



Gawsworth Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111025
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288829
Inspection date 18 October 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Hoban HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Longbutts Lane
School category	Community		Gawsworth, Macclesfield
Age range of pupils	4-11		Cheshire SK11 9QU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 426547
Number on roll (school)	206	Fax number	01625 614436
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Rob Daniels
		Headteacher	Mrs Pam Childs
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Gawsworth Primary School, which is situated south west of Macclesfield in the Cheshire countryside, caters for children drawn mainly from owner occupier households. The take up of free school meals is well below the national average. Although the school has a lower percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) than the national average, it has a higher percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gawsworth Primary is a good and improving school. It is well aware of its strengths, knows what next to do, and is putting in hand the further work needed to provide the best education and care for its pupils. In the school, one is struck by the pupils' maturity, care and commitment to learning. Pupils are happy at school and interact well with staff and with each other. Behaviour is exemplary. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care provided by the school. Academic standards are high, with the most recent National Curriculum tests in 2006 at Years 2 and 6 showing an improvement over the already high 2005 results. However, learners' progress is variable. It is good in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2, but satisfactory during Key Stage 1.

The support for pupils' personal development is a strong facet of the school. This is illustrated in its support for pupils with LDD. Significant positive steps have been taken to create an inclusive and helpful environment for these pupils. Beyond that, the range of external activities pupils undertake - from work with local and international charities, to chess and music clubs - supplement their education and pupils are well prepared for society and for secondary school. All the necessary safeguarding practices are in place.

The quality of teaching is good overall, but varies from the outstanding to pockets of practice that are satisfactory. The outstanding teaching enthuses pupils with a willingness to learn, and challenges them to develop the skills of independent thinking and enquiry. At present, that really good practice is not shared in a systematic manner, so that teaching is not consistently good. The school has put in place measures to improve less effective practice, which are having beneficial effects on pupils' learning. Good progress is also being made to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into classroom practice, and a review of the teaching of literacy has led to impressive progress amongst some groups of pupils. The involvement of children in evaluating their own work is developing, although more work is needed before children are fully able to establish how far their learning is advancing and what they need to do to improve further.

The headteacher is fully aware of the gains made so far, and also what must next be achieved in improved teaching, pupils' progress and in care. Her contribution is greatly valued by parents, and she has had the support and commitment of the governing body and local authority in delivering changes that have already impacted beneficially on standards and care. These include classroom support for teachers and the tracking of pupils with LDD in order to channel support to them more effectively. The work of the literacy coordinator and the recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher have built the capacity to improve standards and care even further from their already high levels. In this work, they are ably supported by the governing body.

What the school should do to improve further

- Support teaching further to improve progress at Key Stage 1.

- Share best practice in teaching more systematically.
- Improve pupils' self-evaluation of their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There is a broad range of attainment on entry to the Reception Year. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and attainment is well above both the national and the local authority's expectations by the time pupils enter

Year 1.

Although standards in 2005 were above national averages at the end of Key Stage 1, progress is only satisfactory. Standards in 2005 were well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Results at Key Stage 2 in 2005 declined slightly on those in 2004, but this does not detract from the generally good progress pupils have made at this key stage over the last three years. The picture of rising standards at both key stages is strengthened by the good unvalidated scores for both key stages for 2006.

Pupils in all year groups commented that they felt challenged and stretched, a view echoed by parents and exemplified by the clear differentiation of learning tasks for individual pupils. Pupils with LDD and higher achievers perform well. Pupils with LDD, for instance, make better progress than other groups of pupils during Key Stage 2, and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels at both key stages indicates that the more able are performing to their capabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Gawsworth School's strengths include the relative maturity of the pupils, and their preparedness to help others less fortunate. Through working with local and international charities, pupils gain a perspective on the world beyond the school which prepares them well for their move to secondary school and into a wider society. For instance, the work with a twinned school in Sri Lanka affected by the Tsunami involves them in helping and learning about another, much less affluent, community. Closer to home, parents comment on how the spirit of positive inclusion in the school is echoed in the pupils' care for LDD peers through simple, thoughtful, everyday gestures of support. Within the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. There were no unauthorised absences last year, and their feelings of safety and security were reflected in parents' comments.

Pupils' maturity is evident in their attention and attitudes in lessons, and their appreciation of other faiths and cultures, expressed to them principally through religious education. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is secure, and the school's encouragement of healthy lifestyles and its 'Healthy School' status offer pupils the opportunity to make healthy choices for themselves. Progress in encouraging healthy lifestyles may be found in the popular cross country club and the recent success in winning the Macclesfield Primary Athletic Association event. Pupils' sense of

responsibility and positive attitudes to wider society and visitors signals that they are well prepared for involvement in the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good: it is strongest in Reception and at upper Key Stage 2, and support to develop teaching practice further in Key Stage 1 is showing a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Teachers' experience and subject knowledge at Key Stage 2 encourages learners' confidence and enthusiasm in their work, and provides them with a platform for independent thought and enquiry.

The marking of pupils' work is evaluative, and pupils in both key stages welcome these observations on their work and commented that it helped them to improve. Pupils know their targets, and work is plainly differentiated, ensuring that it is well calibrated to the particular learning requirements of groups of pupils. The involvement of pupils in assessing their work is developing, although their self-evaluation skills need to be improved to enable them to assess their progress more effectively. Pupils' concentration is noteworthy, although less engaged pupils need to be involved earlier in a lesson, so they can contribute more effectively. Overall, there is a spirit of teamwork abroad in the classrooms in Gawsworth, between pupils, support staff and teachers that contributes to the quality of the learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is making better use of ICT to support learners. A new ICT suite is enabling individual learning modules to be developed to meet the varying needs of pupils. Although interactive whiteboards are contributing to lessons and learning, pupils need to be more involved in their usage to encourage greater engagement in learning.

Work on literacy was reviewed last academic year, and the impact of the review through the introduction of a different approach to reading has led to accelerated progress by groups of pupils. This provides a good basis for sharing best curriculum practice systematically across the school in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning further. The curriculum is enhanced by visits and walks, and pupils build on that fieldwork in the classroom through associated work on ICT, literacy and geography. Other provision - such as paid music tuition in which a quarter of pupils participate, and a chess club - complement the curriculum well. Targeted support in particular subjects also ensures that pupils with LDD are able to gain fully from the curriculum, and the outcomes are enjoyment of learning, a sense of positive inclusiveness, and the good progress that those learners make.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and safety of pupils is paramount to the headteacher and her staff. However, the traffic management situation at the school gates is a cause of anxiety to staff, governors, pupils and parents. Risk assessments are conducted for events such as outside visits. The tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and informs their targets. Pupils know and strive to meet their targets.

Pupils are well informed about their options for secondary school, and the school has strong links with receiving schools through activities such as ice skating, science master classes and lectures at the various secondary schools. Importantly, transition activity for pupils with LDD begins six months earlier than for other pupils, to ensure that LDD pupils settle well into their new school. Parents play active and helpful roles in school, for instance, through support in class, or participating in charity events.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's self-evaluation is coherent and accurate. Governors support the school well and also provide challenge for the staff, holding them to account for what is achieved. The effectiveness of the school's refreshed leadership team and the governors, including the very supportive chair of governors, mean that the school has good capacity to improve. While performance management reviews of staff are held annually, this may result in targets, performance and career development not being considered frequently enough to support staff development.

The headteacher articulates a vision for the school that gives primacy to improved learning and care for all. She is unwavering in her view that while standards are high, there is yet more the school can do to improve the education and life chances of Gawsworth's pupils. How that vision is implemented is illustrated by her attention to detail - the care of individual pupils - through to strategic involvement with the Bollington and Macclesfield Education Improvement Partnership. There she is able to draw on, for example, the expertise of the special education needs sub-group to support pupils in school. Her vision is shared by the literary coordinator and the recently appointed deputy headteacher who, with the headteacher, form the senior leadership team. It is a vision that is endorsed by the governors and parents.

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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?	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	1
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	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2

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.

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

As you may know, I visited your school in October to see how well Mrs Childs and her staff were looking after your education and care. Gawsworth is a lovely school, and you achieve well. I was impressed by your school and by you. I found you welcoming, mature, keen to learn and willing to help others. The results you get in your end-of-key-stage tests are very good - that is a tribute to your hard work, and that of Mrs Childs and your teachers.

Even so, I think you can do better! I believe that you can all make better progress in your work and obtain even better results in the future. Much of what needs to happen next can be found in my report, but these are some of the things you can do:

- continue to work hard at your lessons, and all try to join in your lessons
- become involved in assessing your own work (your teachers will explain this a bit more to you) and
- keep up your very high standards of attainment and behaviour.

You are all a credit to your families and to Gawsworth. I really enjoyed my visit, and I hope that your school goes from strength to strength.