



Giles Brook Combined School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134073
LEA Milton Keynes LEA
Inspection number 282445
Inspection dates 18 October 2005 to 19 October 2005
Reporting inspector Barbara Atcheson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Holborn Crescent
School category	Community		Tattenhoe
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Milton Keynes MK4 3GB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01908507627
Number on roll	390	Fax number	01908507332
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Stephen Deane
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr Phillip Skull

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

Description of the school

This new, two-form entry community primary school opened in September 2003 with 238 pupils and has grown to 390 on roll. Pupils come from many different backgrounds. Pupils are mainly of white British descent with small numbers of Asian, Black African and mixed heritage pupils. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Attainment on entry is average overall. A significant number of children have had either very little or no pre-school education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a newly opened school with rapidly developing strengths, which provides good value for money. The school judges its overall effectiveness to be good and knows where improvement is needed. Inspectors agree and recognise that it already has significant strengths. It is justifiably popular with parents. Everything the school does is centred round the individual child and the enjoyment of learning. The school has developed a very strong team approach where every person is valued and involved. As a result of skill, commitment and an incredible amount of hard work, the school has successfully assimilated large numbers of pupils from a wide variety of feeder schools. Exceptional relationships are a key element in the increasing success of the school. Personal development and care are two of the school's distinctive strengths. Teaching and learning are good and there are examples of outstanding practice. Assessment is used very well to track and monitor the progress of every pupil. Children in the Foundation Stage get a fine start to their schooling. Achievement is good throughout the school and standards are rising. Standards in the visual arts and music are excellent. Good liaison with the secondary school ensures that pupils feel confident when it is their turn to transfer. The curriculum is good and displays sound diversity. The school is highly successful in reaching out to the local community. A parent comments - 'Tattenhoe was just an estate but now it is a community because of the school'. Leadership and management are good. A clear vision is shared by all and performance is rigorously evaluated. The school has correctly identified that the good model of target setting used in English should now be extended to other areas of the curriculum. Teachers must also ensure pupils have more opportunities to plan their own experiments in science. The open school policy ensures that everyone is fully informed and involved, enabling the schools' self evaluation to be of the highest quality and effectiveness. The school has an outstanding capacity for improvement as demonstrated in the progress it has made in just two years.

What the school should do to improve further

* Extend the good model of target setting in literacy to other areas of the curriculum*
Ensure pupils have more opportunities to plan their own experiments in science

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good throughout the school and standards are rising. A secure environment and good teaching in Foundation Stage ensures that children make good progress from an average level of attainment. This continues so that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average. This pattern of successful achievement continues in Years 3 to 6. By the time they leave school the vast majority of this year's pupils will be thoroughly prepared for the next stage of education. The school's first Year 6 came from a variety of schools and had only spent a little time in Giles Brook. As a result, in 2005, standards at the end of Year 6, although above in English, were in line

with national averages in science and below in mathematics. In contrast, analysis of data indicates that the present Year 6, who have been in school for three years, are already making good and sometimes very good progress over a short period of time. This is particularly seen where boys have been motivated to improve their writing. Pupils achieve outstanding standards in music and the visual arts as a direct result of teachers' enthusiasm and expertise. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged and achieve highly. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported and make very good progress towards their targets. Bilingual pupils receive effective specialist support and make very good progress in using English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils love their school and parents agree. Behaviour is very good and bullying is virtually unknown. Exceptional relationships throughout the school underpin the good standards that pupils attain. Attendance rates are very high, including attendance at the wide range of clubs outside school hours. Pupils make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development from their earliest days in the school. Pupils make good progress in learning about keeping safe and healthy and learn about what it is to be a good citizen. They undertake responsibilities such as managing the playground equipment. In the wider community they report on local environmental issues to the council through their Streetcare committee, which 'makes a real difference to the environment'. Pupils make good progress acquiring the personal skills required for work in the future, for example, they organise fund-raising activities and manage their own school council budget.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school with some outstanding features. Pupils say, 'The way they teach art in this school is brilliant'. Pupils take pleasure in their learning. They say, 'Learning at this school is fun'. As a result, behaviour is exemplary. There are excellent relationships and pupils are highly motivated. Parents recognise this and are very appreciative of good teaching and the way in which the school helps pupils learn. Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to plan exciting, challenging lessons. They know each individual pupil so well and use very effective assessment systems and so these lessons are pitched at exactly the right level to challenge all abilities. The school has rightly identified and is successfully addressing increased challenge for the most able pupils. Clear learning objectives enable every pupil to understand their learning and review how well they have done. Pupils are closely involved in setting their own targets in English. Teachers' enthusiasm and understanding of the various ways in which pupils learn ensure that lessons are stimulating and enjoyable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and the quality of work in art and music demonstrates that these areas are outstanding. Pupils are really excited by what the curriculum has to offer. They really enjoy the opportunity to work with all age groups on exciting and creative art projects. The curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of each individual pupil. It supports lower ability pupils and challenges gifted and talented pupils very effectively. The school has correctly identified that teachers must ensure that pupils have more opportunities to design and set up their own experiments in their science work. Pupils enthuse about their Egyptian Day and their visit to a Victorian classroom. These activities enable them to learn about and experience what it was like to live in the past. There are very good links across the curriculum in all subjects but particularly with information and communication technology and writing. The curriculum makes a very good contribution to the pupils' ability to stay safe and healthy and to acquire the skills of citizenship. A very good range of extra-curricular clubs offers pupils a good variety of activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding because of the commitment and expertise shown by all members of staff. Very secure arrangements for child protection and care for all pupils ensure that all adults are aware of the needs of vulnerable children. Exceptional measures are taken to care for these pupils. Pupils feel secure in school and form trusting relationships with adults. Guidance and support systems are strong and based very effectively on teachers' knowledge of how pupils learn. Pupils understand how well they are doing and they feel very well supported when in difficulty. Pupils new to the school are helped to settle in with the support of a peer mentor; as one pupil said, 'We all look after each other here'. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported and make rapid progress with their individual targets. Bilingual pupils receive effective specialist support and make very good progress in using English. The school makes very good arrangements to promote pupils' health and ensure their safety. Provision in the curriculum and at extra-curricular clubs provides rich opportunities for all pupils to be physically active and learn about leading healthy life-styles. Health and safety arrangements are applied rigorously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features. This is a very new school and as such has not had the length of time to embed good practice securely as far as less experienced members of staff with a curriculum responsibility are concerned. Very good teamwork under the creative and dynamic leadership of the headteacher means that in just two years the school has made very good progress and standards are steadily rising. The leadership and management of the headteacher are

outstanding. He is respected by pupils, staff and parents alike. His philosophy of creating an open, community based school where there are good lines of communication is shared by all. He is so valued by parents that the inspection team received over two hundred exceptionally positive parental responses. He is very well supported by the deputy who works effectively to improve standards. This is a school where good relationships are paramount, everyone is motivated, valued and involved and where pupils really enjoy their learning. The tight schedule for development prior to the school's opening, together with well-judged appointment of staff, has formed a secure basis for rapid progress. The headteacher's strengths are complemented by a very good deputy and senior management team who share his vision and commitment. Consistently high expectations of all those who work in the school have contributed significantly to its increasing success. Less experienced members of staff with a curriculum responsibility are benefiting from the very good guidance and support from the senior management team. On this basis the school demonstrates an outstanding capacity to improve. The quality of teaching is carefully monitored and evaluated for impact on pupils' learning. The school development plan is a comprehensive document that clearly outlines the school's priorities. The open school policy ensures that everyone is fully informed and involved enabling the schools' self evaluation to be of the highest quality and effectiveness. Well informed governors bring a wide range of professional skills and expertise to make a major contribution to the school's growing success. The school has already correctly identified building improvements to address the shortage of space. Resources are rightly directed towards raising pupils' achievement.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	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	1	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	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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	NA
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 looking after us so well on our visit to your school. We think you have a good school with many outstanding features. Everybody works together so well to make it a happy place where you can learn lots of new and exciting things.

Everybody works together so well to make it a happy place where you can learn lots of new and exciting things. We especially liked: * The high standards you reach in art, music and information and communication technology. * The way your teachers and other adults help you to do your best and get the most out of each day. * Your enthusiasm for learning and your hard work in lessons, including your good behaviour and respect for one another. * The many exciting things you do, including all the interesting visitors, your trips out and the clubs you can take part in. We know how much you enjoy your lessons and are sure your teachers will do all they can to make them even more exciting. You already have targets for literacy which help you to understand what you have to do to improve. We think that it would be helpful if you had targets in other subject to help you learn even more.

We would also like teachers to make sure that you have more opportunities to plan your own experiments in science.