



# Gilnow Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 105198  
**Local Authority** Bolton  
**Inspection number** 287153  
**Inspection dates** 24–25 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Jim Kidd

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 address</b>	Gilnow Gardens
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gilnow Road, Bolton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Greater Manchester BL1 4LG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 333724
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	240	<b>Fax number</b>	01204 333725
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms M Ryan
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs B True
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average-sized school is situated close to Bolton town centre and serves a mixed area, some parts of which suffer from significant social disadvantage. 75% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and over two-thirds have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below that usually found. Gilnow Primary is applying for the Healthy Schools Award and the school council is hard at work advising pupils on healthy lifestyles and on collecting evidence for the assessment portfolio.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is an improving school, which provides a satisfactory quality of education, an innovative curriculum and good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Staffing issues and a lack of consistency in teaching over a period of three years or so had a negative affect on standards and achievement. These problems are now in the past and effective strategies to address them as well as recent appointments to the teaching staff are bringing about significant improvements in pupils' attainment and progress. In some classes, more able pupils are beginning to aim for higher standards but the level of challenge for them is not consistently appropriate in all areas.

Children get a good start in the Nursery and Reception class. The Pakistani Heritage Achievement Project in 2005, which comprised a range of sessions with parents, had a very positive impact in settling children with little English into Foundation Stage routines. Children are introduced to new and exciting activities and their self-confidence and self-esteem grow rapidly as a result. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 also and they particularly enjoy the many chances they have to work with older children. Although progress has been limited in Key Stage 2 in recent years, particularly in mathematics and science, standards, although below average, are now rising and pupils' personal development is good. It is fostered by the 'enrichment curriculum' on Friday mornings, by the work of the school council, who do much to improve provision in the playground, and by the 'buddies' and peer mediators. Indeed, pupils love their school, feel safe within it and are grateful for the comprehensive support and guidance they receive from their teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils get on very well with each other and their outstanding cultural development and the high levels of racial harmony are hallmarks of the school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the determined work of the headteacher, who leads by example and has a high profile around school, has resulted in a strong sense of teamwork and commitment to improvement amongst all staff. Difficult decisions in relation to staffing and deployment of teaching assistants have been taken and their effect is already bearing fruit. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but improving and standards are rising as a result. Leadership overestimated the effectiveness of some aspects of the school and, although monitoring systems are improving markedly, this demonstrates that it needs to ensure that evaluation of performance has improvements in pupils' achievement as its first goal.

Gilnow Primary is emerging from a difficult period in its history. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what it is trying to do for their children and are correct in their belief that pupils operate within a safe and stimulating environment. It is set to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

- Develop more rigorous procedures to evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that more able pupils are challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards by the end of Year 6 are below average but, from a low starting point on entry to the Nursery, achievement across the school is satisfactory overall. Children make the most rapid progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because of effective teaching and many practical activities designed to foster their self-esteem. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good also and standards improve to below average by the end of Key Stage 1. There have been significant staffing issues and a lack of consistency in teaching quality in Key Stage 2 in recent years. Achievement slowed as a result, particularly that of more able pupils. Standards and achievement in English have held up well but those in mathematics and science were below average in 2005 and 2006. Staffing changes and the redeployment of teaching assistants by senior leaders have been effective and attainment in Year 6 is now rising in all three subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress but those with English as an additional language achieve well because of well-targeted bilingual support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well, are courteous to visitors and feel happy, safe and valued in school. Their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are proud of the active school council, which has brought about significant improvements in the playground, such as the climbing frame. Members are currently involved in promoting healthy eating and are preparing evidence for the school's application for the Healthy Schools Award. Older children support younger ones and 'buddies' and peer mediators make sure that no one is isolated or lonely at break and lunchtime. Attendance is just below average but is improving and is significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection because of the sterling efforts made to improve it. Sport and games loom large and they are good examples of the school's emphasis on fitness and living a healthy lifestyle. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have keen awareness of religions and cultures different to their own, are delighted to celebrate the successes of their classmates in the Thursday achievement assembly, and contribute regularly to a range of charities. There are high levels of racial harmony throughout the school. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory and the school is concerned to improve achievement in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage where close attention to basic skills in literacy and numeracy and personal, social and emotional development helps children become happy and confident learners.

Throughout the school, focused, often bilingual support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those with English as an additional language helps them to learn well. Relationships are good and staff treat their pupils with dignity and respect. Consequently, pupils work maturely in groups together. In Year 6, good subject knowledge and rapid pace are having a marked impact on learning. However, in less successful lessons, there is too much teacher direction and a slow pace to the activities. More able pupils are not challenged consistently to reach higher standards and this has an adverse effect on their achievement as a result.

Assessment is improving and tracking systems to identify where pupils are experiencing difficulty are developing well. Marking is good and the best practice encourages pupils themselves to identify their own progress and that of their classmates, to help them improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets the needs of most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The school is committed to providing practical and reality-based experiences for pupils, particularly through role-play, shared activities between different year groups, and weekly 'enrichment mornings'. For example, following recent work on the Victorians, a role-play area for Year 6 was developed based on a Victorian classroom. Pupils say they love taking part in enrichment mornings and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language derive particular benefit from them. Provision for personal, social and health education is good, including education for safety. For example, Year 1 pupils design posters with clear warnings on issues such as road and fire safety. A good range of extra-curricular activities contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and also helps them to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils visit different places of worship and this helps them to appreciate the diversity of beliefs in society. This is one of the factors leading to their outstanding cultural development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils and, as parents say, 'Our children have gone from strength to strength and have grown in confidence so much that we realise just how sensitive Gilnow has been to their needs.' Most pupils

are aware of their learning targets, displayed prominently on the walls of each classroom, and these are beginning to have a greater impact on their rates of progress.

The school's close links with Sure Start are very effective in helping pupils settle into school. Parents are welcomed into school and teachers and teaching assistants work long and hard to encourage further involvement of mothers, fathers and carers. Procedures for child protection are in place and all staff have received relevant training. Children are aware of how to keep themselves safe and this is constantly reinforced by staff. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those identified as vulnerable and those with English as an additional language are supported effectively and with great sensitivity by teachers and teaching assistants.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, senior staff and governors now provide clear direction for improvement following a very difficult period in the life of the school where staffing issues affected teaching quality and led to a marked decline in standards and achievement in Key Stage 2. The headteacher persevered admirably through these traumatic times and stuck to the job of rebuilding the capacity of the school. The school is now back on its feet, with most pupils achieving satisfactorily and some progressing well. Good quality care, an innovative curriculum and good personal development have remained constant strengths of the school throughout.

Improved monitoring procedures ensure that areas of concern are identified rapidly and shared effectively among staff to set learning targets for pupils. Further development is now needed to ensure that all areas of the school's work are evaluated in terms of their impact on pupils' achievement. Well founded training, more effective teaching methods and careful deployment of teachers and assistants have strengthened learning. The school has established systems and procedures to ensure that staffing and other changes do not hinder progress - a concern raised at the last inspection.

Leaders are committed to equality of opportunity and take account of parents', pupils' and other stakeholders' views. New technology is making an increasingly positive contribution to teaching, learning and school administration.

Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively, act as critical yet supportive friends and are not afraid to challenge the leadership when they feel it necessary to do so. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in relation to pupils' attendance. By overcoming the problems leading to a decline in standards and achievement and with clear progress in the learning of most pupils, the school demonstrates that it has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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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>	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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>	2
<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	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**

Thank you all so much for welcoming us to your school and for being so kind, polite and friendly to us. We enjoyed our visit to Gilnow very much and particularly enjoyed the tour of the school and the playground given to us so well by members of the school council. We now want to share with you what we think about your school.

We think Gilnow Primary is improving all the time and we know that you are very proud of it! You get on really well with each other and also with your teachers and teaching assistants, who take good care of you and want you to succeed. Your behaviour is good and you work hard in your lessons. You all like Friday 'enrichment mornings' and your role-plays and other activities in 'the area' were a joy to watch. The achievement assembly we visited is something we shall remember for a long time and the prayers which some of you wrote were wonderful to listen to. You know how much your school council does for everyone and the 'buddies' and peer mediators try so hard to make sure that no one feels sad or lonely. We also had a marvellous time in the Nursery and Reception and saw how much the children there enjoy the many 'fun' activities, which help them learn. We even met Claude, your school cat, and saw how kind the younger children were to him!

We would now like you to work hard with your teachers to try and improve your standards in all your subjects, and particularly in mathematics and science. We have also asked your teachers to work out just how well you are doing so that they can help you even more and challenge those who are doing well to do even better!

Thank you again for playing such an important part in the inspection. We enjoyed watching you learn and wish you well for the future.