

Goffs Oak Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 117243 |
| Local Authority | HERTFORDSHIRE LA |
| Inspection number | 312546 |
| Inspection dates | 10–11 September 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Sheelagh Barnes |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 210 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Cllr Jeremy Pearce |
| Headteacher | Mrs Linda Stubbs |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 July 2003 |
| School address | Millcrest Road Goffs Oak Waltham Cross Hertfordshire EN7 5NS |
| Telephone number | 01707 888488 |
| Fax number | 01707 872053 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors over two days.

Description of the school

Goffs Oak Primary School is of average size. Fewer pupils than nationally are eligible for free school meals. An average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds but none are at early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There is high pupil mobility, however, which affects some year groups more than others. Attainment on entry to the Nursery class covers the full range but overall is below the expected levels for children's ages in early communication and numeracy. The school has undergone many staff changes in recent times. The school has been awarded with the Quality Skills Mark, an Achievement Award and Healthy School Status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which provides good value for money. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, effectively supported by senior staff and the governors, has a very accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This view is based upon a rigorous system of monitoring and assessment. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of pupils' overall achievement and the school's effectiveness. The progress made by pupils from all groups throughout the school is good due to the good quality of the provision. Pupils' standards in reading and writing are above those expected for their ages by the end of Year 6 and their achievement is good. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This is as a direct result of the good quality of teaching and learning the school provides. Teachers use assessment information effectively when planning lessons to meet the needs of individuals and groups. This is particularly the case in reading and writing. As yet, however, although adequate, it is less rigorously used in mathematics, where pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory. Targets set for potentially higher attaining pupils are not always challenging enough. In addition, the school has identified an area of relative weakness in pupils' mental mathematics. Because of this, the subject is planned to be a focus for development in the forthcoming year.

Inspectors judge pupils' personal development to be good, which differs from the school judgement of excellent. This is because many of the good new initiatives have yet to impact fully into the daily working life of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well due to good management by all staff and make good progress towards developing into caring and considerate members of society. They enjoy lessons and are keen to come to school. Attendance is good and has improved significantly in recent years. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate its work. This is demonstrated by the high proportion of parents who come in to meet and talk to their children's teacher at the start of the term.

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enhanced by a good range of extra activities and clubs. Provision for pupils' care and welfare is good and good attention is paid to health and safety issues. Pupils learn to make wise choices about diet and exercise. They are happy and know who to turn to if they have any worries or concerns.

Many subject coordinators are new, either to their current responsibilities or to the school. The school recognises this. As a result, it is working to develop their roles further in evaluating work within their subject areas and in planning for school improvement. Resources are used well and finances managed efficiently. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve further. This is due to the determination of the headteacher, supported well by all staff and governors, to aim for high standards.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage) where the provision is good. Teachers and support staff plan together effectively to support children and give them a good and happy start to their school lives.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine and develop skills of subject leaders in leading their subjects and in the analysis of data and setting of objectives for whole school improvement.
- Improve pupils' skills in mental mathematics and ensure that potentially higher attaining pupils make all the progress they could.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Children settle well into the Nursery and Reception classes and make good gains in their learning, due to the good quality of the provision. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of their time in Key Stage 1, standards are slightly above average and pupils' achievement is good. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is currently good overall. Pupils make good gains in their learning, and achieve good standards, particularly in reading and writing, which have been recent areas for development throughout the school. Pupils from all groups achieve well and attain the challenging targets the school sets them. In mathematics, progress and achievement are satisfactory and pupils attain the standards expected for their ages. Mathematics has now been identified as an area for development in the forthcoming terms, with particular emphasis on developing pupils' skills in mental mathematics and the accelerating the progress of potentially higher attaining pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have very positive attitudes. They enjoy coming to school and so attendance is good and improving. They always give their best and take pride in their achievements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because it is embedded in the life of the school.

Pupils grow in self-awareness, think in moral terms and reflect upon their feelings and actions. Behaviour is good and pupils are invariably courteous and polite, for example when guiding new pupils and parents around the school.

