

Gayton Junior School

Gayton Avenue, Littleover, Derby, DE23 1GA

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

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.

- Pupils achieve well as they move through the school, especially in their reading.
- Standards are above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall. Staff have strong working relationships with the pupils and give them lots of praise for their efforts.
- Leaders and governors have taken effective action to promote a rise in standards and better teaching, particularly in the last two years. Teamwork among staff is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good and they have positive attitudes to their learning. Many are mature and sensible young people for their age.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe in and around school.
- Most pupils are well motivated to work for different badges which are awarded for their effort in their school work and their homework.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is some variation in the quality of teaching. Occasionally, the work set is not challenging enough for all pupils.
- Staff do not always use questions well enough to check pupils' understanding or involve them in discussions and practical activities.
- Senior staff and subject leaders do not check what pupils are learning rigorously enough to ensure progress is always good or better.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 21 lessons in the 12 classes. Several of these were joint lesson observations with the headteacher and senior staff. Inspectors also listened to individual pupils from each year group reading.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy and assistant headteachers, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Discussions took place with groups of pupils, and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 19 parents and carers from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to several at the start of the school day. Inspectors also reviewed 26 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring information, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They also considered records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Taylor

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Johnstone

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is just below the national average. This provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent in the armed services. There are, currently, no families in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs identified at school action is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is close to average.
- Approximately 60% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, often of Indian heritage. About a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching across the school is always at least good and increase the proportion of outstanding practice by:
 - checking that tasks challenge pupils of all abilities, particularly the higher attainers
 - ensuring that teachers always use questions effectively to check pupils' understanding and help them think about what to do next
 - making sure that all pupils are provided with opportunities to discuss their ideas and are fully involved in activities.
- Ensure that leaders monitor the work of the school more rigorously by:
 - focusing specifically on what pupils are learning and the progress they make, both during each lesson and over longer periods of time.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with varying skills, which are usually in line with and, sometimes, slightly above the national average for their age. Many are confident learners who are secure in what they know, understand and can do. As they move through the school they make good progress.
- In the last two years, standards across the school have risen. They are now above the national average and continuing to improve. Some parents and carers note that standards appear to have risen since the introduction of a badge system rewarding good effort and behaviour.
- The school recognised that, previously, some pupils did not make the progress expected of them. Staff, currently, make much better use of the good range of tracking and assessment information to identify what progress individuals and groups are making. Pupils are often grouped by ability and are often given different activities in lessons and progress seen during the inspection was, generally, good. Occasionally, though, some higher attainers in each group are not challenged as much as they could be.
- Pupils' reading skills are a strength of the school. Most pupils read confidently and fluently and know how to work out unfamiliar words.
- Standards in writing are also good. A sample of recent work showed that pupils can produce lengthy pieces of work with good amounts of detail, accurate spelling and correct grammar. In Year 3, some pupils made excellent progress – including when writing a character description. Because they were interested in the task, most worked closely with a partner when discussing their ideas, and this had a positive impact on the quality of work they produced.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and are able to use what they already know to solve problems. For example, groups of Year 6 pupils of middle ability made good progress when using a formula to find the area of increasingly complex shapes.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are often bilingual and were seen to achieve well and often outperform other groups of pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. They often do better than similar pupils nationally, because their specific needs are clearly identified and well-targeted support is provided.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional teaching assistants, learning mentors and release time for senior staff to work with colleagues to help eligible pupils achieve well. Data show that generally they do better than similar pupils nationally. While pupils entitled to this support do slightly less well in English and mathematics than others in the school, the gap between the different groups is closing.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall, although that seen during the inspection was, sometimes, variable. The sample of pupils' work and the school's assessment data confirm that teaching over time is good.

- There are examples of outstanding teaching where staff have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, in Year 6, pupils made excellent progress in a STEM activity – science, technology, engineering and mathematics project – where they considered technological advances in transport and designed their own car, ship, train or aeroplane. Their attention was captured from the start of the lesson as they listened to futuristic music and watched a collection of images of different modes of transport. As a result, pupils were very well focused and keen to develop their ideas. Teaching is also very effective in some Year 3 classes, including when looking critically at copies of well-known works of art. Well-organised and stimulating discussions then helped to develop their descriptive vocabulary.
- Teachers generally praise pupils' efforts well, which raises self-esteem. Where teaching is less effective, this is partly because staff do not always use tracking information to set the highest appropriate level of challenge for different ability groups.
- Some teachers use questions particularly well to check not only what pupils already know, but also to enable them to identify how they can use and apply their knowledge to improve their work. However, some staff do not make good enough use of questions that have no single specific answer to encourage thought and discussion or ensure that quieter pupils are encouraged to answer.
- Some staff make good use of opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner and share these with the class. This helps pupils develop their self-confidence and a wider vocabulary. In other activities, though, pupils are sometimes allowed to listen passively and not become actively involved in discussion.
- Teaching assistants work in partnership with teachers to support groups and individuals, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They also support those eligible to pupil premium funding with a focus on ensuring that their particular needs are well met.
- Recent staff-training activities have ensured a greater emphasis on recognising what makes effective teaching. The work of the deputy and assistant headteachers in supporting colleagues is effective in developing good practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Most pupils say they like coming to school and think it is a friendly place to learn. The very large majority are well behaved, polite and helpful to each other and to the adults around them. Most say they think they get on well with their teachers and those around them.
- Pupils often have a very mature approach to school and recognise how important this is in helping them prepare for their future. Many say they look forward to lessons, particularly when there is a practical and fun element to tasks.
- While behaviour is good overall, it is not outstanding because pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently excellent. At times, some pupils of all abilities do not play a very active part in their own learning. They offer few ideas to discussions, are passive in their approach and do not always push themselves in their work.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and of what bullying is. Parents and carers are confident their children are happy and safe in school. Pupils can explain what cyber-bullying is and identify what other types of bullying there could be. Most are confident there is little or no

bullying or racism in school, and know that if they have any concerns staff would act upon their worries.

- Pupils are pleased that their good behaviour and efforts are recognised and rewarded in the badges they wear. They explain that prefects have to show exemplary behaviour and recognise the honour of wearing a prefect's badge. Many are proud of their school and say their work and behaviour have improved since the badges were introduced.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are valued and well supported by other pupils and staff alike. Learning mentors are effective in supporting pupils and, where appropriate, their families.
- Attendance has improved and is, currently, above the average. The school does much to encourage good attendance and is actively working to avoid holidays taken in term time.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has made many improvements in the last two years, which are reflected in rising standards. The headteacher recognised where changes were needed and drove forward developments that have focused more closely on pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders have developed a system whereby staff share responsibility for ensuring that pupils make better progress. The deputy and assistant headteachers now have specific responsibility for coordinating teaching in the upper and lower parts of the school. They have been given opportunities to monitor teaching and work closely with colleagues to support their professional development.
- New posts of responsibility were created this year to lead reading, writing, mathematics and provision for special educational needs. These staff also check progress data and work with colleagues to bring about continuing improvement. These changes are already having a positive impact on raising standards.
- The local authority gives the school good support. The school works effectively with the local authority improvement officer to help raise the quality of teaching and this is generally having a positive impact.
- Teachers' performance is checked regularly and senior leaders use information from lesson observations and data about pupils' progress to decide whether teachers should be paid more. There are good opportunities for staff to be involved in further training and work with other local schools. Such activities have led to improvements in several areas.
- The school has a correct view of most of its strengths and areas for improvement. However, records indicate that the monitoring of teaching and learning is at times overgenerous and does not focus sufficiently on the progress pupils make within lessons.
- The work of the special educational needs coordinator and the learning mentors is effective in helping the individual pupils they support. Pupil premium funding is used increasingly effectively to provide additional staff to work with pupils. The school now checks and tracks more effectively the progress specific groups make and organises additional support where appropriate.

- The school provides the pupils with a clear moral code, where everyone is welcomed and valued. With a wide cultural mix within the school, there are lots of opportunities to celebrate everyone's heritage. There are many well-planned activities where pupils develop their social skills by working together in pairs and small groups. This was seen in technology activities involving the whole of Year 6 in making a structure to move a marble down a ramp or slide.
- Procedures to safeguard pupils meet current government requirements. Staff actively ensure pupils have equal access to learning and are provided with an interesting range of activities that enable them to achieve well. The school fosters good relationships and actively tackles discrimination. Overall, because of the good improvements made recently, the school shows that it has the capacity to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly committed to and supportive of the school. Governors are well led and committee chairs have a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governors have had training to appreciate what the data about standards tell them and some governors have an excellent grasp of the information available. Minutes of meetings show that governors are very active in discussing such information and are involved well in checking, at regular intervals, the progress made by pupils during the year. Governors have a programme of focused visits and plan to extend this to help all members further develop their knowledge of what the school provides. Governors also actively seek external support in checking the quality of teaching and learning and understand what the quality of teaching is across the school. However, they now recognise that the information they have been provided with has not always identified areas for further improvement accurately enough. They support the headteacher well in managing teachers' performance and pay-related issues, so that teachers are rewarded in line with how well pupils achieve. Governors also manage the budget effectively and check that pupil premium funding is used appropriately.

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	112756
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	401302

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Cokayne
Headteacher	Sally Ann Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2009
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