

# Gainsborough Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100225
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	285747
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mat Webb
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jacqueline Bruton-Simmonds
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2001
<b>School address</b>	Berkshire Road London E9 5ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8985 4622
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8986 6427

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Gainsborough is a large school with a part-time nursery situated immediately adjacent to the site for the 2012 Olympic Games. It has recently become part of a federation with another primary school in the borough. The executive headteacher leads both schools, but with separate management teams in each. It is in an area where many families experience considerable social and economic disadvantage. Free school meal eligibility is high, as is pupil mobility. A very high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over one third are at an early stage of learning English. Several children from traveller backgrounds also attend the school. A high proportion of the pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Attainment on entry to the school is much lower than expected of three-year-olds and further affected by later entrants who often speak little or no English.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The inspection agrees with staff and governors that the school's effectiveness is satisfactory and improving rapidly under new leadership. It gives satisfactory value for money. The school has gone through a difficult period of declining standards and pupil attitudes. Reversing this trend required firm and decisive action. Since the arrival of the new headteacher as one pupil stated, 'a new Gainsborough School' has been formed. The school now has some good and improving features although there is still some way to go. The major factor in this success is the strong leadership of the headteacher, supported by an effective senior staff team. They have high expectations of everyone, and provide the support for these expectations to be realised.

The youngest children have a satisfactory start during their time in the Foundation Stage which helps them to settle into school life well and make good strides in their personal development. Achievement is satisfactory and improving throughout the school. The focus on improving reading and writing, as well as information and communication technology (ICT) skills has brought its rewards this year. Standards have risen from very low to below average as pupils make better progress, particularly in their basic skills. This is reflected in the improved provisional results in national tests in 2007. Satisfactory and improving teaching and learning are the main keys to this changing picture. The skills of the most effective teachers are being used well to develop others, although the pace of some lessons is too slow when pupils are not challenged or engaged sufficiently. Although assessment is being used to plan lessons that meet individual needs and give pupils a picture of how to improve, there remain some inconsistencies here and in the quality of marking.

Many children come from quite disadvantaged backgrounds, but they are becoming increasingly successful and settled through good care, guidance and support that focus on individual circumstances and need. Pupils feel safe and secure, reporting that there is an adult to turn to if they have a problem. As one pupil commented, 'I enjoy coming to school. It is like a second home'. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their attitudes and behaviour have improved considerably and are good. That the school is a calm and happy place is a major change over the course of the last year. The personal and academic needs of all pupils are carefully identified so that all are included regardless of their ability or background.

There is an enthusiastic and relentless drive to make the school better and to extend the pupils' life chances. The staff team has united to create an environment that promotes better learning. School evaluation is based on rigorous monitoring of staff performance and gives a very clear picture of where strengths lie. When weaknesses are identified, action is taken and its impact carefully evaluated. In a short space of time, the new management team has brought much improvement to the school. Much of this has relied on the senior team. Changes in subject leaders have meant that the role of these staff is still developing. They do not make the significant contribution they might, but are poised to do so over the next year. Because of the significant impact made by leadership and management in raising standards and improving provision the school has good capacity to improve further and meet the many challenges and opportunities it faces.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen teaching by bringing more interest and pace to lessons and improving the quality of marking.

- Make better use of assessment to tailor lessons more closely to pupils' aptitudes and to help them to understand the steps to take to improve.
- Develop subject leaders so that they play a greater role in securing lasting improvements to pupils' achievement in their areas.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but only about half reach the expected goals for their age by the end of reception. While pupils have in the past made satisfactory progress during their time in Years 1 to 6, current data and inspection evidence shows that the rate of progress is improving because of the successful implementation of initiatives to raise standards. Progress is good and overall achievement is at least satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English are also now starting to make similar good progress. The sharp focus on improving the pupils' basic skills has started to feed through into rising test results and improving standards throughout the school. There is no significant difference in the progress of different groups of pupils. Year 2 results were below average in mathematics and low in reading and writing in 2006, but have improved in all three areas in 2007. Year 6 test results were also very low in 2006 in English and mathematics and below average in science. Barely half of pupils reached the nationally expected standard in English and mathematics and few attained above average levels. Standards have improved in both subjects in 2007, particularly the proportion of pupils reaching average standards by Year 6.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their learning. Thanks to the school's efforts, attendance has improved although it remains below the national average. The focus on 'zero tolerance' of unacceptable behaviour has successfully reduced the number of fixed-term exclusions to a low level. The pupils' behaviour is now good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils reflect on the impact of their actions and show respect for the customs of others. They learn how to be safe and understand what they need to do to stay healthy. They enjoy responsibilities such as helping younger pupils with their reading. Pupils raise money for charity and have a voice through their active school council. They take an active interest in developments of the Olympic park. Their personal qualities and improving basic skills give them a sound platform for dealing with the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school's rigorous monitoring of teaching is beginning to benefit pupils' progress. Although satisfactory, teaching and learning are improving and starting to develop stronger features. Constructive relationships have helped to establish classrooms in which pupils enjoy learning.

Better use is being made of assessment information so that most teachers plan lessons which match pupils' capabilities, although there is room for further improvement here. Teachers are now providing greater challenge, although not all have the same high expectations of what the pupils can do. Where teachers plan a variety of activities and make their expectations clear, pupils understand the purpose of what they are doing and find lessons interesting. However, learning lacks pace at times because there is insufficient variety and too few opportunities for pupils to learn independently. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but is too formal at times for Nursery children limiting their opportunity to learn through structured play activities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which increasingly matches pupils' learning needs and is having a considerable impact on their personal development. The focus on improving pupils' basic skills, particularly in literacy is also bearing fruit. ICT is now taught and used in many subjects, helping the pupils to acquire a wide range of skills. The specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties are quickly identified and carefully focused support provided. Withdrawal groups give pupils at an early stage of learning English a sound start in the development of their language skills. Pupils' experiences are well supported by visits, including residential courses. They speak highly of the growing range of after-school activities available to them, which include several sports, dancing and Spanish. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage covers all areas, but the outside space is uninspiring for nursery children. Neither is it accessible for reception children to move freely between classroom and outdoor activities, although plans are in place to rectify this.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is very effective in the care and support it provides for all pupils. This ensures that whatever the pupils' background their individual needs are known and steps taken to help them to succeed in school. Specialist staff and mentors make a significant contribution to the support for pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties. These contributions are enhanced by strong links with external agencies and increasing parental support. The school caters well for the language needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English. The school's systems for child protection, health and safety and the welfare of the pupils are secure and understood by all. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Systems to track the progress of pupils are much improved. Marking has become more thorough and helpful as the year has gone on, but does not consistently help pupils understand the next steps needed to meet their targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

It is because of the strong leadership and clear direction provided by the close knit senior staff team that improvements are taking place in many areas, particularly in the academic progress made by pupils and in their improved personal development. All recognise that this is very much 'work in progress'. Much of the drive for improvement has come from the senior team, as subject leaders move into their new roles. Through well directed support, including from other schools, staff have begun to gain an understanding of their role even though they are not consistently

fulfilling their potential. The headteacher's high expectations of the pupils are reflected in increasingly challenging individual targets for their performance. Teachers are now held closely to account for the performance of pupils in their class. Much improved systems to track the progress of pupils are helping the school to identify where there are shortcomings and the success of any action taken. These systems also enable staff to identify where pupils are falling behind what is expected of them, so that programmes can be put in place to help them to catch up. Governors have also taken a more effective role in helping to shape the school's strategic direction, while challenging the senior team to do even better.

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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>	<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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### 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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Annex A

**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	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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

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

18 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gainsborough Primary School, London, E9 5ND

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we inspected your school. You were all very helpful. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. There are some aspects of your school that we judged to be good. You, your parents and teachers are right in thinking that you go to a satisfactory and improving school.

You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school. You enjoy school, try hard, play happily together and mostly behave sensibly. The care and support you receive are good, particularly if you have difficulties with aspects of learning. You are learning the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and the local community through your interest in developments for the Olympic Games.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. There are three main areas where we think that improvements could be made. We feel teachers could make lessons more interesting and challenging, and through their marking help you to understand the steps you need to take to improve the standard of your work. We also feel that teachers in charge of different subjects need to take greater responsibility for making sure you make the best possible progress.

You can all make the school an even better place by working hard, attending regularly and continuing to improve your behaviour. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Beale Lead inspector