

Goldfield Infants' and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117274
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	312551
Inspection date	26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jonathan Edwards
Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
School address	Christchurch Road Tring Hertfordshire HP23 4EE
Telephone number	01442823551
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- improvements to the provision and children's progress in the Foundation Stage
- provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and how well pupils are using this to support their learning.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Pupils at this smaller than average primary school come predominantly from a White British background. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The nature of these includes moderate learning difficulties and speech language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Children's overall attainment on entry to the school is usually above that expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Goldfield Infants' and Nursery is an outstanding school. Pupils make exceptionally good progress because of a first rate start in Nursery and Reception, outstanding teaching and an exciting curriculum. By the end of Year 2, standards are exceptionally high. Excellent care, guidance and support, and a very positive school atmosphere lead to outstanding personal development and well-being for all pupils.

Outstanding leadership and management are the keys to the school's success and to the improvements since the last inspection. The headteacher provides excellent leadership through her professional skills and infectious enthusiasm. She clearly has the confidence and respect of pupils, parents, staff and governors. Other senior leaders provide very good support. Leaders and a dedicated team of staff are all committed to providing high quality teaching and a creative curriculum for all pupils. Teamwork is strong and there is a passionate commitment to making the school even better. The leadership of English, mathematics and science is highly effective and this contributes to the high standards attained. Self-evaluation is thorough and highly effective action is taken to bring about any necessary improvements. Strong leadership and positive action has led to considerable improvements to the Foundation Stage and to ICT since the last inspection. Governors are actively involved in the work of the school and have a very good understanding of its performance. This enables them to provide constructive challenge as well as very good support.

Parents hold very positive views about the school and are extremely pleased with both the care and education provided. An excellent partnership has been established with parents, who are very appreciative of the curriculum guidance and the workshops provided in literacy and numeracy. They support their children's learning very well and this has a positive impact on standards. In the parents' questionnaire, the school's leadership, the teaching, pupils' progress and the exciting activities provided all received high levels of praise. Typical comments were, 'Very pleased with Goldfield', 'Brilliant school', 'Teachers are so enthusiastic especially the head', 'My children are making very good progress', and 'Leadership is inspirational'.

Since the last inspection, standards by the end of Year 2 have improved from above average to exceptionally high. This is because of improved teaching and curriculum development. Year 2 assessments in 2007 were well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. These high standards are being maintained. Pupils are articulate and confident speakers because of the many opportunities provided for discussion. The focused group teaching of reading and the wide range of interesting reading material available contribute to pupils' success in reading. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for different purposes. Creative role-play, interesting topics and regular opportunities for extended writing enhance pupils' writing skills. Interesting resources and an increased emphasis on investigative work lead to high standards in mathematics and science.

Teaching is exciting and stimulating. The pupils commented, 'Teachers are really good and we learn lots of new things.' A parent remarked that there are, 'interesting and dynamic lessons'. Teachers have established high expectations of behaviour and learning and pupils respond exceptionally well to these. The purpose of the lessons is always clear so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers' instructions, demonstrations and explanations promote learning extremely well. For example, pupils' artwork is of high quality because they are taught specific techniques by skilful teacher demonstration. The enthusiasm of the teachers and their strong

subject knowledge inspire and motivate the pupils. Assessment information is used effectively to match activities to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well, their interest is maintained and they make outstanding gains in their learning. Teaching assistants are directed very well. They make a valuable contribution to learning, particularly for those pupils who need additional support with language and literacy.

An outstanding and stimulating curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment and to their exceptional progress. It makes an excellent contribution to their personal development. While there is strong emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics, there are good links between subjects, which add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. All classrooms have interesting and imaginative role-play areas. These successfully promote drama, speaking and listening and provide inspiration for writing. The much improved ICT provision is used well to support teaching and learning in a range of areas. For example, pupils in Year 1 created plasticine characters of mermaids or sharks for fantasy settings. They photographed these with a digital camera against a marine background. With support, they created short films with animation, text and sound effects. Provision for art and design is a strong feature and pupils' work is of high quality. African, Aborigine and Western art are impressively displayed. A very good range of clubs, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Popular clubs include cricket, French, football, gymnastics, tennis and yoga.

There are highly effective systems to help ensure pupils are safe and protected. One parent wrote, 'All staff have been outstanding in their care, support and dedication'. There are good systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment. Pupils have specific learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics so they know what they are working on to improve. The school has clear plans to use ICT more to monitor individual progress. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through themes like 'One World', pupils gain considerable knowledge and understanding of customs and cultures of different countries. Pupils are courteous, friendly and respectful of others. They thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance and enthusiasm for learning. Behaviour is outstanding because of the high expectations of all staff and the strong relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and show an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating, exercising regularly and keeping safe. They thrive on responsibilities given and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. At Goldfield, pupils are extremely well prepared for the future. By the time they leave, they possess high levels of skill in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In addition to this, their personal and social skills are exceptionally well developed.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

There have been considerable improvements to the Foundation Stage provision. High quality teaching and an exciting curriculum enable children to make excellent progress in all areas of learning. A wide range of stimulating activities is planned both inside and outside the classrooms around interesting themes such as animals, the seaside, China, India and people who help us. Teachers and teaching assistants provide an effective blend of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. Careful attention to the teaching of letter sounds and basic writing skills give children a great start in literacy. Children are inspired and motivated because the learning environment and the activities provided are highly stimulating. Children's behaviour and relationships with others are outstanding. Current assessments show that by the end of Reception, standards are well above those expected.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement the plans to use ICT more fully for assessing and monitoring pupils' individual attainment and progress.

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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 ¹ 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	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	1

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?	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

27 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Goldfield Infants' and Nursery School, Tring, HP23 4EE.

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you about some of the things I found out. Yours is an outstanding school and one you can all be very proud of.

These are strengths of the school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to an excellent start.
- You all thoroughly enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- Teaching is excellent, which is why you are making so much progress.
- You reach high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.
- The school is a very caring, friendly and pleasant place to be.
- Your behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- You show an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe.
- An excellent range of learning activities are provided for you, including clubs, visitors and visits.
- Your artwork on display is extremely good.
- You use ICT very well to support your learning in different areas.
- The school is extremely well led by your headteacher and she receives very good support from other senior staff.
- Staff take excellent care of you and give you outstanding support.
- Your parents give the school excellent support and are very pleased with the care and education provided.

There is just one area that the school could work on.

- Your teachers could use ICT more to check your progress and there are clear plans to do this.

I wish you all the very best for the future and keep up the good work. Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector