



# Gordon Infants' School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 102808  
**Local Authority** Redbridge  
**Inspection number** 276774  
**Inspection dates** 18–19 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Marfleet

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Golfe Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Ilford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		IG1 1SU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8478 2977
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	237	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8514 7218
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr B Harris
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss J Tilley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2003		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is situated in an area of significant deprivation, with a higher than average proportion of pupils being entitled to free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with most of these coming from various Asian backgrounds. The proportion with a first language other than English is high. Mobility levels are high and twice that of other schools in the borough.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Gordon Infants' School is a good school, which has improved considerably in recent years. Outstanding care, guidance and support, from the Foundation Stage onwards, enable pupils to achieve and develop well and help secure their well-being.

Standards have risen noticeably since the school was last inspected, and results at the end of Year 2 have been above average in two out of the last three years. 2006 results were a little lower, although pupils' progress was still good. What is significant is that pupils join this school with standards that are well below average and often a limited knowledge of English, but leave with standards at least in line with the national average. Standards in mathematics are above average. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well and make as much progress as others.

Pupils' good achievement is a result of good teaching. Knowledgeable and capable teachers deliver a stimulating curriculum to their classes. There is a strong emphasis on basic skills, although teaching about and through information and communication technology (ICT) is relatively undeveloped. Relationships are excellent. Behaviour management is quiet but very effective, and exemplary behaviour is just one aspect of the pupils' good personal development.

Pupils are very happy at school. They enjoy each other's company and smile a lot, most obviously at lunchtimes. The fact that attendance levels, though improving, have been below average for many years is not a reflection of their enjoyment of school. It is largely because some parents continue to take their children on extended holidays in term time, in spite of efforts by the school to discourage this practice.

The improvements that the school has made are the result of good leadership and management, well supported by the local authority. The governors, whilst meeting their responsibilities, have been less effective in challenging the school. They have supported the headteacher, but have left initiatives to her. It has not been easy to recruit governors, and vacancies remain. What has helped the school move forward most has been the headteacher's experience and accurate self-evaluation. With her leadership team, she has worked hard to overcome weaknesses that were there in the past. Pupils' achievement is tracked and teaching and learning monitored extremely effectively. This has led to better teaching and the increasingly good achievement. The impact of good leadership on provision and as result on progress has thus been clearly demonstrated, and shows that the school has a good capacity to improve even further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills and use them in other subjects.
- Work with parents to improve attendance, particularly those who take their children away in term-time.
- Ensure that governors are more active in holding the school to account.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children join the Foundation Stage with standards that are well below average. Many join the school later than others, some with little or no previous experience of schooling. Nevertheless, all pupils achieve well, both in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, and standards are at least average by the end of Year 2. In fact, standards have risen steadily over the last five years. In 2005 pupils reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were significantly above average. Standards fell slightly in 2006, mainly because of the different abilities and experiences of the pupils in that year, but good progress was still made. Results have been higher in mathematics than in reading and writing, where fewer pupils reach the highest level even though their progress in these areas is good. Their attainment reflects the fact that many speak languages other than English at home. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make as much progress as others, because of the good quality support they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. They behave extremely well in lessons and at play. They are very considerate towards each other and know the difference between right and wrong. One child commented, 'If you play in here then you must tidy up'. They contribute to the wider community, for instance in collecting harvest gifts and carol singing in a local nursing home. Sharing their different customs and celebrations, notably in assemblies, helps create a very inclusive ethos, which is greatly valued by parents. Pupils are confident and friendly with visitors. They know they are safe and that adults will help them with any problems. They are increasingly aware of the importance of healthy food and taking plenty of exercise, and can explain why some foods are healthier than others. Acquiring good literacy and numeracy skills prepares them well for the next stage of schooling. Although there has been some improvement in attendance, a small number of pupils still miss too much schooling, in spite of the school's measures to challenge parents about this problem.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilful in managing their classes. High expectations of pupils' behaviour mean that lessons are conducted in an orderly way, without becoming dull. Teachers create stimulating tasks for pupils, appropriate for different abilities, which enable them all to learn well. The use of ICT is relatively limited. Pupils are given access to ICT in the computer suite, and some have opportunities to use computers

in their classrooms, but they learn less about ICT than do many at their age. Support staff are used very effectively to meet the needs of pupils who require extra help. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and progress is tracked very carefully, enabling appropriate planning and relevant support.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is particularly good, providing a rich and varied range of activities. In Key Stage 1, provision is good, but the school recognises the need to develop it in a few areas. Literacy, numeracy and science are well provided for, but some areas, such as music, are not planned for in as much detail. On the other hand, themed weeks, for instance on science, the arts or Africa, enhance the provision. There is a good ICT suite, but it is not positioned centrally and pupils have relatively limited access to computers in classrooms. The curriculum is, however, enriched by visitors, such as the police and fire services, and by a range of visits - to South Weald, Epping Forest and the local museum of Victorian Life, to name a few. Pupils can join in some worthwhile after school clubs, including cricket, can learn to play the cello, and can participate in drama workshops.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff know all pupils very well and are committed to giving them the best conditions possible in which to learn. The level of care they receive contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and enables them to achieve well in their lessons. Very good links exist with outside agencies, enabling extra support to be given to those children who need it. Very good procedures are in place to support children coming to school for the first time and they settle in quickly. Parents value communications with the school. They are regularly informed of their children's progress, they can talk to the teachers each month, and they know how they can help their children at home. There are good links with schools that children go to next. Pupils' progress is tracked very well and clear learning targets are provided for everyone as they move through school. They know what they must do to make further progress, both in their work and how they behave, to ensure that they do as well as possible.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Rising standards and a very positive ethos show that the headteacher's determination and commitment to move the school forward have succeeded. Recent appointments to the senior leadership team have consolidated the high expectations and the shared view that continued improvement is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills have improved steadily. A very well organised system for checking how well pupils are taught and cared for is securely in place. The results of this monitoring enable staff to respond quickly and give extra support, for example to

those whose first language is not English. There is relentless involvement with the few parents who are not ensuring that their children attend enough. The harmonious atmosphere in the school is valued by parents, who approve of the way different cultures and customs are celebrated. Resources are used well and pupils benefit from good equipment and attractive accommodation, although ICT is relatively under-developed. Links with other agencies, including the local authority, contribute well to pupils' progress and personal development. Governors are supportive and value the detailed information they receive but need more training in order to challenge the school more effectively.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I want to thank you for making us so welcome during the inspection, and a special thank you to those who talked to us. We really enjoyed looking at your work and watching you in lessons and assembly. We believe that Gordon Infants' School is a good school.

Why we think your school is good:

- You make good progress in your work and are doing as well as pupils in other schools by the time you leave.
- The school is led well, and it has kept on improving.
- You are taught plenty of useful and interesting things.
- The teachers and other staff help you to learn well.
- They support and look after you extremely well.
- You behave really well and enjoy being at school a lot.
- You know how to stay safe, fit and healthy.
- Your parents are very happy with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Give you more time to use computers.
- Encourage the school governors to keep a check on the school.
- Get across the message that being away from school will stop you from learning as much as you should.

You can help by asking more questions when you don't understand, and by not missing school. We want to wish you well in the future and hope that you will always be as happy as you are at Gordon Infants' School.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Marfleet(Lead Inspector)