



Gosforth East Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108521
LEA Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 277995
Inspection dates 21 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Peter Harris

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Harewood Road
School category	Community		Gosforth
Age range of pupils	9 to 13		Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 5JT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2855445
Number on roll	466	Fax number	0191 2130492
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr George Snaith
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr Geoff Oliver

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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

Gosforth East is larger than most middle schools. It is oversubscribed and has significantly more boys than girls. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic origin is just below the national average, the proportion whose first language is not English is above. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentages of pupils with statements of special educational need and of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. Attendance is well above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gosforth East Middle School is a good school and this judgement is the same as the school's own evaluation of its work. Standards are above average. Pupils' progress and achievement are good. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from different ethnic backgrounds progress well. Pupils are confident and have the skills and personal qualities to succeed at the high school and later on in employment. Teaching is good and working relationships are strong. The school is an orderly and harmonious community where pupils feel safe and secure, behave well and enjoy their work. Attendance is well above that seen nationally. Leadership, management and governance are good and the drive to improve provision and raise standards is being pushed forward by the headteacher, supported by committed and able teachers and middle managers. The evaluation of the school's performance is done effectively and appropriate development priorities are in place. There are well developed systems to track pupils' progress but pupils are not always sufficiently clear about how well they are doing and how to get better. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community but opportunities for them to develop enterprise skills are restricted by the school's limited links with business and other organisations. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, the school's capacity to move forward is good and it gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' ability to evaluate their own progress and understanding of what they have to do to get better.
- Improve the opportunities for pupils to link with the community, especially business and other organisations, to give them more opportunities to develop their enterprise skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards achieved by pupils and the progress they make are good. The achievement on entry of pupils is broadly average. Over the last five years, the standards pupils have achieved in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science have been significantly above the national average and they have made good progress. In 2005, pupils achieved standards significantly higher than the national average at all levels in English and made good progress. The standards achieved in science and mathematics were also above the national average, with a particularly high proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels in science. All pupils make good progress, including those from minority ethnic groups and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The results of end-of-year tests and other information on pupils' performance show that standards in Key Stage 3 are also above those expected at the end of Year 8 in English, mathematics and science and that pupils have made good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. The inspection agrees with the school's evaluation. Pupils enjoy school greatly and this is reflected in their outstandingly good attendance and behaviour. Although a few parents have concerns about behaviour, pupils behave exceptionally well in class and around the school. There are a few instances where bullying is reported, and the school addresses them successfully. Pupils feel safe and have someone to go to if they have a problem. Younger pupils speak highly of those pupils in Years 7 and 8 who are available at lunchtime to help them. The school has achieved a Healthy School's Award and ensures that pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating. The acquisition of the Sportsmark Gold award gives the pupils good opportunities to participate in sport both in and out of school, although there is scope to increase girls' opportunities for sport outside of school.

Pupils gain good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) that help them to develop their economic well-being. Those pupils on the school council contribute positively to the school by representing the views of their fellow pupils. When they raise funds for charities the pupils link well to the wider community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because the school places high priority on these aspects of its work. Lessons in personal, social and health education enhance pupils' good understanding of moral values. They are developing a good understanding of what it means to live in a multiracial society. This is enhanced by involving the school community in sharing and celebrating aspects of different cultures that are present in the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. This was also the school's evaluation. Pupils make good progress because of their positive attitudes to school and their ability to work well independently and collaboratively. Some of their best learning is when they are given practical tasks which require them to think for themselves and learn from mistakes. This is seen, for example, in the presentations they give to their fellow pupils on work researched outside of the classroom. Such challenges boost their confidence and self-esteem. Teaching is good throughout the school. Varied teaching strategies are used to motivate and engage pupils, particularly the use of computer technology to help pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning. The climate for learning is good because of the positive working relationships established across all years. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately, but they do not always communicate to pupils how well they are doing, the steps they must take to get better and how they can judge for themselves the progress they are making. When teachers use open-ended questions effectively pupils are helped to reflect further on the work done

in class, and encouraged to explain at length what they have learnt. Good questioning techniques are used to test pupils' understanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school judges this aspect of its provision as good and the inspectors agree.

The curriculum is well planned across the key stages. The school has taken care to ensure what is provided meets pupils' needs. Many take their national tests in mathematics early in Year 8, enabling them to follow the course at an accelerated rate in the high school. There is also close attention to those pupils who need help to make better progress; for example, through the time allocated to use the library and the focus on reading skills when pupils join the school. There are good links to the local premiership football and rugby clubs which help develop pupils' computer skills.

The school makes good provision for physical development in the curriculum, and in out-of-school activities; also in encouraging pupils to live a healthy lifestyle. However, the range of team games provided for girls is restricted. The school is addressing the concerns of some parents about school meals.

There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities which enrich the school experience for pupils. They are well attended and enjoyed, and all pupils have the opportunity to participate in residential outdoor adventure activities. The activities are well matched to pupils' aspirations, for example, the opportunity to study Italian at a breakfast club, which links to the course at the high school.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the community in their activities for charity and, for example, in their musical performances, and other schools are invited to events. However, opportunities for them to develop enterprise skills are restricted by the school's limited links with business and other organisations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judges that it provides outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils. The inspection judges that this element of its provision is good with a particular strength in the quality of care. The procedures for child protection are well established, known and understood by all. Staff know pupils well and their positive relationships with pupils contribute significantly to ensuring that pupils behave outstandingly well. Pupils receive good advice on how to stay safe and live healthy lives. The vast majority of parents are pleased about the way the school looks after their children. There are good arrangements to ensure that pupils settle in to school and to prepare them for transfer to the high school. Pupils with a range of needs are helped to make good progress assisted by targeted support from staff, including learning mentors, and activities such as the homework club. Effective procedures for assessing pupils' learning, monitoring the progress of all groups, and the setting of challenging targets, make a good contribution to the standards that pupils achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. This was also the school's view of its work in this area. Able and committed teachers are given the scope to show initiative in the drive to raise standards and to look for imaginative ways to make their teaching more stimulating. The headteacher has encouraged, guided and supported such enterprise. He is aided in his work by the skills of his most senior colleagues and the efficiency of middle managers. Their work is directed to improving performance and promoting the pupils' well-being. The school has a clear understanding of how well it is doing and the priorities for improvement. It has involved everyone in the process of self-evaluation. Equality of opportunity is strongly promoted and the school is a harmonious community free from any form of racial tension. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and are its enthusiastic advocates. They are closely involved in evaluating its performance and in planning for the future. The above average standards are evidence of the strong team of teachers and the effective support they are receiving from the headteacher and the governing body. There is an appropriate range of good quality resources to support pupils' learning and they are used well to secure good value for money. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection and the school's capacity to improve further is good.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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The pupils of:

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NE3 5JT

21 June 2006

Dear Pupils

I and my fellow inspectors visited your school on the 21 and 22 June. Thank you for helping us by talking about your work and your experience in school.

We would also like to thank the many parents who responded; we took their views carefully into account.

I want to share with you what we thought about your school.

You go to a good school. You achieve good standards in your work and you make good progress. You are very well behaved in your lessons and try hard. This is a credit to you. You told us you enjoyed school and we could see this. Your attendance at school is outstanding.

Your teachers are hard working and teach you well.

The school is well led by the headteacher and his senior staff. They take care to ensure you feel safe and that you have an enjoyable and worthwhile time at school, in lessons and through the other activities the school offers.

We have recommended two ways the school can improve.

We think the school should help you to understand more for yourself the progress you are making in your work, and what you have to do next to get better.

We also think that the school should create more opportunities for you to have links with business and other organisations in the community, so you can develop skills in running activities and enterprises, as part of your development as young people.

Thank you again for your help and we wish you success and enjoyment at school.

Peter Harris

Her Majesty's Inspector