

Goldenhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123977
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	314770
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Bailey
Headteacher	Neil Wade
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
School address	Broadfield Road Goldenhill Stoke-on-Trent ST6 4QE
Telephone number	01782 235790
Fax number	01782 235791

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This primary school is situated on the edge of Stoke-on-Trent, with most pupils coming from the local community. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Children's attainment is much lower than the expected levels on starting school in the Nursery.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

One parent captured the essence of this good school when commenting that 'It feels like a big family where all the children know each other and enjoy lessons.' Parents are rightly pleased with the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the school and with the good progress made by their children.

Pupils achieve well because the good teaching is successful at meeting differing needs. Leaders make outstanding use of test data to check how well pupils are doing and to set challenging but realistic targets. This means that they can be sure that improvements are being sustained from year to year. Consequently, children get a good start in the Nursery and Reception Year and then continue to make good progress in the rest of the school. Any pupil, including any with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who falls behind is given good support that helps them to catch up quickly.

Standards are broadly average overall by the end of Year 6 in most years. The above average test results achieved at the end of Year 6 in 2007 represented good progress from their starting points for this particular group of pupils. The school has begun to tackle pupils' comparatively weak speaking and listening skills through a local authority project. This is having a positive effect. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils listen well enough and there are not enough opportunities for practising and improving speaking and listening skills throughout the day. This slows the pace at which skills improve.

Pupils are well cared for and supported. Very good relationships with adults mean that pupils are willing to have a go at new things and are not scared to make mistakes. As one teacher told her class, 'There is nothing that you cannot do.' Pupils love coming to school because, as they say, 'Teachers make every day fun.' Pupils are very friendly and sociable. Their behaviour is good and they happily take responsibility. Pupils are prepared outstandingly well for the next stage of their education because they make good progress in developing basic skills, develop very positive attitudes towards learning and have many opportunities to learn about managing budgets. The very well organised tuck shop helps pupils to develop an excellent understanding of why they should adopt healthy lifestyles. This aspect of personal development is promoted especially well through the good curriculum that includes a very exciting range of clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils quickly develop good social skills, but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about or experience cultures other than their own, hindering cultural development.

Good leadership is instrumental to the success of the school. The commitment of the headteacher and other adults to ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential can be seen in all aspects of school life. Governors are developing their role and there is a continued drive to raise standards further. The many developments since the last inspection demonstrate the school's good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) achieve well because teaching is good and they are provided with interesting activities. Although standards are below nationally expected levels by the start of Year 1, children make good progress, with progress being especially good in personal and social development because of the high expectations of all

adults. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere in lessons and this ensures that, on starting school, children soon settle. The good curriculum includes a good balance between adult directed activities and children choosing their own and this helps children to become more independent. Children are encouraged to work outside, although the use of the outdoor areas is not consistently good from class to class, because some areas are more stimulating and better resourced than others.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers always expect pupils to listen well and plan more opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their speaking and listening skills.
- Give a greater focus to developing pupils' cultural awareness in lessons and other activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards show year on year improvement as pupils move through the school from the Nursery onwards. Standards, which are slightly below average at the end of Year 2, improve to broadly average levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 in most years. In 2007, a particularly capable group of Year 6 pupils successfully reached above average standards in national tests, making good progress from their starting points. In English, pupils make good progress in reading and writing, but speaking and listening skills improve more slowly. Although a new project that focuses on improving speaking and listening skills is starting to have a positive effect in some classes, the school has rightly identified this as an important area for development.

The good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a direct result of the effective support that they are given in lessons from teachers and skilled teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are justifiably proud of their school and the way it enables them to become responsible young citizens who are prepared very well for later life. Although rates of attendance are satisfactory because some parents take term-time holidays, pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They are keen to do their best and behave sensibly throughout the day, although occasionally some pupils do not listen well enough.

From starting school in the Nursery, pupils quickly learn to care for each other. They have a clear understanding of how they should behave around school and they follow rules carefully. For example, they diligently use the designated 'zone-parc' play areas on the playground for the right things, leading to playtimes being calm and harmonious. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and they do this well, making a good contribution to the community. School councillors play a prominent role in school life and they are pleased that their views are respected by adults. Pupils show good concern for the needs of others by raising funds for charities, although they have a limited awareness of cultures other than their own.

The promotion of healthy lifestyles has a high priority in the school and this is very effective. Pupils are very conscientious about adopting healthy lifestyles. They eat healthy snacks at playtime and take a very active part in sports and physical activity. Pupils develop a good

understanding of how to stay safe. For example, they are aware of the need to be cautious when using the Internet.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Positive, supportive relationships are a key feature in motivating and engaging pupils. Lessons are well organised and interactive whiteboards are used successfully to illustrate and enliven learning. Teachers make good use of knowledgeable teaching assistants who contribute well to supporting pupils' learning. Teachers plan work that is well matched to the individual needs of pupils, ensuring that there is good challenge for all, including the more able. The grouping of pupils by ability for some lessons in Years 3 to 6 supports this well. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively but they do not always expect pupils to listen well enough and, when this happens, the pace of learning slows.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a very wide range of experiences both in and out of lessons. Pupils' learning is enhanced through special days or weeks on subjects such as the environment. Business enterprise projects give pupils very good opportunities to learn about the world of work. The school places a very strong emphasis on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills. This has a good effect on pupils' progress, although they get too few opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills in different lessons. Pupils are pleased that they are able to learn to speak Spanish but beyond this, the curriculum does not do enough to celebrate the cultural diversity of society. This restricts pupils' cultural development. Enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding and contributes greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and their willingness to learn. Visits and visitors help to bring subjects alive. Pupils are encouraged to maintain their health and fitness through a very good range of sporting activities and clubs. Older pupils speak very enthusiastically about their recent residential visit when they learnt new skills such as archery and canoeing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Members of staff care for pupils well. Pupils feel safe and secure and they are confident that adults will deal with any worries quickly. The school works well with outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. For example, all teachers have received basic first aid training so that they can respond promptly to accidents. Good induction procedures ensure a smooth start to school life in the Nursery.

Teachers use assessment information well to plan work that builds on pupils' starting points. All pupils are set clear targets to help them understand how to improve and are given regular verbal feedback on their work. The quality of written marking varies in quality because it sometimes misses opportunities to give pointers for future development. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and effective arrangements are put in place to enable them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The drive, commitment and enthusiasm of the headteacher and other senior managers have helped the school to maintain a good pace to improvements since the last inspection. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is because there are good systems for evaluating school effectiveness that are sharply focused on checking whether all pupils are doing well enough. The school has gathered a wealth of assessment information to show pupils' progress from year to year. This is used extremely rigorously to set challenging targets for improvement and to identify any underachievement. Consequently, pupils who are not doing well enough are quickly given the necessary support to get back on track.

Subject leaders play a valuable part in supporting colleagues, although they get relatively few opportunities to find out at first hand about their subjects by visiting lessons. Governors are supportive and are kept well informed by the headteacher. The new chair of governors has rightly identified that governors now need to do more to find out things for themselves so that they can contribute more fully to school development planning.

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	3
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?	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
How well 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	1

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	1
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**

17 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Goldenhill Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 4QE

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly. We are very pleased that you come to such a good school.

Some of the things we found out about your school:

- You settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception Year and get on well together. Throughout the school, you behave well and are keen to take responsibility.
- The well organised school council helps you all to contribute successfully to school life.
- Good teaching helps you to learn new things quickly. At the moment, you do well in English, mathematics and science.
- You are taught all of the things you should be and there are many exciting things for you to do outside lessons.
- You are very keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. A particular 'well done' to the pupils who run the healthy tuck shop so well. Business activities like this help you to be very well prepared for when you go to your next school.
- Adults are kind and caring and they help you understand how to improve your work.
- Most of your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.
- Your headteacher and teachers lead the school well. They are working successfully to make it even better.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Help you to improve your speaking and listening skills by giving you more opportunities to use them in different lessons. You can help your teachers by trying to make sure you always listen carefully.
- Help you to learn more about cultures other than your own.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn, and we wish you all good fortune for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard.

Best wishes

Mr M Capper Lead inspector

17 October 2007

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