

Gordon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100127
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	276254
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Krafft HMI

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 on roll	
School	464
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steven Mann
Headteacher	Mr John McKinlay
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 1999
School address	Grangehill Road Eltham London SE9 1QG
Telephone number	020 8850 5486
Fax number	020 8859 1673

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Gordon is a larger than average primary school with a nursery. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups, who speak English as an additional language or who are eligible for free school meals, is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is increasing but is similar to most other schools. The school has undergone major refurbishment recently and has a new sports centre.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Gordon is a calm, caring school that provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. The good personal development and well-being of pupils and the parental support of the school are key factors in maintaining the high standards pupils reach by the time leave at the end of Year 6. Pupils attend regularly, behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They like lessons which give them the opportunities to work together in groups but say this does not happen often enough. They are confident, articulate and respond well to the adults in school because relationships are good. They know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything and particularly value the 'Listening Ear' facility available at lunchtime and say they wish it was available at playtimes too. Pupils are well cared for and their pastoral needs are met effectively.

When pupils start school they have the skills and knowledge expected of their age. They make good progress by the end of Year 6 to reach standards that are above average but progress is uneven and varies from class to class. This is because, although satisfactory overall, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and tasks are not always differentiated to carefully match pupils' different learning needs. As a result some pupils do not have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Inconsistencies have been compounded by high levels of staff turnover and changes to the leadership team in the past few years. A minority of parents express concern about these inconsistencies and the lack of challenge for some of the more able pupils.

The use of assessment information and systematic tracking of the progress pupils make is in its early stages of development. It is not yet being used rigorously to evaluate the impact of changes that are being made. For example, the curriculum is satisfactory and promotes pupils' personal development and enjoyment, particularly through the good range of regular visits and residential trips. However, it does not build consistently on what pupils already know, so rates of progress vary. The planning of some specialist teaching, such as music, disrupts the delivery of some other subjects.

The school's self-evaluation involves governors and senior leaders appropriately. It honestly and accurately recognises the need to address the inconsistencies in the quality of provision. Changes have been made to the leadership team and the team is not yet complete. Some members are still developing the skills they need to set a clear, shared direction for improvement which promotes a whole school approach to good quality teaching and learning. Local authority support and changes to the Foundation Stage team have had a positive impact on improving the quality and provision in the Foundation Stage which is now satisfactory. This improvement demonstrates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the skills of the leadership team in setting a clear direction for improvement.
- Develop a consistent approach to good quality teaching and learning.
- Use assessment information and pupil tracking data rigorously to improve and evaluate the quality of provision.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

As a result of improving teachers' skills and appropriate use of tracking information to plan activities, pupils make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. They reach the levels expected by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach average standards by the end of Year 2, although rates of progress vary and few pupils reach the highest levels in writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make equally good progress to reach high standards. This is because they are confident, have very good attitudes to learning and are provided with interesting activities which motivate them. As a result appropriately challenging targets are generally met in Year 6 but expectations throughout the school, especially of the more able are inconsistent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour in classrooms and elsewhere in the school is good. They enjoy good relationships and are respectful of their teachers and one another. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is particularly enhanced through art and music. As one parent put it: 'Gordon children are accepting of each other'. They show a good understanding of healthy living, and participate enthusiastically in a variety of physical education and sporting activities. Pupils say they feel safe at school as a result of the caring approach of adults. They show enjoyment through attentiveness and positive attitudes. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the school council and raise money for various charities. Skills and achievement in literacy, numeracy, and the positive qualities which pupils show in lessons, contribute well to their future economic well-being. Attendance is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good lessons observed, mainly in Years 3 - 6. Good relationships, respect and rapport are evident across the school. Typically what characterises a good lesson is the high level of pupil engagement, the clarity of learning objectives and well-paced teaching. This results in good progress. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which slow the pace of learning. Teachers do not always provide pupils with tasks that are challenging and well matched to their individual learning needs. Opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and work collaboratively are restricted by adult-directed activities. Lack of involvement in planning of all staff is a barrier to consistently good progress. As assessment and pupil-tracking processes are new teachers do not consistently build on what pupils already know and can do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that promotes personal development and enjoyment so pupils achieve well. There is a strong focus on promoting music and specialist

teaching is provided across the school. However, timetabling interrupts the flow of other lessons and impacts on the provision of time for other subjects. Interactive whiteboards are available in most classrooms and teachers are learning how to use them effectively. Planning for pupils identified as more able is not consistent and they are not challenged to apply their learning, particularly in Years 1 and 2. There is a good range of visits and extra-curricular activities to support the curriculum and pupils enjoy enrichment experiences such as the Science Week, described by one parent as 'fantastic!'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school looks after its pupils satisfactorily. Pupils appreciate the 'Listening Ear' and the opportunities it gives them to talk to someone. Procedures to safeguard and secure the health, safety and protection of pupils are effective and there are appropriate links with outside agencies to support pupils' welfare. Individual Education Plans for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are in place and are used to target additional support but the school is aware that they are not reviewed frequently enough or used sufficiently within teaching plans. Individual curriculum targets are set but vary across the school and not all pupils are given a clear guidance on what they need to do next to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. Membership of the senior leadership team has recently been expanded but is not yet complete and so management structures and leadership skills are not sufficiently well developed to make a consistent impact on improving the quality of provision. A cycle of activities to monitor the quality of teaching and of the curriculum is in place, but how the outcomes are used to shape the direction of whole-school improvement planning is not yet fully understood by all leaders. Governors make a good contribution to leadership by challenging and supporting the school well. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We especially enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking with so many of you. You were very confident and told us what you thought very clearly.

You and your parents like your school. You trust and respect the adults and you told us you know who to ask for help if you need it. You value the opportunity to talk things over when you need to in the 'Listening Ear' and wish it could be available at playtimes too. You behave well, work hard and particularly enjoy the many trips you go on. You really enjoyed science week, especially when some of you were lucky enough to see a chicken lay an egg.

Your headteacher and teachers have made your school a calm, caring place and you get a satisfactory education. To make it even better, we have asked them to help you make equally good progress as you go from class to class by checking on how well you are doing and making sure all the lessons are as good as each other.

Thank you again for making us so welcome and we hope that you carry on working hard and enjoying being at school.

With very best wishes

Jackie Krafft
Her Majesty's Inspector