

Garrick Green Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121001
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313832
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rob Jackson
Headteacher	Mrs Rebecca Dewing
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2003
School address	Garrick Green Old Catton Norwich NR6 7AL
Telephone number	01603409078
Fax number	01603409078

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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 issues:

- Is there a difference in the performance of boys and girls?
- Why are results in mathematics behind those in reading and writing?
- What is the quality of the pupils' learning?

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, nationally published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, observations of lessons, conversations with pupils and discussions with the headteacher, teachers and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection 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 in this report.

Description of the school

Garrick Green is much smaller than most schools. The school changed in September 2007, from being a first school that included Year 3 pupils, to an infant school with pupils up to Year 2. A new headteacher was appointed from the beginning of this term. The school is located in a suburb of Norwich and most of the pupils live in the immediate area that mainly consists of owner occupied housing. About a third of pupils travel from the nearby Fiddlewood estate which consists of a mix of owner occupied and social housing. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Garrick Green is a good school with pupils' personal development an outstanding feature of its work. The new headteacher has been very effective in the short time of her leadership. She is supported well by a team of experienced, enthusiastic and caring staff. Together, they provide the sort of very close teamwork that leads many parents to make positive comments about the skills of the staff. Parents are unanimous in their support.

Teaching is good throughout the school and some outstanding teaching was seen. Teachers plan lessons well and set work that encourages thinking, particularly in writing. The support staff make a strong contribution to the pupils' good achievement, particularly for those who find learning difficult. Teachers question pupils well. In an outstanding literacy lesson, the teacher's excellent probing questions made the children think very carefully and led to them giving extended and well-constructed answers. Teachers are becoming adept at using the new interactive whiteboards and this is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Achievement is good for both girls and boys. Pupils make excellent progress in their reading and writing because the curriculum for literacy is rich, taught well, and parents are positively involved in their children's learning. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are nearly always above average, though they were average for the pupils at the end of the 2007 school year. In fact, standards are significantly above average in some years in reading and writing, although they are not so in mathematics where standards, and pupils' achievement lags behind. However, the school recognises this, and there are good plans in place to strengthen achievement in mathematics.

The school provides a good curriculum. Learning is made interesting and exciting because staff link many subjects together to enliven lessons. In addition, there are special weeks in which pupils concentrate on a particular subject or theme such as design and technology where pupils design and make masks. The school is very attractive with wide range of beautifully presented work that celebrates the pupils' achievements very well. A suitable range of additional activities enhances lessons and pupils talk excitedly about the visits that they make that support their learning. 'Lessons are never boring', said one pupil. Staff constantly seek to make curricular improvements to strengthen the quality of provision, and although the impact of the improvements to the mathematics curriculum is yet to be seen in national assessments, there are indications that these are beginning to enhance progress.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. They achieve outstandingly well in these areas because the staff take great care to support and care for pupils. As one pupil said 'Teachers solve our problems if we get stuck and lessons are not too easy or too hard.' Relationships throughout the school are excellent as is pupils' behaviour. Pupils' love of school and learning is reflected in their excellent levels of attendance. Pupils develop a good awareness of their own safety and understand the important elements of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils thrive in the excellent range of opportunities given to them to take responsibility. The 'red bibbers' wear the bibs with pride and take great pleasure in explaining how they help others during playtime. The discussion group helps children to learn elements of citizenship. They take their responsibility seriously and are anxious to explain how they decided to construct the new play tyres. Pupils are prepared well for their move to junior education.

There have been significant improvements in the procedures for checking pupils' progress since the previous inspection. These procedures are now good. Pupils' achievements are carefully tracked and good quality profiles are kept so that their progress can be recorded. These arrangements are particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and in reading and writing throughout the school. In mathematics, although pupils' progress is tracked, it is not as pin-point accurate as in other areas. Strong and careful attention is given to the safeguarding of pupils. All child protection and health and safety arrangements fully meet current regulations.

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The new head teacher provides outstanding leadership and management. She has successfully built on the many strengths found at the time of the previous inspection, and as one teacher said, 'She has tweaked parts that needed tweaking.' She has a clear vision for the future of the school and is committed and determined to ensure that improvement will be continuous. To this end, she has carried out a thorough and accurate evaluation of the school's position. Supported by staff, who carry out their responsibilities effectively, she has developed an accurate view of the school's provision and pupils' progress. This has resulted in a good quality improvement plan and the improvements seen show the school's good capacity for further improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and they provide good day-to-day support. However, they do not have effective management systems in place, for example, regular routines for committee or full governing body meetings, neither have they had any recent training. As a result, their capacity to provide challenging support for the school is more limited.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision and achievement is good. The effective teaching, by both the teacher and teaching assistant, is characterised by strong relationships and particularly good provision to develop the children's personal and social skills. As a result, children are confident and secure and they enjoy lessons. On entry to Reception, children's skills are below those typically found for children of their age. However, they make good progress and by the time that they enter Year 1, the large majority achieve the expected goals in all six areas of learning. The provision is enhanced by the teacher's good knowledge of how these young children learn, which enables a challenging match of activities to be prepared for them. These are planned with purpose and ensure that the children build firm foundations in their learning. Children have many opportunities to make choices for themselves from the rich range of resources available. Outdoor provision is hindered because at present there is no shade or cover and this limits learning in inclement weather.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils achieve as well in mathematics as they do in reading and writing.
- Strengthen the quality of governance through up-to-date training and more effective organisation of the governing body and its committee structure.

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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?	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

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

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	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 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	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

29 November 2007

Dear Children

Garrick Green Infant School, Norwich, NR6 7AL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school to see how well you are learning. I really enjoyed talking with you and you helped me to find out about your school.

You told me that you really enjoy school and you are very proud of it. I can understand why. All the staff look after you very well and help you to feel safe.

Yours is a good school. It is a fun place to be where you have lots of opportunities to learn because your school provides you with many exciting things to do. Your teachers make sure that lessons are interesting and good and they help you to learn to look after yourself and others. You really enjoy taking responsibility - such as by being 'red bibbers'. Your behaviour is excellent both in lessons and when you go out to play. Everyone really cares for others: well done!

Your headteacher is doing an excellent job. She is supported very well by all the other adults in the school.

You achieve well, particularly in reading and writing. You told me that you like doing art, and there are some excellent displays of art work around the school.

I have asked your teachers to help you to make as good progress in mathematics as you do in reading and writing and you can help by working hard to meet your targets.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector