

Gamesley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112693
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325664
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Glynn Storer

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	164
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Williams
Headteacher	Mrs Deborah Meredith
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Grindleford Grove Gamesley Glossop Derbyshire SK13 6HW

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2009
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Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves Gamesley and outlying communities in the area of Glossop. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The high proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals reflects the problems experienced by many in the school community. Children's attainments on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are exceptionally low in relation to national expectations. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well above that in schools nationally. The school roll is rising steadily, although there continues to be a relatively high pupil turnover in any given year.

The school holds the Activemark, Eco Schools (bronze), National Healthy Schools Standard and the Local Authority's Anti-Bullying Commitment (intermediate) awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gamesley Community Primary is a good school. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and with the hard work and dedication of all staff, the school has improved enormously since its last inspection. Teaching, the curriculum and the quality of leadership and management are all considerably better than they were and, as a result, standards and the rate at which pupils progress are rising. Parents fully endorse this view. 'Gamesley is a great school', 'the headteacher is second to none' or 'brill school...my children have come on in leaps and bounds', are typical of the views of many.

From exceptionally low starting points, most pupils achieve well during their time in the school. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily in recent years and are currently close to the national average. Recent initiatives to improve levels of literacy are paying off and so standards in reading and writing are improving. Pupils make particularly good progress in science, although not in mathematics. Progress is slower in mathematics because pupils do not do enough practical, hands-on activities to develop and reinforce abstract mathematical concepts effectively. Standards are rising because teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. The teaching of literacy skills is consistently effective throughout the school and this strengthens pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. Effective pupil management and a systematic approach to raising pupils' aspirations and to building their confidence and self-esteem result in positive attitudes to learning and increasing independence that improve achievement. Teaching assistants also make a valuable contribution, especially to pupils at risk of underachieving, be it because of learning, personal or emotional difficulties. The support for these pupils is good and, at times, excellent and ensures that they, too, achieve well in relation to the difficulties that they face.

The introduction of a curriculum based on topics that link several subjects together has done much to increase pupils' interest and enjoyment. They say, 'its fun and if you are stuck, teachers always help'. These positive attitudes reflect in improved levels of engagement, a reduction in incidents of poor behaviour and in a steady rise in attendance rates. The curriculum also places considerable emphasis on personal, social, health and citizenship education and successfully prepares pupils for adult life. Pupils' personal development and well-being are generally good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils are well integrated with their local community but do not have the wider perspectives needed for life in an ethnically diverse society. Nevertheless, pupils act on a good understanding of right and wrong and of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles. Their sound and improving basic skills, positive attitudes to learning and growing aspirations and awareness of opportunities that are open to them, equip them well for future economic well-being. Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care and personal support and guidance for all pupils are outstanding, but especially for those who are in any way vulnerable. One carer summed it up perfectly, saying 'the staff radiate more light than the brightest beacon'. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet current government requirements. Teachers use their on-going assessments and marking of pupils' work satisfactorily to set targets and to provide advice that motivates pupils to succeed.

Leadership, management and governance are effective. The school's impressive track record of improvement since its last inspection, along with thorough arrangements for monitoring and school self-evaluation indicate a good capacity for further improvement in the future. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the school is exceptionally low, especially in communication, language and literacy. Most children make good progress in Reception. They make particularly good gains in their personal, social and emotional development and in early literacy skills that lay the foundations for effective learning in the future. Induction procedures are strong. Children settle quickly into school life and adults gain a good knowledge of each child's needs and respond to them. The caring environment and structured routines support children's confidence and personal development well. Children have good attitudes, readily engage in learning and relate well to others. Teaching is good because staff assess children regularly and plan activities that meet the full range of children's learning and development needs, though there is scope to extend further the facilities for outdoor learning and play. The EYFS leader has a clear understanding of strengths and improvements to be made. She provides good leadership for the EYFS team on the implementation of effective EYFS provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics by ensuring that staff use more practical activities and apparatus to support the development of mathematical concepts.
- Strengthen the promotion of community cohesion by ensuring that pupils learn more about life in an ethnically diverse society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Despite good gains in Reception, standards on transfer to Year 1 remain well below national expectations. Until recently, pupils made satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. However, the school's tracking shows clearly that, in speaking, listening, reading and writing, many pupils now exceed nationally expected rates of progress and that standards are rising. Progress accelerates again in Years 3 to 6 in response to consistently good and, at times, outstanding teaching. In the 2008 national tests for 11-year-olds, standards in mathematics and science were close to the national average. Though standards in English were somewhat lower, tracking indicates that initiatives to improve pupils' literacy skills are paying off. Pupils' progress is improving and increasing numbers of pupils are on course to reach the nationally expected standard in English by the time that they leave school. In relation to their starting points, the 2008 results represent good overall achievement for most pupils, including for those who find learning difficult and for the potentially higher attainers. Pupils' progress in science was particularly good, although progress in mathematics was less than that in other core subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils mature well and develop good attitudes towards learning. They show pride in their work and achievements. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Moral development is particularly strong, with pupils displaying a very clear sense of right and wrong about issues such as bullying, justice and fair play. Consequently, behaviour is good and pupils treat others with courtesy and respect. They develop a positive commitment to racial equality, saying for example that 'everyone should be treated the same'. However, pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of cultures in Britain is limited. Pupils' thoroughly enjoy school and are

