



Girton Glebe Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110610
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 288720
Inspection dates 15–16 January 2007
Reporting inspector John Messer

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cambridge Road
School category	Community		Girton, Girton
Age range of pupils	5–11		Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB3 0PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01223 276484
Number on roll (school)	204	Fax number	01223 276484
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs A Bonnett
		Headteacher	Mr P Atkin
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children are taught in seven classes in this village primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British families but nearly a quarter are from ethnic minority backgrounds. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language and of these, several are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry is generally average but in 2003 it was exceptionally high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part-way through their education is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its overall effectiveness as good but inspection findings show that it is satisfactory. Within this overall picture there are significant strengths as well as important areas for improvement. Personal development is good. Pupils are generally well behaved. They are keen to learn and eager to succeed. Most enjoy school. They work and play happily together. School musical performances, in which everyone is fully involved, give them good opportunities to act, sing and play instruments. This does much to foster their self-confidence. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a good range of after-school clubs and sporting activities. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. They have a good understanding of how to eat sensibly, stay healthy and keep fit. Sound foundations are laid for their future learning and working lives.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching ranges from outstanding to inadequate. In the Reception class teaching is inadequate because behaviour is not managed successfully. Consequently, children do not always make as much progress as they should and standards are not as high as would normally be expected of this age group. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good and pupils achieve well. By Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is always at least satisfactory and often better. However, teachers do not always expect enough of pupils, especially the more able, and sometimes activities are not sufficiently stimulating. As a result, pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is uneven. In some classes it is good but in others satisfactory. Progress accelerates in Year 6 where standards observed are above average in English and science and average in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The school has correctly identified the need to improve the performance of the more able pupils in mathematics and science.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has gained the confidence and respect of parents and the community. He has recently developed good systems to measure the amount of progress that pupils make in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Data is carefully analysed to find out if pupils are making enough progress and where extra learning support might be needed. The systems are new and have not yet had their full impact on raising standards but there are clear indications that achievement is improving as a result. The school's self-evaluation is adequate because it recognises strengths and weaknesses. It has correctly identified the need to develop the roles of subject leaders so that they have greater influence on improving achievement across the school. The governing body is well informed and monitors the work of the school closely. Finances are managed well and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Reception class so that children make better progress.

- Raise teachers' expectation of the standards that the more able pupils are capable of attaining in mathematics and science.
- Provide more guidance for teachers about how to make lessons more exciting.
- Develop the roles of subject leaders so that they take more responsibility for raising standards across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall, although children do not make enough progress in the Reception class. Standards are below those normally expected and they are capable of achieving more.

Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and by Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are usually above average. The results of national assessments for pupils in Year 2 in 2006 were high in reading, writing, mathematics and science but this was an exceptionally able group of pupils who were very advanced when they started school.

Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent. Most groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve satisfactorily. In recent years the standards attained by the more able pupils in mathematics and science have been too low. This is because teachers do not always expect enough of them or give them sufficiently challenging work. The school's performance in national tests in 2006 was above average in English but below in mathematics and science. However, this year group had a higher than usual proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and their learning was interrupted by staff absence. Standards in Year 6 are now above average in English and science and average in mathematics and ICT.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good but there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is mostly good although a small minority of pupils in Reception do not behave well. Attitudes to work are positive but some pupils are unable to sustain their concentration, especially when the work does not interest or challenge them sufficiently. Attendance is average and the school takes appropriate steps to promote improvement. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with quickly. Most enjoy school and value the friendships they form. School and class councils provide them with a voice in the running of the school and they are pleased to be involved in decision making. Sport is strongly promoted. Older pupils act as playground leaders to organise games. Pupils have a good understanding of a balanced diet and the 'Health Promoting Schools' project has been highly successful. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and wholeheartedly support fundraising events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning, whilst satisfactory overall, vary widely. Behaviour is generally managed well but in the Reception class the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils interferes with the learning of all. Teachers do not always expect enough of pupils, especially the more able, so they do not always learn as rapidly as they should. Lessons are planned thoroughly but many activities are not particularly stimulating. Pupils' relationships with teachers and support staff are good and staff know their pupils well. This helps pupils to communicate easily with staff. Lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties have carefully planned activities that help them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English also receive the support that they need to progress satisfactorily alongside others in the class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors to the school. There is appropriate emphasis on teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT. The school has made a start in using ICT to make links between subjects. The school has recognised the need to develop an innovative curriculum that captures the interest and imagination of all pupils. Educational visits are carefully planned and provide valuable experiences that bring subjects alive. The school places appropriate emphasis on the cultures and faiths of other countries and their people so that pupils are learning how to appreciate our multi-cultural society. A good range of clubs and out of school activities enables pupils to extend their sporting and musical interests. French is taught to pupils in Years 3 to 6 and makes a good contribution to communication skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The care of pupils is good. Staff know the pupils and their families well. Risk assessments are completed thoroughly to ensure that pupils learn in a safe and secure environment. Child protection and other safety procedures are thorough. The school is developing good systems for tracking pupils' progress. However, the information is not yet being used effectively by teachers to guide and support pupils in their work so that achievement is increased. Targets have been introduced recently but the impact of these is limited and discussions with pupils indicate that they are not fully aware of how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has been in post for two years and is determined to raise standards across the school. However, his efforts have not yet had their full impact. A succession of staff absences has interrupted teaching and pupils' learning. Subject leaders have yet to develop strategies to promote consistently good achievement in their areas of responsibility. There is insufficient guidance for new teachers to improve teaching and learning. Parents are satisfied with the education provided for their children. They particularly like the friendly atmosphere but a significant number regretted that the school does not seem to aspire to excellence. Whilst the school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses shows that it knows how to move forward, its evaluation of its present overall effectiveness is over generous and indicates a degree of self-satisfaction that is not actually warranted by its performance. The key issues for improvement from the last inspection have been tackled successfully. The school has correctly identified areas for development and good plans have been laid to raise standards. Early indications are that standards are improving and that this year's national test results will be better than last. The school 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	School Overall
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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?	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	4
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

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	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

17 January 2007

Dear Children

Girton Glebe Primary School, Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 0PN

We enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

We think that there are lots of good things about the school. You try hard with your work and you are good at reading, writing and science. There is a good range of lunch-time and after school clubs. You told us that you think that your headteacher is a good leader, that he is friendly and has a good sense of humour. We agree and we loved his assemblies. You are kind and thoughtful and you are sensitive to the needs of others. Most of you behave well but a small number of younger children spoil things and behave badly. You said that the teachers and other staff are really helpful and that if you have a problem you can talk to them easily. You have sensible attitudes to learning and are keen to succeed. The interactive white boards are great and support your learning well. Your singing is good and the school performances sound wonderful. I know that you are really looking forward to performing 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin'. These performances help to develop your self-confidence.

We know that your headteacher is determined to make more improvements and to help you to reach even higher standards in your work. You told us that, apart from more pencil sharpeners, there wasn't anything much you could think of to make the school better. Actually, there are four things that could improve standards further. We think that children in the Reception class could make better progress. Work in mathematics and science is sometimes a bit too easy, especially for the faster learners, who could easily manage work that stretches them more. We think that lessons could sometimes be more interesting and exciting. Finally, the teachers could take on more responsibility for helping the headteacher to raise standards.

We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Messer

Lead inspector