

Gipsey Bridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120449
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339697
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Roberts
Headteacher	Mr Simon Chandler
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and part lessons. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, governors and parents. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books, the school improvement plan, a range of policies and information about pupils' attainment and progress. They also took account of the views expressed in the 25 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- how effectively the school responds to and meets the needs of the most able pupils
- what the school is doing to ensure pupils make as much progress as possible in writing
- how successfully the curriculum caters for the full range of ages and abilities in each class
- how the school ensures that pupils are appropriately knowledgeable about backgrounds and cultures that are different from their own.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is well below average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the number who speak English as an additional language is low. While the percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average, the percentage who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

The school has the Eco Schools Green Flag award, Artsmark Gold, the Basic Skills Award and Financial management Standards in Schools. The school works closely with four others as part of a learning network initiative. The school is currently led temporarily by a member of the local authority's leadership team, whilst the governing body follow the process of appointing a permanent headteacher.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a school that is at the heart of the community it serves and where all staff willingly go the extra mile to support pupils and their parents and carers. As a result pupils achieve well in their academic development and outstandingly in their personal development. Other than a slight blip in English at Year 6 in 2009, when they were broadly average, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average. This success is the result of the excellent start that children get in the Early Years Foundation Stage and consistently good teaching as they progress through the school. The curriculum is carefully tailored to successfully meet the needs of the full range of ages and abilities in each class. The response to pupils who show the slightest sign of falling behind is prompt and effective. Similarly, suitable work is planned to match the needs of the highest attaining pupils. Even so, staff are eager to refine their approaches to tracking pupils' attainment and progress to make them even more precise. With this in mind new systems have recently been introduced, although these are not fully embedded. Speaking and listening is taught effectively and lays the foundation for good progress in many subjects. Even so, there are times when opportunities to use questions and discussion to challenge and extend pupils' thinking are not used as fully as they might be, particularly at the start of lessons. Arrangements to assess pupils' progress and to involve them in understanding what they need to do to make their work even better are good. In this respect marking is helpful and provides encouragement.

The school provides pupils with an outstanding quality of pastoral care, consequently their personal development is excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, including their understanding of others who come from backgrounds and cultures with whom they would not normally have contact. Behaviour during lessons and around school is outstanding. Attendance is also well above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of learning and the pride they take in their school. One pupil said, 'I love my school and don't want to leave.' Several others who heard the comment readily agreed with this. Pupils are eager to take responsibility and make an excellent contribution to school life and to their community.

The school is in no way complacent and is always seeking ways to improve. Governors and staff have a good track record for identifying precisely what needs to be done to bring about improvements. This is typified by their response to a fewer than expected number of pupils attaining at Level 5 in English, and especially in writing in 2009. A carefully structured programme was introduced enabling pupils to write for a range of purposes, underpinned by careful guidance on using exciting adjectives and structuring complex sentences. This has already resulted in standards being restored to above

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average levels and illustrates the school's good capacity to sustain improvement in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further extend the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills by
 - ensuring that pupils are able to contribute fully to the opening part of lessons
 - creating even more opportunities for pupils to take part in discussions
 - giving pupils time to collaborate and to plan their answers to questions
 - increasing the use of open-ended questions to challenge pupils' thinking
- Fully embed the recently introduced system for tracking pupils' progress in order to enable teachers to reflect more frequently on the progress that pupils are making.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils with particular special needs, higher attaining pupils and those who are recognised as having special talents all do well. At all stages, year-on-year, standards exceed expectations and national averages. This is not only in English, mathematics and science, but in other subjects such as art and design, design and technology and music. Good learning is clearly shown in the pupils' books and in their response during lessons. Pupils are passionate about learning, very enthusiastic about their school and always willing to talk about what they are doing. This is partly because of the level of trust pupils have for the staff. They are confident that should they have any problems, be they academic or personal, staff will be readily on hand to sort them out. Pupils, even the very youngest, are also well informed about the importance of eating healthily and know how to stay safe.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to their community. They are kind, courteous and care for each other. They willingly take responsibility and are eager to help in the running of the school in whatever way they can. For example, the harvest festival, which includes produce grown by pupils, is received with great acclaim by parents and the community. The pupils' singing and music making during this event is outstanding. Pupils' excellent spiritual development is supported by many activities, such as the daily assemblies, to which pupils make an excellent contribution in terms of reflection, prayer and the thoughtful sharing of their views.

Pupils acquire the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to the extent that they are prepared well for the next stages of their education and the foundation is laid for their future success in the world of work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan their lessons very skilfully to provide activities that capture the interest and meet the needs of the full range of abilities in each class. This includes successfully matching work to the requirements of the most able and those who have special needs. A prominent feature of each lesson is pupils' involvement in understanding how well they are doing and in knowing what they need to do to improve. Teachers constantly involve pupils in guided self and peer assessment. They also frequently involve pupils in discussing their perceptions of the progress they have made. The insights that pupils gain from these experiences are central to the good progress they make. Teachers also assess pupils' progress accurately and frequently. This helps them to identify the next steps in learning for each pupil and ensure that good progress is maintained. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well, but opportunities to involve pupils in discussion, especially during the early part of lessons, are not always used to the full. Similarly, teachers sometimes do not give pupils enough time to reflect and plan their answers to questions.

Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' progress. They provide excellent support to individuals and groups during lessons. They also lead the programmes for those who sometimes struggle with areas of their learning and are central to promoting the good progress these pupils make.

The curriculum meets pupils' learning needs well. Good attention is paid to the development of key basic skills in all subjects. Teachers take care to link the common features of different subjects, helping to make learning more meaningful. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of after-school clubs, educational visits and

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events. For example, pupils recently visited the Science and British museums in London. This experience captured their enthusiasm and interest to the extent that it inspired some very high quality writing.

Pupils benefit greatly from a very high quality of personal support and pastoral care. Staff are acutely aware of the individual needs of each pupil. They are swift to respond to any concerns and take prompt action at the slightest indication of any child falling behind or falling to make the expected progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

All staff are most supportive of each other and work closely together. This provides a positive climate for all to be involved in identifying what needs to be improved. Central to this work is the commitment to ensuring that every child can succeed to the best of their ability. The school acts promptly to resolve even the slightest problem that might disadvantage any pupil. Arrangements to evaluate the quality of provision are rigorous. Staff are appropriately self-critical and always looking for ways to become even better. Typical of this is the way staff are embracing the recently introduced system for tracking pupils' progress.

Governors play their part effectively. Like the pupils, they are proud of the school. They are great advocates for its work and promote the contribution it makes to the local and wider community effectively. They are also regular visitors and hold the school to account for the quality of work. During their visits attention is focussed on the key priorities for improvement identified by the school's development plan. Governors also fulfil their duties well in respect of safeguarding. Current requirements are met in full. Checks are in place to ensure all adults are suitable to work with children, and all are trained appropriately in child protection. The impact of this is shown in the way pupils enjoy school, feel safe and are enabled to do well.

The school works closely with parents and carers. Good advice is provided to help parents support their children's learning. For their part, parents support the school exceptionally well. They give first hand support and are constantly ready to help in whatever way they can. Substantial amounts of money are raised each year, with events such as the very popular Summer Fayre, to support its work. As one parent commented, echoing the views of many, 'This is a delightful school. I cannot think of anywhere better for my child to go.'

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Partnerships with other providers to enhance pupils' learning are effective. For example, during the inspection an advanced skills teacher from a specialist secondary school visited to lead the work of Year 6 pupils in design and technology. The outcomes of this work were of a very high standard. The school provides good value for money. Resources are used wisely and the office staff provide excellent support for the headteacher and governors in managing the schools' budget.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly. Their attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is currently close to that expected for their age. They get off to a cracking start and make rapid progress in all areas of their learning. For example, this year only a few could form letters legibly when they began school. However, because of the very effective focus on early writing skills they quickly learned to write their name when they signed up for the various activities. Children's spoken communication improves remarkably because adults teach letter and word sounds precisely. They also model language well through story telling and encouraging discussion. Social development is another area of rapid progress. This results in children relating to each other and to adults with care and confidence.

The recently opened Foundation Stage classroom provides a stimulating environment and enables children to make a smooth transition between playing and working, both indoors and outdoors, in all areas of their learning. There is a similarly excellent balance between adult led activities and ones in which children can work independently, which they do exceptionally well. Even so, there are times when children are left to their own

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devices for a little too long. At such times earlier adult intervention would help to maintain the outstanding pace of progress usually found. Arrangements to assess children's progress are frequent and thorough, helping to ensure that no child falls behind and that the next steps in their learning are clearly identified. This underpins the exceptional progress made by vast majority of children. By the time they join Year 1, most exceed the expectations for their age in all areas of their learning and all have made exceptional progress from their starting points.

The transition for children into Year 1 is smooth and they are prepared very well to embark on the subjects of the National Curriculum. For the very few who have not reached that stage the school sensibly retains the advantages embodied in the Early Years learning programme.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are positive about the school and most appreciate the quality of education provided for their children. A small number of parents feel their children are not making sufficient progress. Some others feel the school does not provide them with enough information about how well their children are doing. Inspection findings show that throughout the school pupils make good progress. Staff are also frequently available to provide information about pupils' progress. For example, they willingly talk to parents and carers at the start and end of each day and at the regular 'drop in' consultation sessions. A number of parents are also concerned that the school does not currently have a permanent headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gipsey Bridge 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 inspection team received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 84 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	80	4	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	68	6	24	2	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	60	8	32	0	0	1	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	60	7	28	2	8	1	4
The teaching is good at this school	17	68	7	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	64	7	28	2	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	68	8	32	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)	13	52	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	52	11	44	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	32	14	56	0	0	2	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	28	14	56	1	4	3	12
The school is led and managed effectively	8	32	9	36	2	8	3	12
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	68	7	28	1	4	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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



22 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of GipseY Bridge Primary School, Boston PE22 7BP

You may recall I visited your school recently to see how everyone is getting on. I must thank you all for being so kind and courteous and for giving up your time to tell about your school. I am very impressed by how hard you all work in lessons and by the ways in which you help around the school. I thought your singing and music making for the harvest festival were outstanding. The produce you have grown is also very impressive.

You all do well because your teachers and the teaching assistants give you all the help you need. They are good at making sure that you understand how well you are progressing and know what you need to do to make your work even better. Those of you in the Reception class make a very impressive start in learning how to speak and write correctly. I was particularly impressed by how 'grown up' and mature even the youngest of you are. The ways in which you are all able to get on and work on your own are very impressive. Above all, I was delighted to see how much you enjoy your lessons and the confidence you have that, should there be any problems, staff are always on hand to help solve them.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are always looking for ways to make the school even better. With this in mind they have agreed to look carefully at ways of further developing your speaking and listening skills. So, you need to be ready to take part in extra discussions and be prepared for lots of conversation opportunities when you prepare your answers to questions. They are also introducing a new way of checking on your progress to make sure that you do not fall behind in any of your work.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future. If you all keep on working as hard as you do now, and attending so regularly I am sure you will be successful.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead Inspector

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