



Gosberton House School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120749
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280882
Inspection dates 28 November 2005 to 29 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Sue Aldridge LI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	11 Westhorpe Road
School category	Community special		PE11 4EW
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01775840250
Number on roll	83	Fax number	01775841017
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Jamie Gordon
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2000	Headteacher	Ms. Louise Stanton

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 28 November 2005 - 29 November 2005	Inspection number 280882
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Gosberton House is a mixed special school that caters for up to 86 pupils aged from two to eleven. At present there are 83 pupils on roll. There is an assessment class that has places for ten pre-school children, and six other classes. There are five children awaiting assessment for a statement of special educational needs. There are 78 pupils with statements; 35 pupils have moderate learning difficulties, and 48 pupils have autism. Of those with statements, 80% have speech and language therapy needs and 10% have physiotherapy needs. A small number of pupils have visual impairment or are blind. All the pupils are White. There are no pupils with English as an additional language, no travellers, refugees or asylum seekers. There are two pupils in public care. A relatively high percentage of pupils join the school other than at the usual time of first admission. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances; when they enter the school their attainment is low. The school's work is recognised by a number of external bodies. These include accreditation from the National Autistic Society (NAS), Investor in People (IIP), an Inclusion Quality Mark and a Basic Skills Award. It also has the Healthy Schools Award. Since the school was last inspected, it has established an outreach service. The service that provides support for pupils with autism is funded by the Local Education Authority (LEA). The school funds itself the service for visually impaired pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gosberton House is a very good school, where pupils flourish and parental satisfaction is exceptionally high. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, including the assessment class, is good. Pupils of all ages achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. Teaching is good and highly skilled staff work most effectively as a team to provide excellent support for pupils. School self-evaluation is sound and involves all appropriate contributors. The school sees itself as good; it knows its strengths and most areas for further development. However, there are several ways in which the process could be strengthened. The school is very well led and managed, and this has led to very good improvement since the last inspection. Its outreach service is valued by mainstream schools. The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school should develop in future and it has the capacity to be outstanding but can not until the overall local authority provision for outreach services is clarified.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensuring that the school's intentions are included in policies. - Making greater use of measurement and analysis. - Including levels in the annotations of pupils' work samples.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed that their children make good progress at the school. Although most pupils do not reach the standards expected for pupils of a similar age, this is because of their learning difficulties. Nonetheless, the school is successful in returning a small number of pupils to mainstream schools. Records show that children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning. All pupils make good progress against their individual targets. Annotations show that most targets are achieved or partly achieved. However, this information is not analysed for each class, different groups or the whole school. Analysis of pupils' performance by Durham University shows that pupils with autism do rather better than those with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). A higher percentage of pupils with autism (73%) make better than expected progress compared with 64% of MLD pupils. Analysis shows that there are no differences in the achievements of girls and boys. The school sets challenging targets to raise achievement in Year 6, and in the summer of 2005 these were all met. Results in national tests have improved each year since 2003, and a small number of pupils in Year 6 reach or exceed expected levels. For instance, in 2004 two pupils achieved Level 4 in English and mathematics, and one achieved a Level 5 in science. In 2005, one pupil achieved Level 4 and one a Level 5 in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Attendance at the school is good, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of lessons and school life. They arrive smiling each day, smartly turned out in their school uniforms. Pupils take part enthusiastically in classroom and extra-curricular activities. Their obvious pleasure at break-times, when they take part in an excellent range of activities, is wonderful to see. The school is most successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and parents are delighted with this. One wrote appreciatively of how a pupil had been 'transformed from an uncommunicative and frustrated child into a confident, polite and well-mannered young man'. Pupils make great strides in their socialisation. A few have previously been excluded from mainstream because of their challenging behaviour, and they improve their ability to understand and deal with their anger and frustration. This leads to increased self-control and a greater awareness of their own safety and the safety of others. Pupils with autism improve their ability to read facial expressions, they begin to empathise with others and to form friendships. Older pupils work together well, in small groups and as members of teams during games activities. The school and classroom rules, approved through the School Council, are well understood. Pupils willingly take responsibility in school; they contribute to the local community by distributing harvest produce and taking part in village events. Self-awareness and self-esteem are very effectively developed. Pupils grow in their ability to understand their feelings; they can identify good points about themselves and celebrate these. They reflect on a personal problem by using pictures and identify a good way of dealing with this. As their achievements are widely recognised and celebrated, their self-confidence grows. Pupils' cultural awareness is well developed through the curriculum, visits, visitors and cultural events in school, and pupils increase their understanding, tolerance and appreciation of differences in society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Staff are highly skilled in teaching pupils with autism, and well trained staff support pupils with visual impairment. Many have further qualifications in autism, and teaching assistants have been very well supported in developing their skills. Staff work in a most effective partnership in the classroom; they use a variety of methods and approaches to take account of the barriers to learning created by pupils' learning disabilities. For instance, to support pupils with autism, the whole school environment is rich in visual reminders, in the form of symbols with text, which support pupils' understanding and provide timely prompts. Moves from one activity to another are carefully signalled, and so pupils manage transition calmly, and they are engaged well throughout lessons. In this way, personal development and learning are both promoted well. Staff assess pupils thoroughly; they know the pupils and their abilities well and they plan suitably challenging activities across the range of abilities. Pupils are well

supported in the classroom, and they take part in activities with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. During the inspection, the assessment class spent a wonderful afternoon exploring Diwali through their senses. With incense filling the air, they listened to music, made and decorated clay lamps, explored artefacts, and found out about the story of Rama and Sita. Teachers involve pupils well in assessing their learning, and in 'marking' their own and others' work. They keep detailed records and annotate samples of pupils' work well. However, they do not routinely add levels of attainment to work samples, so these are not as useful as they might be as evidence of progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets requirements and serves each group of pupils well; it is particularly successful in promoting pupils' personal development. There is a strong emphasis on personal, social and health education (PSHE) as well as communication, and this is highly appropriate for these pupils. Emotional literacy, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, and social use of language programmes help to meet individual needs well. Similarly, individual education plans (IEP) personalise the curriculum for each pupil. Most pupils have targets to work towards at lunchtimes, and this helps develop personal, social and independence skills. There is close work with parents, who contribute to the setting of targets and are involved well in supporting this work at home. Formal homework is well established too. The National Curriculum is suitably modified to allow for additional programmes, although staff are careful to teach subjects such as science, history and geography in sufficient breadth to ensure that pupils who return to mainstream are not disadvantaged. There is good enrichment through visits, visitors, residential school journeys and a wide programme of lunchtime and after-school clubs. Physical activities are particularly well represented in the curriculum. Subjects such as science and PSHE give pupils a good understanding of healthy living and how to keep safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent level of care. The arrangements for keeping pupils safe and healthy are good. Child protection procedures and training of staff meet recommendations. There is suitable liaison and planning with social services in relation to pupils who are in public care. Risks are carefully assessed and suitable action taken to minimise these; staff are vigilant and pupils are very well supervised at all times. Individual behaviour plans are effective in improving pupils' behaviour. Through their lunchtime targets, pupils are encouraged to eat a wider variety of foods and to eat healthily. A breakfast club, afternoon fruit and plentiful drinking water in classes help to develop healthy lifestyles. Exercise and breathing sessions (Activate) help pupils to prepare for learning. The arrangements for supporting pupils and their families are excellent. Induction includes a photographic record of the pupils' preliminary visit to the school, retained by them as a reminder of where they are going. Courses are run for parents and they are involved well in helping pupils to reach targets at home. Many

parents wrote on their completed questionnaires, praising the staff for their help and support. One comment noted that 'our family has at last been able to function as a family unit'. Staff are constantly looking for ways of helping pupils to improve in every way. With this in mind, there has been excellent development of the outdoor environment since the last inspection and staff have had training in making playtimes positive. There is now a most effective ticketing system for playtimes, to ensure that pupils' choices do not exceed demands or compromise safety. As a result, pupils have a choice of a very appealing variety of activities and environments, and playtimes are enjoyed by all.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

All staff with leadership responsibilities carry them out well. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a very clear vision for the school and this is communicated effectively to everyone. Since her appointment, she has strengthened teamwork in the school, empowered staff through training, developed an outreach service and secured a most effective partnership with parents and other agencies. As a result, staff, parents and professionals associated with the school feel valued. The quality of the school environment has improved too. The school has received very positive evaluations from outside agencies, such as the National Autistic Society. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They provide good support and challenge, and visit the school to check on its work, particularly health and safety. Finances are well managed and funds well targeted to where improvements are needed most. Although self-evaluation is effective, staff miss opportunities to measure how effective the school is. For instance, there is little measurement of improvements in behaviour or autistic tendencies, although the school has records to enable it to do this. Evaluation of outreach activities such as training is carried out and completed questionnaires are analysed. The result is a list of things that were seen as positive and negative, and suggestions for improvement of future courses. There is no measurement of customer satisfaction though, such as the percentage who felt that nothing could be improved, so it is not clear how good the course was. Practice is not reflected in policies either; few mention monitoring and evaluation and there is no whole-school policy on this important aspect of the school's work.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	4	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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?	1	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	3	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	NA
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

Thank you for making me feel welcome in your school. I enjoyed my visit, especially talking to you at lunchtime, and seeing how well you all work and play together. I came to see how well you are all getting on and find out if there are any things that could be done better. There are many things that are good. The main ones are: - you are all working together and learning together well, as your motto says you should - as you grow older, you are much better at getting on with others - you look very smart in your new school uniforms - your parents like the school very much - staff look after you all very well, and you say you feel safe in the school - the staff are good at their jobs and they help teachers in other schools too - there are lots of extra things for you to enjoy as well as lessons - the school playground is great and it makes playtimes special for you. There is one thing that could be better. At the moment the staff know how well the school is doing, but they should find ways of measuring improvements so that they can show this to other people, and write levels on your best work. I hope that you will all keep up the good work. I wish you a very happy Christmas.