keen to make the most of their opportunities. Attendance has improved considerably in recent years and, though still below that in schools nationally, is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe and say that there are always adults that they can turn to if they have any worries. They adopt healthy lifestyles and are both energetic and enthusiastic about physical education. Their highly responsible approach to their jobs as school councillors, buddies and school ambassadors, and their efforts for good causes, demonstrate pupils' good contribution to the community. In view of their good achievement, their awareness of the world of work and high aspirations, pupils are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have adopted an approach to teaching literacy skills that they apply consistently throughout the school. They group pupils by ability rather than age and teach in a way that promotes enjoyment, so that teaching closely matches the needs and interests of all pupils. These arrangements improve pupils' learning significantly and are a key factor in the school's drive to raise standards. Teachers also manage pupils' behaviour well. They work hard to raise pupils' aspirations and self-esteem and provide activities that promote confidence and the capacity to learn independently. Teachers deploy their teaching assistants effectively and, in doing so, ensure good support, especially for those pupils who find learning difficult or who are emotionally fragile. Most teaching provides activities that match the range of abilities in the class although, occasionally, such activities are not sufficiently different in the demands that they make on the pupils to ensure best possible progress. Similarly, when teachers' monitoring of activities is not sharp enough to spot and correct errors or misunderstandings, pupils' progress is limited.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The introduction of a topic based curriculum that links subjects creatively has increased pupils' interest and enjoyment. Provision for basic skills in reading and writing is good. A range of practical and investigative activities in science, promotes good progress. The school is spreading this approach to mathematics, but provision is not yet consistent in all classes and so its impact on pupils' progress is limited. Pupils develop satisfactory computer skills, although there is scope for pupils to make greater use of computers to aid learning in other subjects. Links with the community and agencies such as the police enhance the curriculum and benefit pupils' learning, for example on personal safety. Money matters are a feature of personal and social education and the school 'job centre' imaginatively raises aspirations by getting pupils to think about possible careers. This effective provision prepares pupils well for their future lives. The modern foreign languages provision includes a cultural dimension that, along with educational visits to places such as art galleries and museums, begins to broaden pupils' horizons. However, the curriculum lacks the global dimension necessary to give pupils an understanding of other cultures and of issues that affect Britain and the wider world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Pastoral care is outstanding. There is a high level of commitment from staff to providing the best possible personal care and guidance for all pupils. Vulnerable pupils receive excellent support through the school's positive play scheme, which is a model of good practice. Consistently high expectations and the effective use of rewards and praise frequently have improved behaviour and attitudes towards learning. The school has been relentless in its drive to raise attendance and this has led to significant improvements. Arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils are robust and fully meet current requirements. In this safe and supportive environment, pupils reach challenging targets. Links with welfare and support agencies are effective. However, although academic guidance is good overall, marking of work does not always inform pupils about the next steps they must take to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is going from strength to strength. It has a good capacity for further improvement because the headteacher is an outstanding leader. Her vision and the direction that she provides ensure that everybody is pulling in the same direction and have provided the impetus for significant improvement since the last inspection. Leadership and management at all levels are effective because the headteacher has built an able team of senior staff and is actively fostering the leadership potential of those who are recently qualified. Staff morale and team spirit are strong; the headteacher gives all leaders a real role in school improvement and ensures that they have the training, time and resources to 'deliver the goods.' As a result, monitoring is thorough and school self-evaluation accurate. Governors contribute effectively to school management. They have begun to do more first-hand checking in order to hold the school to account for what it achieves. There is, however, scope for the governing body to strengthen further this aspect of its work.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gamesley Community Primary School, Glossop, SK13 6HW

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago, along with my colleague, Mr Hussain. Thank you all for making us so welcome and for taking time to talk to us and to answer our questions. A special 'thank you' goes to the head boy and girl and to school ambassadors for taking the lead in this welcome. We were particularly impressed by your 'job centre' and we think that your plans to improve the school's outdoor areas are very exciting. I thought that you would like to hear what we found out about your school.

There are many good things happening in your school.

- Your school has become a lot better in recent years.
- Almost all of you make good progress.
- You do particularly well in science.
- Staff make absolutely sure that everybody is included and has the opportunity to succeed.
- You get on well with one another and most of you behave well.
- Your teachers and other adults care for you extremely well when you have problems, make sure that you are safe and help you grow into confident, independent learners.
- Mrs Meredith, the staff, governors and pupils work hard to make your school a better place.

To help things get even better, we have suggested that your teachers should give you more practical activities to improve your progress in mathematics. If they give you tips on how to improve your maths when they mark your work, you can help by following their advice carefully in your next pieces of work. We have also asked them to make sure that you learn more about the wider world and about people with different ways of life, so that you will be even more prepared for adult life.

I hope that you will all continue to work hard and enjoy your time at Gamesley Community Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector