

Gunthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110730
Local Authority	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LA
Inspection number	288756
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Swann
Headteacher	Mr T J Revell
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002
School address	The Pentlands Hallfields Lane Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE4 7YP
Telephone number	01733 571193
Fax number	01733 576967

Age group	5–11
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Inspection number	288756

© Crown copyright 2007

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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school has more pupils than is typical for a primary. It serves the Gunthorpe and Paston area of Peterborough, which includes families from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. There is a below average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, a small number of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average but high in some year groups. There is an above average number who have a statement of special educational need entitling them to extra support. The school has awards for its work in promoting healthy living and for developing basic skills.

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 good school which is working hard to improve further. It provides its pupils with a good education. The school is improving because the headteacher provides very strong leadership that is correctly focused on raising standards and, following the school's motto, by creating a pride in pupils' performance. Parents are very happy with the school and one wrote 'We feel the school is well run....it has a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere'.

Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in reading and writing throughout the school. Their progress in mathematics is less consistent and is not always sufficient to enable them to attain the standards they are capable of reaching. Children make good progress in the Reception Year because the provision is effective. In particular, they are helped to develop good learning habits. The good improvements made under the current leadership are yet to have time to impact fully on the older pupils, and standards at the end of Year 6 remain broadly average. However, the better progress now evident throughout the school, together with the steadily rising standards at the end of Year 2, indicate that standards are improving and pupils are continuing to achieve well. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, because of the support they receive. Pupils at an early stage of learning English also make good progress. However, more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could because in some lessons the work is not sufficiently challenging for them, or correctly matched to the skills and knowledge they already possess.

The success of the school is largely due to the hard work of the headteacher, the senior leadership team and the staff. The good quality teaching and learning has clearly improved since the last inspection and the school is fully focused on improving it further. There is a good, imaginative curriculum provided for pupils. The nature of the way the school makes effective links between subjects is best shown by the outstanding quality of the live action and animated films pupils have made to enter, very successfully, in a local festival. These involved a wide range of knowledge and skills from different subjects brought together to create a single high quality piece of work.

This sort of enrichment through the curriculum is part of why pupils say they enjoy school. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, and their good personal and social development has a high priority through the school. Pupils have good opportunities to make a contribution to their own and the wider community. The level of their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) supports satisfactory preparation for the future. The school cares for the pupils well. There have been recent improvements to the amount and quality of information about how well pupils are doing. This is very new and teachers are yet to make full and consistent use of this information in planning work or in setting appropriate targets for pupils. The leadership demonstrated by senior staff and by the governing body is good, and the school provides good value for money. The improvements made since the last inspection have been significant and show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress made by pupils in mathematics.
- Help the more able pupils to attain higher standards by ensuring the work provided for them is sufficiently challenging.

- Improve the consistency of teachers' use of tracking information and other data in planning and setting targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children in the Reception class often have below average levels of attainment especially in their personal, social and emotional development and in their writing skills. They often have quite a good knowledge of numbers. The progress they make in all areas throughout the Reception Year is better than that typically found nationally. By the end of the year most have reached the expected levels in their mathematical, physical and creative development. However, they are still slightly below the expected levels in reading, writing and communication skills.

The current pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress and have reached above average standards in reading, and broadly average standards in writing and mathematics. The standards at the end of Year 2 have risen consistently over the last three years and are continuing to do so. The current Year 6 pupils have standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average. This represents good progress given their attainment on entry and the high number of pupils who have joined or left the school during Years 3 to 6. However the progress in mathematics is not as strong as that in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They have a positive attitude towards school and say their lessons are interesting. Pupils are well behaved. They feel safe in school and know who to ask for help if they are worried. Several pupils highlighted the importance and popularity of the sports clubs and the contribution of the sports coaches to their physical well being, thus demonstrating a good understanding of healthy living. The attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good. They support each other well by acting as playground friends and looking after younger pupils. Pupils are keen to become members of the school council and contribute to the local and wider community by raising funds for various charities. The 'Justice Group' ensures that disagreements are settled and pupils take care of school property. The school works hard to encourage good attendance but a small number of families do not support these efforts.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

