

Gayton Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112756
Local Authority	City of Derby
Inspection number	289398
Inspection dates	7–8 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Whitaker
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Ann Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Gayton Avenue Littleover Derby DE23 1GA
Telephone number	01332760372
Fax number	01332764035

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an above average size junior school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need are both similar to the picture found in schools nationally. A higher than average number of pupils are from different ethnic minority backgrounds but only a very small percentage of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. The school gained Healthy School status and Sportsmark awards in 2006, Artsmark Silver and Basic Skills accreditation in 2005 and Activemark and ECO schools recognition in 2004.

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 a satisfactory school with features that are good and it provides satisfactory value for money. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses but this is not always reflected in the accuracy of the grades in the school self-evaluation. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and, based on this track record, there is a sound capacity for further improvement. There is a determination and cohesion with both staff and governors to make the school an even better place.

By the time that pupils leave school standards are currently above average, although in writing, pupils do not yet achieve well enough and standards across the school are closer to average. Past test and assessment data has indicated that over time progress between Years 3 and 6 has at times been inadequate given pupils above average starting points. However, the current picture is more positive. The improvements made in teaching, assessment and planning are now contributing to pupils making satisfactory progress. There is, however, still more to be done. Teaching is satisfactory but is not consistent in asking enough of the more able pupils. Conversely, some teaching is good and ensures that pupils achieve well. Here, lessons are pacy, challenging and keep pupils interested and motivated.

Pupils' personal development and the care and guidance for pupils are good and are strengths of the school. Most pupils behave well and their enjoyment of school is reflected in the good attendance rates. Pupils are well versed in how to keep fit, safe and healthy and they are more than ready to make a telling contribution to the school and wider community. Key skills to help pupils prepare for their future lives are developed satisfactorily, although the scope for improving how pupils function and flourish as confident independent learners is more limited. Pastoral support, including pupils' welfare, is given a high priority with room for developing pupils' academic guidance. Pupils feel safe and valued and know that they have a voice that is listened to and respected. The curriculum, although satisfactory, has some good aspects, notably a wide array of enrichment activities and multicultural provision. Parents are supportive and speak well of the school.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher manages the school effectively and has overseen successfully the recent re-structuring of the management team. The focus of staff and governors is now, rightly, on ensuring the development of more good teaching and that the strengths in provision are evaluated by their impact on how well pupils achieve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching consistently provides enough challenge for higher attaining pupils and enables all pupils to make good progress.
- Improve writing standards by providing more planned opportunities for pupils to write across different subjects.
- Provide more opportunities and set higher levels of expectation for pupils to develop as independent learners

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

When pupils start school, standards are above and occasionally well above average. When pupils leave school, national test and assessment data shows a pattern of at least above average attainment. However, the same data shows that the progress made by pupils has, over time, been below that found in many schools. In 2006 the school was in the bottom 5% of all schools nationally in relation to the progress of its pupils. There has been improvement since then. Evidence from pupils' books, teaching and the school's tracking data paints a more positive picture in showing that pupils, overall, are now making satisfactory progress but at times there is still not enough challenge for higher attaining pupils. Standards are currently above average in reading, mathematics and science with writing standards, across the school, closer to average. The good procedures that have been introduced for assessing pupils' progress have given a sharper edge to target setting, but the impact on achievement is not yet fully realised because this work is still in progress. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties make similar progress to their classmates. There is no difference in the progress made by pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy school. Most pupils behave well and treat each other with care and respect. Occasionally, some inappropriate behaviour occurs, particularly when activities lack excitement and challenge. Many pupils relish opportunities to develop responsibility by becoming 'Sports Leaders' or 'Playground Peacemakers.' Thanks to their input, playtimes are good social occasions, with impressive levels of racial harmony. Strong links with organisations such as Rolls Royce, enable pupils to make a good contribution to the wider community. The influential school council takes its responsibilities very seriously and has been closely involved in, for example, recent refurbishment aspects of the school premises. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as many pupils are reflective, know right from wrong and have a good awareness of and respect for cultural diversity. Numerous good quality sports opportunities have a high level of participation because pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and enjoy being active. Pupils show a good appreciation of how to stay safe and manage risks in their lives well. By the time pupils leave, most have acquired sound skills for the next stage of their education but the qualities of being good independent learners are not developed enough.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with evidence of some good practice. Relationships in many classes are good and teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. Teachers' planning shows improvement but in some classes there remains a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Conversely, where teaching is good, work asks a lot of pupils, moves along at a cracking pace and expects pupils to make a telling contribution to their own learning. As a result, pupils rise to the challenges and make good progress. Teaching is equally successful when tasks readily capture the interest of pupils and high expectations of good behaviour are

