of enjoyment from their lessons. Only when learning is not well matched to pupils' needs and the pace of learning slows is there any chatting and loss of concentration. A few replies to the parental questionnaire said that behaviour was not consistently good and led to disruption. Inspectors observed no evidence of disruption and pupils confirmed that behaviour is typically good over time in discussions and in their questionnaire responses.

The school's positive expectations of pupils' conduct have created a calm and productive environment for learning and socialising. Pupils enjoy school, reflected in their regular attendance and punctuality. A small number of families have received excellent support from the inclusion team to help them get their children to school, which has improved attendance since the last inspection. Effective mentoring and nurturing opportunities effectively support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those with emotional or behavioural difficulties. Clubs before- and after-school and at lunchtime support working families and provide wider opportunities for children to mix in a positive environment, where they can do homework or have opportunities to use ICT if they do not have a computer at home.

Pupils say they feel very safe and that bullying, while rare, is dealt with firmly by staff. They understand the different types of bullying, including cyber- and prejudice-based bullying. The playgrounds are lively places where pupils get on together very well and a range of play activities, supported by well-trained peer mentors, help them to interact positively and develop social skills.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders have a clear vision to create a very effective and high-achieving school. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development, reinforced by regular observations of teaching and learning by senior and middle leaders. Their findings inform an effective system of performance management and professional development to help meet school development needs. There remains inconsistency in that not all teaching and learning fully match pupils' needs and the excellent practice seen in English is not practised across the curriculum. However, sustained improvement since the previous inspection in pupils' achievement, higher standards, good conduct and positive attitudes to learning – supported by good teaching – endorse the school's capacity to improve further.

The broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils and where it is individually tailored to meet specific needs it is outstanding in promoting inclusive education. Policies and practice to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity are very effective and reflected in the good achievement of all individuals and groups across the school's diverse, but harmonious, community. There is no

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discrimination in this school. The curriculum is well planned and structured, with opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills across subjects. Opportunities for thematic approaches are effective and practical work is a powerful learning tool. Examples of this include a Year 5 practical science lesson on evaporation and a Year 3 lesson involving pupils' exploration of light and shade in the outstanding facility of adjacent grass and woodland that the school has developed into its 'forest school'.

A stimulating Year 1 assembly reflected the commitment to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a celebration involving whole families. Family work is seen as a vital element in creating an inclusive school and the inclusion team is highly effective in engaging with parents and carers in supporting their children's achievement, behaviour and safety. Pupils' social development is also well promoted through a well-supported range of extra-curricular activities.

The governing body is effective and challenges the school well. It is fully informed and, therefore, able to monitor improvement, in which it has been centrally engaged. All statutory duties are carried out, including the implementation of effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

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.



21 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gilbertstone Primary School, Birmingham, B26 1EH

I am writing to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school. I would like to thank those of you who spoke to us and who had the chance to complete a questionnaire. We listened to your views in writing our report. I am delighted to tell you that you go to a good school.

Your achievement has risen since the last inspection and you are making good progress. Those of you who need extra help are very well supported by the inclusion team and teaching assistants. Everyone is encouraged to do well and make good progress. You clearly like your teachers a lot and they work hard for you. In the best lessons there was a real buzz of learning, but sometimes the pace was slower and we noticed that some of you became a bit chatty. This means learning is better in some lessons than others. Sometimes everyone has the same work to do, rather than working at a level and on tasks that suited them best, and a few of you did not seem to know or understand your next steps of learning. We have asked the school to try to improve these things because that would make your school even better.

One thing that is obvious is that you like school a lot, so it is not surprising that your attendance is better than that in most schools. Your behaviour in and around school is good and can be excellent. You play together very well and enjoy taking part in many of the activities that are open to you. The clubs before and after school and at lunchtime are also good and many of you use them well.

You can help your school by continuing to be so positive about it and making the most of all the opportunities that are given to you.

We send you all our very best wishes for the future and we will have fond memories of our visit to Gilbertstone.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt
Lead inspector

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