

# Gallions Mount Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100126
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	307297
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Ewing

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	391
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	22
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Tina Kirby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Douglas Johnston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Purrett Road Plumstead London SE18 1JR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8854 2691
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8854 6925

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Gallions Mount is a larger than average size primary school that serves an ethnically and socially diverse area. The largest groups represented are pupils of Black British African and White British heritage. Several other ethnicities are represented in smaller numbers. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is high compared with most schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is double the national average. The number of pupils who have learning, speech and language difficulties, and behavioural and emotional difficulties is similar to most schools. The proportion of pupils starting and leaving the school at different times is high. The school has received a number of national awards in recent years including the Healthy Schools' Award, Investors in People, Artsmark Gold and the Activemark Gold. The headteacher was appointed in 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Gallions Mount is a good school. The vast majority of parents and pupils agree. As one pupil said, 'It's a lovely school, always interesting, never boring.' The new headteacher is creating a dynamic school with an enthusiastic and committed team of staff. Consequently, standards are rising and pupils' achievement is consistently good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning that enhance the impact of the good teaching. Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are well below those expected of three-year-olds, particularly in communication, language and literacy, emotional development and mathematical development. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) because the teaching is good, with particularly strong teaching in Reception. The teaching and curriculum are good throughout the school and this ensures that the pace of learning for all pupils is consistently good. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points even though standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 and with the current Year 6 on track to achieve higher standards compared with last year's test results.

The school's welcoming culture engenders confidence across the community and parents think positively about much of its work. One wrote, 'The school offers a very good all-round education'. Pupils enjoy coming to school, attendance is satisfactory and improving and their behaviour is good. Personal development and well-being are good because pupils of all abilities are well supported by teachers and an effective team of teaching assistants. In particular, the support to pupils with emotional difficulties is outstanding. Pupils have an impressive understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and they have a confident understanding of how to work and play safely. The school council is actively engaged in improving the school and are good role models to their peers. Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are improving well as standards rise and, with their eagerness to learn and their positive attitudes, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Care and support are good. Safeguarding regulations are fully in place and effective. Guidance is satisfactory. Although pupils achieve well, there are inconsistencies in the guidance they receive and, as a result, pupils are not confident in taking the next step in their learning. In particular, teachers' marking is thorough, but does not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work. Consequently, opportunities are missed for pupils to reflect on, or assess, their own learning. The curriculum is good and extra curricular activities such as residential visits, special focus weeks and a broad range of clubs enhance the provision further. Information and communication technology (ICT), an area identified for improvement at the last inspection, is now satisfactory and standards are rising because the teaching is now much more effective.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, effectively supported by a competent and skilled leadership team, has established a clear direction and sustainable vision for the school. The focus on shared leadership is enabling key middle leaders to play an increasingly effective role in raising standards and in improving the rate of pupils' progress through careful monitoring and systematic evaluations of pupils' progress and performance. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and well informed about how the school is improving. However, they have yet to systematically monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's work on outcomes for pupils. As a result, this limits opportunities for governors to call

the school's leadership to account. Given the school's robust and effective drive to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress, the school has a good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is good overall. When children join the Nursery, their skills are well below those typical for their age. Aspects of their communication, language and literacy skills are particularly weak. Teaching is satisfactory in the Nursery and children make steady progress overall. On occasions, the pace of learning dips because children become restless when activities are not clearly structured. In the Reception classes, teaching is consistently good and dynamic, and consequently, children make accelerated gains in their learning. Activities are focused and engaging so children learn rapidly. By the end of the Reception, their skills have developed well, achieving levels just below those expected for their age. Children have good relationships with staff and with each other. Teaching assistants play a particularly valuable role in supporting those pupils with significant additional needs. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well, although individual education plans for these children are not yet fully in place. Children behave well throughout the EYFS because they demonstrate good attitudes and teachers manage behaviour well. The curriculum is effective and the learning environment is well planned to provide a good range of both outdoor and indoor activities across all areas of learning. As a result of the warm, safe and caring ethos, children settle quickly into school and discover that learning is fun. The impetus for improvement has accelerated following the recent appointment of an enthusiastic EYFS Leader. She has swiftly focused on improving provision to good effect, although strategies to evaluate the impact of recent initiatives are not yet fully in place.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that teachers' marking provides more effective guidance to pupils that will help them to improve their work and understand the next stages of their learning.
- Develop the role of governors so that they systematically monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's actions on outcomes for pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and pupils reach the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, whatever their starting points and backgrounds, because the school has rightly focused on improving standards and ensuring that teaching meets the wide range of pupils' needs. Standards vary in different year groups since the number of pupils joining and leaving, other than at expected times, is significantly high. In 2008, standards by the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve below average standards in the same subjects. Nevertheless, given their starting points this represents good progress. In 2008, by the end of Year 6, standards were above last year's national averages in English, mathematics and science. This represents very good progress because these same pupils achieved below average standards when they were in Year 2. Current Year 6 pupils are making good progress and are on track to achieve even higher standards compared with previous years.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their satisfactory and improving attendance. They develop confidence and respect for each others' achievements and learn to look out for each other. Relationships between adults and children are consistently good. Their good behaviour and perseverance allow pupils to learn effectively. They are proud of their achievements. A good range of sports clubs, healthy eating initiatives and a curriculum with an emphasis on their personal development have resulted in pupils adopting healthy and fit lifestyles. They appreciate and respect the wide diversity of cultures around them. When asked what he liked most about the school, one boy said 'the way we fight racism'. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school, for example, through the school council, and older pupils acting as peer mentors to help younger ones through the adjustment in status from Year 2 to Year 3. Pupils cooperate well from a very early age and show increasing independence and ability to make balanced judgements. They help run fundraising activities, but so far do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about handling money. Academic standards are rising and this, together with strong personal development, prepares pupils well for their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good and, occasionally, outstanding teaching make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Most lessons are effectively planned, well paced and clearly focused on pupils' learning needs. Relationships are good, giving pupils the confidence to ask for help and to articulate their ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge and learning is challenging within most lessons. They use questioning well and work hard to ensure that learning is sequential and demanding. Pupils respond well by working hard and being eager to learn. Their positive attitudes heighten the impact of the teaching. Focused assessments provide an overview of the progress of individual pupils and this information is used well to provide additional support for those who need it. Teaching assistants often make a strong contribution to pupils' progress, particularly those who find learning difficult. On a few occasions, teaching assistants are not effectively deployed and waste valuable time 'minding' pupils rather than providing effective intervention support.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The strengths of the curriculum lie in the way it creates links between subjects to engage pupils in real-life situations. For example, following a science lesson on healthy eating, Year 3 pupils enthusiastically made sandwiches for the class then wrote instructions. Another strength is the emphasis on emotional well-being as a foundation for learning. All classes take part in circle time, when children can voice their problems, emotions can be identified and conflict can be dealt with. Since the previous inspection, provision for ICT has increased and this has led to improved standards. The school uses the local area well to introduce pupils to a variety of lifestyles and the environment. Links with other providers, such as the local college, supplement what the school can provide on its cramped site. Pupils are enjoying more investigations in mathematics and science lessons, but generally they do not have enough opportunities to

develop greater independence in their learning when undertaking problem solving or research tasks.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Despite being a large school, staff know pupils well and emotional well-being has a high priority. Pupils talk warmly of 'The Place2Be' and the work of the learning mentors. The recent appointment of a full-time inclusion manager is leading to even better provision for pupils with additional needs. There are good links with a wide range of external agencies, including speech therapy specifically for children in the EYFS. Pupils with English as an additional language have good support, so that by Year 6 they achieve well. The school has worked rigorously to improve attendance and it is paying off. Safeguarding procedures are followed effectively. As one parent wrote, 'The school has a clear structure to handle problems.' While pastoral care is good, academic guidance is only satisfactory. Marking is inconsistent, with a number of methods being followed across the school. Marking praises pupils' achievement, and shows if they have met their objective, but does not indicate how they can advance their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher's vision of shared leadership has engendered a strong commitment and drive to raise standards and improve outcomes for pupils. This fosters a common sense of purpose, a clear focus on developing teachers' skills and is improving learning opportunities for all pupils. The leadership team's monitoring of the school's work is effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses and school development planning is comprehensive and focused. Core subject leaders closely track the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and plans are now in place for all subject leaders to receive training in the monitoring of their individual subjects. Effective steps have been taken to address the inadequate provision and standards in ICT identified at the last inspection. Governors play a key role in improving the accommodation and in managing the budget. They recognise that they do not yet have robust and systematic methods to monitor the work of the school to help them act as a critical friend to the school's leadership.



## Annex A

## 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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

03 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gallions Mount Primary School, London, SE18 1JR

You will remember that, recently, I and two other inspectors, spent two days observing you and the staff at work. We greatly appreciated the warm welcome extended to us by everyone and valued your helpful comments about your school and your education. This letter briefly explains our findings.

Gallions Mount is a good school that is well respected by parents and pupils alike. In particular, things that impressed us include:

- your headteacher and the staff, who are working hard to improve teaching so that your lessons are more stimulating and challenging
- you really enjoy school and your attendance is improving steadily
- through your school council you play an important part in shaping the future of your school
- in lessons you cooperate well and your skills in English, mathematics and science are improving steadily
- you have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle
- those of you who find learning difficult at times are supported very well
- you have told us that you are safe at school and feel confident in approaching staff if you have a problem.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to improve your school even more by:

- making sure that marking always gives you helpful tips on making the next step in your learning and assists you in becoming more independent as learners
- helping governors to be more active in checking on how the school is working.

We ask you to continue to work hard and carry on playing your part in helping the staff and governors to make Gallions Mount a school of which you can continue to be justly proud.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Ewing

Lead Inspector