achieved. These key features of good learning are missing where teaching is only satisfactory. The school has put much successful work into improving its assessment procedures. Assessment information is now beginning to be used more rigorously to tackle underachievement with the aim of ensuring that the expectation is for good rather than satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good features. Appropriate emphasis is given to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills. However, opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects, or within other curriculum initiatives, are not systematically capitalised on. Pupils who have learning difficulties benefit from a wide range of catch up programmes and the school is currently sharpening up the targets in some pupils' individual plans. Adaptations to the curriculum, such as the introduction of regular extended writing and problem solving sessions, help target key weaknesses, although the impact on standards and achievement is yet to be fully realised. The curriculum has a number of good aspects. A strong emphasis on sport, including a very extensive range of clubs, helps pupils to stay active. Close links with industry introduce pupils to the world of work and enable them to work with adults from a range of jobs. The use of activity weeks, theme days and a good range of visits and visitors, including visitors from different faiths, add to the quality of pupils' learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils are very good. The school has taken a positive and proactive approach toward any incidents of bullying or any forms of racism. Pupils are confident that such issues are handled effectively and they are keen to point out that there is always someone to turn to if they have any concerns. The school works closely with parents, carers and a host of outside agencies to support pupils' welfare and well-being. Support for pupils at risk is particularly good. Links with other schools are strong. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are good. The use of assessment information is satisfactory but improving, and is beginning to impact more on achievement. Teachers are using data with greater accuracy to aid progress. However, although learners are becoming more involved in reviewing the quality of their work, they are not always clear as to what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher manages the day-to-day running of the school in an effective manner. She, and other members of the recently restructured management team, are determined to improve the school. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in some aspects but over generous in others. Improvements have been made, for example, in assessment procedures, teachers' planning, enrichment opportunities and pupils' contribution to the community. However, there remains work to be done in ensuring that all such initiatives have the best possible impact on how well pupils achieve. Although aspects of provision are good, the school recognises teaching and learning need to improve further if

good progress is to be the norm. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school, and, led by an effective chair of governors, are taking a more proactive stance in gaining a better understanding and awareness of the work and performance of the school.

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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>	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 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	2
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	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?	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?	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?	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

11 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Gayton Community Junior School, Gayton Avenue, Littleover, Derby, DE23 1GA

You may remember that we visited your school not too long ago and this letter is to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would just like to take the opportunity to say thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us to have an enjoyable couple of days. We had the chance to talk to many of you. It was good to hear about the many things you enjoy about school and that there is always someone to talk to or sort things out if you have any worries or concerns. We were particularly impressed by the way in which the school council operates and gives you a chance to have your ideas listened to and in a number of instances acted upon.

During our visit we saw that many staff are working hard to make learning fun and enjoyable to try and help you all achieve as well as you can. Staff help you learn to know what is needed to keep fit, safe and healthy. There are many opportunities for you to take part in visits and clubs and to learn from different visitors to the school, particularly visitors from different faiths and cultures. We found that most of you behave well and are polite and courteous to visitors.

Mrs Wilson, the staff and governors want to make the school even better and we have asked them to make a few improvements to help this happen. We think that lessons could at times be better, so that all pupils make good progress. We have also asked your teachers to help you reach higher standards in your writing and to help you become confident independent learners. Having met you all we are sure you will want to play your part in the success of the school by continuing to behave well, working hard and contributing to lessons and your own learning.

It was a pleasure to meet you and we wish you every success for the future.

Martin Newell

Kathleen Campbell

John Brennan

Additional Inspectors