

Gilnow Primary School

Gilnow Gardens, Bolton, Greater Manchester, BL1 4LG

Inspection dates 1–2 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Whatever their starting points, most pupils make good progress because their differing needs are well met. Teachers regularly check how well pupils have learned and use this information to carefully plan good lessons.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. There are many and interesting activities in lessons which the pupils enjoy. Pupils are involved in choosing topics that capture their imaginations and these are successfully used to further develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils are eager to learn and get on with their work. They say that they can suggest ways how to improve the school and that their views are listened to and acted upon. Pupils feel safe.
- Pupils' come from a wide range of faiths and cultures which are respected and celebrated in this vibrant school community. The school works well with a wide range of professionals outside the school to guide and support pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk. The 'Sparkle Room' is a very well-staffed facility that provides a welcoming and supportive room for pupils and their families.
- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be and expects the best from pupils. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have prioritised the quality of teaching, leading to improvements in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although most Year 6 pupils reach the nationally expected standards in English and mathematics, too few do better than this.
- Sometimes more-able pupils are not given work that challenges them to do their best and pupils are not always given time to correct their work.
- There are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to find out things for themselves.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, but some pupils miss too much school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 teachers and visited 13 lessons. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, senior teachers and subject leaders, parents, a representative from the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school’s self-evaluation and development plans, local authority reports, records of pupils’ current attainment and progress, documents relating to attendance and pupils’ behaviour and pupils’ work.
- The inspection team took account of the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. There were no additional responses during the inspection.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Steve Rigby	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gilnow is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is much higher than that found nationally.
- Four-fifths of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Three-quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is more than three times the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well above average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is average.
- The number of pupils leaving or joining the school part-way through the year is much higher than average.
- The school holds Healthy School status.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed together with a new senior leadership team.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, to increase pupils' achievement, particularly for the more able in writing and mathematics by:
 - teachers consistently giving pupils time in lessons for them to edit and correct their work
 - ensuring that the more able pupils are consistently challenged to do their best
 - developing more opportunities for pupils' to use information and communication technology to improve their ability to find things out for themselves.
- Improve attendance so that all pupils can benefit from uninterrupted learning and have a better opportunity to reach their full potential.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and also in Years 1 and 2. They join Year 3 with skills which are still below those expected for their age but these skills are improving due to improvements in teaching.
- Throughout Key Stage 2, all groups of pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium support, make good progress and some do better.
- Many pupils are often at a very early stage of learning English when they start at Gilnow, so initially their progress in mathematics is stronger than in reading and writing. However, precise actions and activities provide many opportunities to increase pupils' speaking and listening skills, and this helps these pupils to make rapid progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress in English and mathematics, through Key Stage 2.
- By the end of Year 6, most pupils leave with skills in line with national expectations in English and mathematics, but not enough do better than this, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Changes have been made to the teaching of reading. These have been successful and have resulted in improvements in pupils' ability to learn how to link letters and sounds. Standards in reading are improving year on year. By the end of Year 2, standards are below national expectations but by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their reading abilities are in line with those expected for their age and, for some, better. This was demonstrated by the pupils who read to the inspectors.

The quality of teaching

is good

- As a result of the headteacher prioritising improvements in teaching and learning through training for staff, teaching is now consistently good throughout the school and some teaching is outstanding. This has led to improvements in the involvement and enjoyment of pupils in their learning, resulting in improvements in achievement for all groups of pupils.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons very well together to ensure that pupils are given work that will get the best out of them. Consequently, pupils learn very quickly because they are given work which matches their ability and they are finding out things for themselves.
- An example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils were reporting on the impact of the hurricane in America. They discussed, in pairs, what they noticed in the photographs before being shown a video link which totally captivated them. The teacher and teaching assistants used very searching questioning techniques to expand pupils' vocabulary and the high standard of work produced was as a result of exceptional progress in pupils' speaking, listening and writing.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection, due to pupils' better performance in mental mathematics, which has helped with problem solving and understanding number sentences.
- Teachers and teaching assistants now use their accurate knowledge of pupils' progress to plan lessons that help pupils to do their best. Occasionally the more able are not always challenged in the same way.
- The pupil premium funding is primarily used to provide precise activities for individuals and sometimes groups of pupils, as well as for support in the 'Sparkle Room'. This facility is accessible to the whole family, providing opportunities for them to meet with agencies from outside the school to help them with the needs of wider family issues. As a result, gaps between those pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk and their peers in school are narrowing.

- Although information and communication technology (ICT) is used across the school, there are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to find out things for themselves and be more independent in their learning.
- The headteacher has secured improvements in the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils are clear about how to improve their work and some are given opportunities in 'fix-it' time to edit and correct their work. However this does not happen in all classes. Pupils now have opportunities to mark their own work and that of their peers, as seen in lessons and in pupils' personal 'Learning Journals'. This helps them to gain a good understanding of how to reach their next steps in learning.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language are given well-targeted support both in class and through precise support from staff and from outside the school, such as educational psychologists and family support workers. This ensures that these pupils make the same good progress as all other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave very well and are polite and friendly towards staff and visitors to the school. Pupils care for each other well and the school is, as one parent put it, 'a happy place'.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and this is reflected in responses from parents who told inspectors that behaviour is much better than it used to be, and is now good. Pupils know how to measure risks and why they should behave well.
- Pupils say that bullying does not happen at Gilnow, but they would be able to talk to any adult if they thought that this was happening to them or someone else. Records of incidents show that there have been very few examples of poor behaviour since the new policies and procedures were introduced by the headteacher.
- Children settle very well when they join the Nursery and Reception classes. This is as a result of very effective arrangements between school and home for managing the change from one to the other. Children quickly develop an understanding of how to play and learn well together. They demonstrate their understanding of right from wrong and show respect for each other and the adults around them.
- Groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy the responsibility of supporting the younger children. Pupils come together for collective worship where they clearly show their respect and understanding of the wide range of faiths and cultures in the school. This was seen during the inspection when the pupils respectfully celebrated together the festival of Eid.
- Pupils whose circumstances may put them at risk are well cared for by the range of support from the school and work with professionals outside the school. All pupils enjoy being a part of their school community. Attendance is average and has improved since the previous inspection because of the introduction of ways of encouraging good attendance. However, although most pupils enjoy and attend school regularly, some pupils' learning is interrupted by their absences and this limits their progress.
- One member of staff commented 'I am proud to be a member of staff at this school. The children are beautifully behaved and enjoy a fantastic creative curriculum'.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows what needs to be done to make the school more successful and how to do it. Together with the senior leadership team, she has provided training for teachers to help them to develop their skills by seeking support from a range of sources outside the school. This has led to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and in pupils' performance.
- The headteacher has considerably strengthened the way in which teachers are accountable for their performance and does not allow staff to be rewarded financially unless they are successful in helping pupils to make at least good progress. The quality of teaching and the progress of pupils are regularly and accurately checked so that things can be put in place rapidly to address

any concerns.

- Leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas to be developed. Because of this the quality of teaching and progress of pupils is securely improving.
- The curriculum has been revised to include 'creative curriculum themes' and an emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills through topic work. This is having an impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning. Learning is made exciting, with lessons based around real-life situations and regular visits to places of interest. One pupil clearly explained how learning has improved saying, 'They used to show us pictures but now they take us to see it'.
- Pupils have many and varied opportunities outside lessons which include sport, music and many other activities. The choir, in particular, has given pupils the opportunity to sing at prestigious events, including celebrating the arrival of the Olympic torch in Bolton.
- The many and varied opportunities both in and out of the classroom ensure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. This was seen when the Year 5 pupils hosted an 'Arm in arm, hand in hand' conference, at which pupils from another school visited and together they shared their understanding of the celebrations of Eid, Diwali and Christmas. This reflects the very active approach taken by the school to ensuring equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for Gilnow. They are extremely supportive of the headteacher and the new ways of doing things that she has introduced. They question and challenge senior and subject leaders regularly. The Chair of the Governing Body is a regular visitor to the school and knows which groups of pupils need additional support. The governing body is involved in teachers' performance management. The governing body has made sure that money is spent appropriately to support particular groups of pupils and their families and that the impact is clearly seen through the progress of all groups of pupils. This has led to the pupil premium funding being spent on one-to-one and small group work both in the classroom and the 'Sparkle Room'.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105198
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	404972

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Ryan
Headteacher	Joanna Riley
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2010
Telephone number	01204 333724
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