

# Gretton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115558
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311977
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Cole

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	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dee Chadwick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cheryl Cuthbertson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Gretton Cheltenham GL54 5EY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 602679
<b>Fax number</b>	01242 602679

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the differences in standards between English, mathematics and science;

the level of challenge in the work given to more able pupils;

the guidance pupils receive on their work.

Evidence was gathered from the school's assessment information, planning and monitoring documents, observation of lessons in each class, discussions with staff and pupils, and from parents' written comments. There was no detailed investigation of other aspects of the school's work but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school serves a rural area of favourable social and economic circumstances. Almost all pupils are White British. Pupils start at the school with skills above the levels expected for their age. A few pupils have learning difficulties, a lower proportion than typically found.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Pupils achieve exceptionally well both in their academic work and in their personal development. The acquisition of excellent academic skills alongside fine personal qualities of confidence, enterprise and responsibility is giving pupils a first-rate preparation for their future education and the later demands of adult life. The close-knit community of this school is characterised by purposeful, fun activities and extremely friendly relationships. Pupils both work and play with great commitment and enjoyment. One parent praised the school's 'very healthy balance between work and play.'

From their early time in the Reception class right through to Year 6, pupils grow greatly in their confidence, pride in achievement and enjoyment of learning. They feel very happy and safe at school, a tribute to the excellent pastoral care the school provides. There is meticulous attention to formal procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their personal welfare. Staff manage pupils with much warmth and encouragement. Behaviour is excellent and attendance well above average. Pupils contribute very responsibly to the life of the school and to the wider community.

In what one parent called this 'great atmosphere', pupils keenly take full advantage of the excellent teaching and curriculum provided. The result is very good progress at each stage of their education. By the time they leave the school, pupils reach exceptionally high standards. Nearly all of them exceed the levels expected for their age, sometimes by a very wide margin, especially in mathematics. Very few schools can match the high national test results of this school.

The outstanding strength of the teaching is the way it gives pupils tough challenges at the same time as making learning fun. Imaginative planning and use of resources combine with careful grooming of pupils' self-esteem to encourage pupils to be enthusiastic, confident and determined learners. Lessons are carefully planned to meet the full range of pupils' needs, taking account of precise assessments of their levels of ability and progress. The school works hard to see that every pupil achieves their full potential. Some special arrangements are made, sometimes involving other schools and organisations, to provide extra challenges for the most able pupils. Occasionally, however, a very few pupils of the highest ability are not fully challenged by their lessons. Carefully devised additional support enables the few pupils with learning difficulties to make the best possible progress.

Parents and pupils value school staff very highly. A parent's view that 'staff work incredibly hard to provide a varied and exciting curriculum' is entirely justified. Thoroughly planned and highly effective programmes of formal work in subjects are complemented by a wide range of educational visits, visitors, special events and cultural activities. Some of these exploit the school's very good links with the local community and with other schools and bodies. A growing international dimension within the curriculum includes French in Years 2 to 6 and a supportive link with a school in The Gambia. There is a very good range of optional after-school activities, including good opportunities for sport, although some limits are imposed by the lack of a playing field, a cause of regret for many pupils and parents.

Outstanding support and guidance are given to pupils on personal and social matters. This includes excellent advice on healthy lifestyles, backed up by an exceptional range of opportunities and encouragements to put principles into practice. For instance, the staff join with pupils in the daily 'Wake and Shake' exercises, just one of many exercise opportunities for pupils. Younger pupils and those who attend the optional gardening club grow salad and

vegetables for pupils to eat. The 'Cuisine Club' plans and cooks healthy dishes. Recently, parents also became involved, in an experiment to reduce traffic and increase exercise during a 'Park and Stride' week. Parents parked their cars at agreed points on the outskirts of the village and walked children the rest of the way to school. Many are continuing this practice.

The academic guidance given to pupils is generally good. Pupils' work is marked helpfully with pointers for improvement. However, some new arrangements for setting personal targets for pupils are not fully effective in helping them understand exactly how they can improve their work. Targets are not as specific or as relevant to each individual as is necessary to be fully effective and some pupils are a little vague when asked about them.

The very many excellent qualities of the school reflect the totally determined and visionary leadership of the headteacher. She inspires a dedicated and very hard-working staff team in a shared drive to provide the very best quality of education. There is a tireless search for improvement. New, carefully considered initiatives are constantly and successfully undertaken. These are based on the school's very accurate evaluation of its work through rigorous checks, particularly on pupils' progress and on the teaching. A very good example of effective leadership and management began with a recognition that Year 6 pupils' English test results in 2007, though good, were disappointing when compared with those in mathematics or science. Prompt and effective action has quickly led to a marked improvement in English over the past year so that standards in all three subjects are now at the same high level. Governors and parents, who have very high regard for the school, play their part in fully supporting and encouraging the school's ambitions and endeavours. The school's record of success and improvement shows it has an excellent capacity for further improvement, wherever scope for it can be found.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

All of the school's very positive qualities are as evident in the well-managed Reception class as elsewhere. A welcoming, encouraging and caring atmosphere leads to constant smiles that show how confident and happy the children are. The excellent teaching is firmly focused on pupils' carefully identified individual needs. Flexible arrangements in sharing staff and accommodation with Year 1 allow pupils to move between the two settings where doing so is beneficial for their progress. The very good curriculum of wide-ranging activities is carefully designed to promote learning and enjoyment. All of this leads to excellent progress. By the end of Reception, standards are significantly above average in all areas of learning.

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

- Ensure pupils' personal targets are more specific to their individual and immediate needs for improvement.
- Extend the challenges offered to pupils of the highest ability.

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## 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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

12 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gretton Primary School, Cheltenham GL54 5EY

I really enjoyed the day I spent in your school recently. I would like to thank all of you for your friendly welcome.

It was very good to see that you really enjoy school. You told me that you have a lot of fun and that you get on very well with each other and with the adults. I could see this very clearly for myself. You have a very sensible attitude to school and to your work. Your behaviour is excellent and you try really hard in your lessons. All of this is helping you make extremely good progress.

Your progress is also due to the excellent lessons your teachers give you. They provide you with very good work that helps you learn a lot. All the adults give you plenty of help and encouragement. They look after you extremely well. They also organise plenty of interesting visits and events which you enjoy. I was particularly impressed by the school's efforts to help you stay healthy by taking lots of exercise and eating sensibly.

You go to an outstanding school. The adults in charge of the school are doing an extremely good job and providing you with a very good education. However, I have suggested two ways that the school could be even better:

- I am asking the teachers to give each of you targets that help you understand more clearly how you can improve your work from day to day.
- I think a few of you could do harder work in some of your lessons. I have asked the teachers to provide this.

I am sure you will play your part by continuing to do your very best to follow your teachers' guidance and tackle the challenges they set for you.

I wish you all the best for the future.

M H Cole Inspector