

# Garstang Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119300
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339402
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gillian Salter-Smith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Bartlett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael McCusker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Oak Road Garstang Preston PR3 1HT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, a representative of the local authority, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement plan, self-evaluation documents, the analysis of pupils' progress, and policies and documents relating to safeguarding and community cohesion. Case studies of a number of the more vulnerable pupils were carried out and 120 questionnaires from parents or carers were analysed alongside staff questionnaires and pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the consistency of learning and progress throughout the school, especially in Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of teaching across the school, especially the role of teaching assistants and teaching in Key Stage 1
- whether outcomes for pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding
- planning, evaluation and provision for community cohesion
- resources and the use of the outdoor area to support development and progress for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The school is average in size with a well below average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Of the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language none are in the early stages of learning English. A below average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has gained the National Healthy School Status and has a local authority award for exemplary practice in delivering a programme for social and emotional learning and development.

After-school care, known as the Rafters Club and managed privately, is provided during term and has been inspected by Ofsted. A separate inspection report is available.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Garstang Community Primary is an outstanding school. Parents are highly appreciative of the well-established, positive ethos that ensures that their children really enjoy school and learning and that they feel happy, safe and secure. Pupils are proud of and committed to their school. They are a real credit to the school, their families and the community. Their behaviour is exemplary and attendance is high. They have caring natures and show sensitivity towards each other's feelings. They take their many responsibilities within the school very seriously and their charitable work, both within the local community and beyond, includes their valued contributions to the town's work on Fair Trade. They have an excellent approach to staying healthy, demonstrated in the high numbers that enjoy extra sporting activities and their very positive attitude towards healthy eating.

Pupils' excellent achievement and high attainment have been maintained since the last inspection and all pupils throughout the school make good progress. Pupils enjoy learning and show a very mature attitude towards their studies. Teachers and teaching assistants work especially well together to ensure that all pupils are well supported. Pupils are often excited about learning new things in new ways because the excellent curriculum provides exciting experiences such as dressing up as Romans or Egyptians and acting out historical situations. Good teaching is based on very positive relationships and high expectations of pupils helping pupils to learn at a good rate. In a few lessons the pace of learning is less rapid because pupils are not so actively involved in the learning or they are not challenged sufficiently. Pupils' very secure basic skills alongside their maturity and excellent social skills prepare them exceedingly well for the next stage of their education.

In the Reception class, children's outcomes are outstanding. They are well taught and very well cared for. However, parts of the learning environment are not very welcoming or attractive. The recently improved outdoor space is not used fully enough to support learning across all areas of the curriculum.

There is good evidence of the successful promotion of community cohesion with especially well established links with the local and global communities. Opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the diversity of modern-day British society are in the early stages of development as are procedures to evaluate the impact of the community cohesion policy.

Leadership at all levels has an exceptionally secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement because of the meticulous monitoring and evaluation of almost all areas of the school's work. The headteacher's energy,

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enthusiasm and commitment to every child's well-being and success are an inspiration to all staff and pupils. There has been no complacency since the previous inspection. A dip in results in 2008 resulted in highly focused work that succeeded in securing the best ever Key Stage 2 tests results in 2009, demonstrating an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that the quality of learning and teaching is as good as the very best in more lessons by:
  - improving the pace of learning in some lessons and giving more opportunity for pupils to be active learners
  - ensuring that tasks fully match pupils' needs and challenge each individual.
- Improve the environment for learning in the Reception class by:
  - providing more planned opportunities for children to learn when outdoors across all areas of learning
  - making all areas of the learning environment welcoming, attractive and better suited to learning and play, especially the covered outdoor space.
- Further develop the provision for community cohesion by:
  - ensuring that pupils gain an understanding of the diversity of modern-day British society
  - developing a means of evaluating the impact of the policy on outcomes for pupils more fully.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils are diligent and enthusiastic learners. They concentrate well, are confident in giving answers to questions and are not afraid to pose their own questions. They collaborate well in pairs and groups. They enjoy talking about their work and are eager to help and support each other. Pupils are able to work independently of the teacher but sometimes their work lacks urgency when they are not given clear time-frames in which to complete tasks. In a few lessons pupils are passive recipients of learning rather active participants because they are expected to spend too long listening to the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are particularly well supported by teaching assistants and class teachers. Pupils start school with above average standards and make good progress in both Key Stages 1 and 2 to reach high standards in all subjects by the time they leave. The very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds makes equally good progress.

Pupils give visitors a very courteous welcome. They are polite, considerate of others and they encourage others to behave well. Pupils feel very safe and secure and trust adults to help sort out any worries and concerns they may have. Responsibilities are carried out with enthusiasm and include serving the salad bar at lunchtimes and leading

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activities at playtimes. Pupils enjoy assemblies and the many opportunities they have to reflect on and develop less tangible feelings about their spirit and soul, and an awareness of the special nature of much in life such as families, relationships, the natural world and the global community. A well established link with a school in Ghana provides pupils with a much appreciated opportunity to communicate directly with children of a similar age from a very different culture.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers and other adults establish a positive atmosphere in classrooms conducive to learning where pupils feel secure and confident. Lessons are well planned with learning set out in well structured steps. The learning objectives are made clear to pupils and tasks are explained clearly. In the very best lessons, probing, well-targeted questioning is part of the constant checks on pupils' understanding and progress. Tasks are usually well matched to different abilities, although occasionally the more able pupils are not fully challenged because they are not required to move on from less demanding tasks to more challenging extension tasks quickly enough. Teaching assistants support the

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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learning of pupils very effectively, especially those who are less able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils know their targets for writing and numeracy and find them helpful in knowing what to concentrate on. In the very best lessons pupils benefit from assessing their own work and that of others against very clear criteria. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers' comments encourage pupils and guide their improvement.

The curriculum meets the individual needs of pupils of all abilities very well, including the more able. A sophisticated system is used to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and ensures that the provision is tailored closely to their needs. The underlying theme of 'learning can be a joy' is played out in many lessons where activities are highly relevant to pupils' interests and needs and pupils enjoy active 'hands-on' tasks. Very good attention is paid to practising and improving basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology through stimulating tasks that link subjects. The school has developed many effective partnerships with organisations that help to enrich learning experiences. For example, the library hosts regular musical performances that are very much appreciated by the local community. Many additional activities enrich learning, for example, visits to theatres and to a nearby stately home bring excitement to learning. The school's very good focus on social and emotional learning has been recognised by an award for excellence from the local authority. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in music and sport, is supported and enjoyed by a high number of pupils. The care, guidance and support of pupils are given the highest priority by the school, which recognises the importance of support for pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement. Each and every individual pupil is extremely well known by staff and positive relationships with pupils' families enhance the support pupils receive in school. Well established partnerships with local support agencies ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive closely targeted support.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

An exceptionally clear agenda for improvement has been established through close scrutiny of pupils' progress and achievements and highly effective monitoring of provision. Leaders have worked very successfully towards clear priorities. Extremely well focused plans have led, for example, to improvements in the use of assessment. In turn,

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these have helped the school to target support and accelerate pupils' progress, especially for the more able pupils. Staff work together very well towards clearly articulated common aims, and expectations of staff and pupils are ambitious.

Governors support the school well. Comprehensive reports from the headteacher keep governors well informed of the school's work and a number of governors visit the school regularly to discuss their areas of responsibility with staff. Governors are rigorous in holding the headteacher to account. They take parents' views into account but only occasionally have sought the views of pupils directly.

The school strives relentlessly to ensure that each and every child is well cared for and supported so that they can succeed academically and in their personal development. There is a very strong emphasis on tackling discrimination through a focus in assemblies, the curriculum and the overall ethos of accepting differences.

Safeguarding arrangements are in line with government requirements. Procedures for the safe recruitment and vetting of staff are rigorous and staff receive regular training in child protection. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The school has taken an appropriate range of planned actions to promote community cohesion. The school is in the early stages of developing links with another British school in a setting very different to its own. The school's policy is satisfactory but procedures for monitoring its impact on outcomes for pupils are not yet fully established.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Excellent relationships and communication between home and school help children to



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settle down into the Reception class very quickly and make good overall progress. Children are taught well and are very well cared for. Staff take very good care to assure children's welfare and safety. The majority of children start Reception with a good level of development for their age. By the end of the year, most children exceed age-related expectations in all the areas of learning. Children enjoy learning and playing very much indeed and there is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. Frequent, ongoing assessment of children's progress helps to inform the learning activities that are planned for groups and individuals. As a result, the more able children are challenged and children receive the support they need. Adults make very good use of talk and questioning to develop children's thinking and there is a good focus on learning sounds, letters and numbers.

Relationships between adults and children are very positive so that children grow in self-confidence. Behaviour is outstanding and children follow well established routines and share equipment and toys very happily. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe when playing outdoors and are exceptionally keen to help others. They are very knowledgeable about healthy eating and they thoroughly enjoy taking plenty of exercise. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage sets out clear priorities for improvements which include the need to improve resources. Although children achieve outstandingly well there are parts of the learning environment that do not support children's learning as well as they should. Some of the areas are not very welcoming or attractive and the recently improved outdoor space is not used fully enough to support learning across all areas of the curriculum.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

There was a good response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire. The overwhelming majority are very supportive of the school and inspectors agree with these views. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the headteacher's leadership and the care and support that all the staff show for their children. A small number expressed concerns about the rate of progress their children were making. Inspectors found that pupils make good progress overall and that in a few lessons, progress could be faster.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Garstang Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	98	82	22	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	103	86	17	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	68	57	48	40	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	76	63	39	33	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	84	70	36	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	62	41	34	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	91	76	29	24	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	71	59	36	30	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	72	60	43	36	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	58	40	33	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	56	43	36	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	96	80	23	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	76	28	23	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Garstang Community Primary School, Preston PR3 1HT

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome you gave to us when the inspection team visited your school. It is important that you know what we found out about your school. You are right to feel very proud of your school, because it is an outstanding school that has many excellent features. You, the pupils, are one of its most important assets. You enjoy your school and are enthusiastic learners. Your behaviour is exemplary and your kindness and sensitivity towards each other's feelings are wonderful qualities. You are keen to play your part in the life of the school and I enjoyed having my lunchtime salad served to me by such enthusiastic pupil helpers whom I know have had special training in food hygiene. You know how important it is to take up a healthy lifestyle and your enthusiasm for sports and your commitment to healthy eating will stand you in good stead for the future. Many of you enjoy the excellent range of extra-curricular activities including the opportunities to learn a musical instrument and take part in musical performances. The excellent curriculum makes learning exciting and interesting for you and the staff take great care to make sure that you feel happy and enjoy school. With all this support and your willingness to learn, you reach high standards in your work and your achievement is outstanding.

The leaders and managers of the school, including governors, work hard to make improvements all the time. They have agreed with us that there is still more that can be done and we have suggested some further improvements.

- Ensure that the quality of learning and teaching is as good as the very best in the school in more lessons.
- Make all areas of the Reception class welcoming and attractive and provide more opportunities for children to learn when outdoors.
- Ensure that you all gain a better understanding of the diversity of modern-day British society.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith

Lead inspector

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