These are good because teachers have created strong relationships with their pupils and this encourages full participation in lessons. Teachers usually make pupils aware of the objectives of the lesson and what they will have learnt by the end. Pupils listen to teachers well and therefore are clear about what is expected although in a small number of lessons there are times when teachers talk for too long and not enough time is found for pupils' activity. Lessons are well-resourced and the use of ICT has improved since the last inspection. Teaching assistants provide staff with good support, and their work is particularly successful with the pupils who find learning difficult. In the best lessons these objectives are referred to during as well as at the end of the session, thus keeping pupils' minds focused on the learning expected. In a

significant minority of lessons, however, there is insufficient challenge in the activities provided to support the progress of the most able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and provision in all areas of learning is planned effectively. In Years 1 to 6, the school has reviewed the way it delivers the curriculum and it is now more creative. This meets pupils' needs well and is helping teachers to provide the full National Curriculum in an innovative way. The curriculum is rightly focused on developing pupils' basic skills in English, mathematics and science, with particular emphasis on the development of reading and writing. In addition, carefully chosen topics are successfully increasing pupils' enjoyment of their work. Enrichment is good and teachers are also increasingly linking subjects so that elements of one subject are used to hone skills in another. Provision for pupils with particular gifts and talents is good and covers many different subjects that range from sport and art to a wide range of foreign languages and design and technology. The school also provides a wide range of activities outside the school day and these contribute well to pupils' enjoyment and understanding of healthy living.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This school looks after its pupils very well. This high standard of care underpins good personal development and creates a calm and positive environment for learning. An example of the thought and consideration taken is the provision of a worry box in each classroom. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' health and safety, child protection and the management of racist incidents are in place and effective. Close links with a wide range of health and other professionals and external agencies help the school to provide pupils with strong support as and when the need arises. Systems for monitoring pupils' personal and academic development are effective and are reflected in pupils' good achievement. However, teachers are yet to use this information consistently in planning and setting targets. Support given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and meets their needs well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and standards are rising. This is because the leadership team, including governors, have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They provide clear direction for the development of the school and are successfully focusing on raising standards. This is being achieved through the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning, the introduction of assessment and tracking systems and the setting of high expectations. Assessment information is analysed rigorously and is being used well to identify areas for development. The leadership team acknowledge that time is now needed to consolidate these initiatives. Subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities, although only recently appointed they are making a significant contribution to raising standards. Governors are good advocates for the work of the school and provide effective support and challenge.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
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	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

13 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Gunthorpe Primary School, Peterborough, PE4 7YP

I want to thank you all for the way you made us so welcome when we visited your school. You helped us to find out about the things you enjoy doing and it was a pleasure talking to so many of you. It is obvious that you have pride in your school and you clearly enjoy being there. We agree with you and think that the school is a good school. We particularly enjoyed seeing some of the music work you have done in the mini-bugs concert! We also found talking to the school council very helpful and you are doing a very good job by helping to make improvements to the school.

We thought you were very well behaved in lessons and in the playground. This helps your teachers when they are teaching you new things. You joined in lessons well, answering questions and you are good at working together to solve problems and to discuss the work. This is really shown well in the films many of you have been involved in making, and we are sure that some of you are likely to go on to good careers in the media!

Mr Revell and the staff work very hard to make the school successful. Those of you who find learning difficult, or who are new to the school and to the country make good progress, especially when you are helped by the teaching assistants. The changes made to the school since it was last inspected have helped many of you to make more progress and learn new things. Staff give you lots of opportunities to learn new things, to join clubs and go on residential trips and visits. You are getting much better at reading and writing. We think the teachers need to help you make equally good progress in mathematics. We also think that some of you find the work provided quite easy and teachers need to provide you with more difficult and challenging activities. The teachers have a lot more ways of finding out how well you are doing now, and we think they need to use this more when planning work and to set you targets to help you learn even more.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Enjoy your time at Gunthorpe and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector