

# Gateford Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131722
<b>Local Authority</b>	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	293827
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	291
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Neil Hopkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lorraine Shore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Amherst Rise Gateford Park Worksop S81 7RG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01909 478681
<b>Fax number</b>	01909 473487

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Gateford Park Primary School is larger in size than most other primary schools. On entry to the Reception, most children have levels of skills similar to those expected for children of their age. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all pupils have English as their first language. There are no pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average as is the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is average. Since the school opened in February 2000 there have been several changes in headship, with three permanent appointments and two temporary appointments.

## 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 effectiveness as satisfactory and inspectors agree. It gives satisfactory value for money. The school has not had a smooth passage over recent years as it has been affected by frequent changes of headteacher and an unusually high turnover of teachers. Since her appointment, the present headteacher has brought stability to the school and ensured that the school provides a purposeful learning environment in which pupils are well cared for. Leadership and management have been strengthened and are now satisfactory, and staffing has been restructured. The school's self-evaluation is more systematic and the senior leadership team has an accurate view of the school's performance and where improvement is needed. However, similar self-review procedures have yet to be embedded in the routine work of middle managers. The school's capacity for continued improvement is satisfactory.

Pupils feel safe and secure because of the good quality support and guidance the school provides. Pupils enjoy their education and their behaviour is good. They understand the value of healthy lifestyles and make good contributions to the school community. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good, which helps to prepare them for the next stage of their education. A number of parents expressed concern about communication between the school and home. The school is aware of these concerns, many of which arise from the previous discontinuity in school leadership, and is actively engaged in strengthening relationships with parents and carers and alleviating their concerns.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Because teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress and standards have risen to be above national expectations by the time children enter Key Stage 1. However, this rise in standards is too recent to have had an impact on pupils presently in Key Stages 1 and 2, where staffing difficulties have had an adverse effect on pupils' progress. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and mathematics are average, while those in writing are below. However, in Key Stage 2, inspection evidence shows that in mathematics and science, pupils are working at higher standards than indicated by the average results obtained in the 2007 national tests. Standards in English remain broadly average. This is mainly because of continuing weaknesses in pupils' writing skills, and in particular those of higher ability pupils. Nevertheless, although there is a continuing need to raise standards in English, in many lessons pupils are now making good progress. This is providing a better foundation for their future economic well-being. Key reasons for this improvement are work that is being done to improve the quality of teaching and a number of successful new appointments. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory, with many examples of good teaching. Class teachers are making better use of assessment information to set targets and monitor pupils' progress, but this information is not always used to plan learning activities that are closely matched to their learning needs.

Whilst the guidance given to pupils on what they need to do to achieve their next steps in learning is developing well in some areas, this practice is not consistently good across the school. The drive to raise standards is being supported by revisions to the curriculum to place an increased emphasis on the development of basic skills.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage gets children off to a good start. Children feel safe and happy because the staff are caring and provide a warm and friendly environment. The varied and well-planned activities ensure that children make good progress in all areas of learning. Children enter Reception from a variety of settings and have skills, knowledge and understanding broadly in line with national expectations. The teacher and teaching assistant provide an effective blend of direct teaching and also allow children to explore, work independently, and be creative. As a result, standards have risen and are now above national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children enjoy the varied opportunities to extend their learning through the very good indoor facilities. The school is seeking to further develop the outdoor curriculum to extend children's learning experiences.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly those of higher ability pupils, so that progress in English is at least comparable to that in other subjects.
- Ensure the consistent use of assessment information in lesson planning so that learning activities are well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance on how to improve.
- Develop the skills of middle managers so that they become responsible for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of provision in their areas.

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

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. While pupils make good progress in mathematics and science, progress in English, although satisfactory, is slower. This is because of weaknesses in writing and, in particular, in the writing of higher ability pupils. This picture is the same for boys and girls. Inconsistency in the quality of lesson planning contributes to the uneven progress seen between year groups and subjects. The school has identified this weakness and is implementing a number of strategies to boost learning and get pupils back on track. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and more even because they receive effective support. The school did not meet the 2007 targets set for English and mathematics. This was mainly because the targets were unrealistically high. Appropriately challenging but more achievable targets have been set for 2008.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils enjoy school and try their best. They make good progress in their social development, work well together and respect one another's ideas. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good. They understand the difference between right and wrong, and show

courteous and thoughtful behaviour that contributes well to the positive atmosphere in lessons. Many pupils willingly take responsibility in the school community. This is seen in, for example, their enthusiasm for working as monitors, members of the school council and taking part in the Junior Sports Leaders Award scheme. They take full advantage of these opportunities and gain skills that are the basis of responsible citizenship and provide a sound foundation of skills for their future well-being. Pupils realise the importance of taking exercise and know how to make wise choices in eating. They participate fully in the many opportunities to take part in exercise and sport. They feel safe and are confident that any problems are dealt with quickly. Attendance is average, mainly because of family holidays taken during term time. The school tries hard to discourage this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with much that is good. As a result of successful action being taken to improve teaching, most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the few with minority ethnic backgrounds, are making at least satisfactory progress in lessons. Lessons are generally well planned and teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Because pupils behave well and respond willingly to the requests of their teachers, lessons are conducted in a calm and orderly atmosphere. In many lessons, pupils are actively involved and encouraged to share ideas. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons, are eager to learn and work hard. The school is strengthening procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and this information is being used well to track pupils' progress. However, there is inconsistency in the use teachers make of this information in planning learning activities that are well matched to pupils' attainment levels. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, comments do not always provide pupils with enough specific guidance on how to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with several good and improving features. As part of the school's drive to raise standards, the curriculum is being revised to place a stronger emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and computing skills. The school is in the process of developing a curriculum plan to ensure that these skills are reinforced more effectively in all subjects. As a result the curriculum is better suited to the needs and aspirations of pupils of all abilities and is having a positive impact on their progress. While provision for pupils with specific gifts and talents is in the early stages of development, the curriculum is enriched by the provision of Spanish and the chance to learn a musical instrument in Key Stage 2. A link with a school in Madrid gives added life to the learning of Spanish. The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons. Occasional events such as literacy week and visits from authors and poets add depth to learning, while other extra-curricular activities such as chess, cookery and tag rugby enhance learning and help promote pupils' good personal development.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The school meets legal requirements for safeguarding pupils. Secure procedures to ensure health and safety are in place. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out and procedures for child protection are thorough. Pupils know who to go to if they are worried or upset. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by class teachers and teaching assistants. Arrangements to prepare pupils for secondary school are well developed, and help to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education. Support and guidance for pupils' academic development are much improved. Assessment information is now being used more effectively to set individual pupils' targets and identify early any who are falling behind. This is contributing to the better progress pupils are making, although the guidance given by teachers to let pupils know what they have to do to achieve their next steps in learning is not consistently effective. The school works closely with a range of external agencies to support pupils' personal and academic development, and is strengthening links with parents and carers.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The effective leadership of the headteacher is providing the school with a clear direction after a period of considerable instability in both school leadership and staffing. A substantial budget deficit has been eliminated, the senior leadership team has been strengthened and a very committed team of teachers and support staff has been assembled. Together they ensure that this is an inclusive school and a cohesive, friendly community. The senior leadership team has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where improvement is needed. Performance management is now in place and all staff benefit from carefully planned professional development. The recent improvements seen in teaching and learning, for example, stem from successful development training. This is having a positive effect on standards. However, the contribution that middle managers make to school improvement is restricted because they are not yet fully involved in checking and evaluating the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility. Governance is increasingly effective because governors are now better informed and more able to fulfil their roles as critical friends.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

<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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

04 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Gateford Park Primary School, Worksop, S81 7RG

You may remember that my colleagues and I visited your school recently to talk to you about what you do and what you learn. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you some of the things we particularly like.

- You enjoy school and behave well. This is really helpful to your teachers because they can concentrate on helping you to learn.
- You get on well with each other and with all of the adults in the school. The older pupils look after others well and are very willing to take on responsible jobs.
- Teachers try hard to make your lessons interesting and you told us how much you enjoy your lessons, and particularly those in which you are active.
- You enjoy the additional activities and clubs and some of these are helping you to have a good understanding of how to be healthy.
- You know that all of the staff are there to help you and we were pleased to hear that you know what to do if you have a problem.

Mrs Shore, all of the staff and the governors are keen to make the school even better. They have all agreed to focus on some things to help this. They will be trying hard to improve your writing skills and planning lesson activities that stretch all of you. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked them to give you clear guidance on how to improve when they do this. We have also asked that more of the staff are involved in checking how well the school is doing.

Having met you, we know that you will want to help your teachers as much as you can and make Gateford Park an even better school. We left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well.

Yours sincerely Dr Kenneth Thomas Lead inspector