They are very respectful and supportive of one another, sharing and celebrating each other's achievements. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of healthy lifestyles, which has helped to win the school a national award. They develop good awareness of personal safety and as a result, work and play safely and look after one another very well. They raise funds for charities and take the opportunity to offer their ideas to improve lessons, the school and its grounds. The school now plans to give pupils a greater role in making decisions. Pupils are building good foundations for later life and learning the skills they need for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers establish classroom routines effectively and pupils know what is expected of them. Relationships are good and so pupils are comfortable to answer questions, for example, or to ask for further explanation. Teachers make good use of a range of teaching aids, such as interactive white boards to make lessons interesting and exciting. As

a result, pupils enjoy their work. Support staff are well informed and make a good contribution to the progress pupils make. Targets for the next steps in learning are set, based on accurate assessment. These are shared with pupils, who are also involved in the evaluation of their own work. This method is used particularly well in literacy and is a contributory factor in pupils' good achievement in reading and writing. On occasion in mathematics, however, work is not matched as closely as possible to the potential capabilities of higher attaining pupils. As a result, progress in mathematics is only satisfactory overall.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. A broad and balanced range of activities provides a good range of relevant and interesting learning opportunities for all pupils that stimulate interest and imagination. Strong emphasis is given to developing basic skills. Tasks encourage healthy lifestyles. Pupils talk enthusiastically about activities they have done in themed days and their progress clearly benefits. Visitors and visits, including learning French and a residential trip, extend and enliven the curriculum. The school's plans to develop this further, with greater links between subjects, are appropriate. Provision for personal, social and health education is particularly good and has a significant impact on pupils' personal development. Regular homework reinforces learning in school. A good range of extra-curricular provision includes sports and gardening. Extensive use is made of the interesting outdoor areas to enhance both learning and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Goffs Oak has a strong ethos in these areas. The school meets all current requirements for safeguarding its pupils. Pastoral support is very good. All pupils' needs are identified quickly and the school strives to meet them. This is at the heart of the positive climate for learning which contributes to good achievement and personal development. Pupils know what to do if they feel bullied and are confident any issues will be resolved. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are generally good and ensure tasks are well matched to the needs of each pupil. Clear success criteria and individual targets are having a real impact generally, although the school has correctly identified that there is a need for greater rigour in setting targets for higher attaining pupils in mathematics. Work is regularly and effectively marked so that pupils know what to do to improve and older pupils are learning to evaluate their own successes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. This has resulted in a good level of improvement, particularly in pupils' achievement, attendance and progress in recent years. The headteacher has a good knowledge of standards throughout the school as a result of her accurate and rigorous monitoring. This leads to accurate school self-evaluation. The headteacher has high expectations of where she wants the school to be and a clear and measurable plan of how to achieve this. Governors are supportive and take their responsibilities seriously. However many co-ordinators are new to their subject leadership roles, either generally or within the school. Whilst they are clearly motivated and well informed, they have not yet fully developed

their leadership roles, for example in monitoring standards within their subjects and in contributing to school improvement planning.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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|---|-----|
| 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 3 |
| 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 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

12 September 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Goff's Oak Primary School, Millcrest Road EN7 5NS.

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you.

What we liked most about your school:

- Your teachers teach you well.
- You make good progress, especially in reading and writing.
- Your head teacher leads the school well and knows what to do to make things even better.
- You are looked after well so that you feel safe.
- The school has good systems to track how well each one of you is doing so that it can make sure that all of you do well.
- You have lots of exciting lessons, clubs and sports.
- You really enjoy school and come regularly.
- When you start in the Nursery or Reception classes you are helped to settle into school well so that you quickly learn to enjoy coming to school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Help you to improve your mathematics, especially working out number problems in your head.
- Arrange for teachers in charge of subjects to be able to check just how well all of you are doing in that subject and find ways to help you even more.

We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barnes and Mr Greatrex