

Gayton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121971
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340059
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gillian Challis
Headteacher	June Wyhiwskyj
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed six lessons and both class teachers were seen. Meetings were held with the headteacher and Key Stage 2 leader, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a group of pupils. Virtually all pupils and some parents were informally spoken to. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at records of assessments of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Questionnaire returns from 34 parents and carers were analysed, as were those from six staff and 23 Key Stage 2 pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- the school's tracking of individual pupils' progress, to see whether previous outstanding progress is being maintained for all pupils
- how the school ensures that pupils in every year group receive their full curriculum entitlement
- how well the school's 'Community Cohesion Charter' helps pupils to prepare for life in Britain's multicultural society.

Information about the school

This is a very small primary school. All pupils are of White British origin, with none from other ethnic backgrounds. All speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies from year to year, but is currently above average, with a high concentration in Years 5 and 6. No pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most have moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. A few have physical disabilities or a degree of autism. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. Pupils are grouped into two classes: one contains Reception children and pupils from Years 1 and 2; the other has pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The headteacher is the class teacher for the infant/reception class. The school has Healthy School, Green Flag and Active Mark awards.

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

Gayton primary is a truly outstanding school in all aspects. It has maintained high standards for the last ten years and consistently improved on the very good and outstanding judgements of its two previous inspections. The headteacher leads by example in her teaching and constantly communicates her vision for excellence. Consequently, the whole staff and governors share in this ambition. The highest expectations are apparent in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils and their parents are in no doubt about this. Pupils come to school eagerly and punctually, expecting to work hard. Attendance has risen from above average to well above since the previous inspection. Pupils say they enjoy learning, and it is obvious that they do from the great pride they take in their achievements. The high quality work they produce is apparent in displays around the school, from their colourful, sophisticated computer generated designs for 'Joseph's coat', to egg-box models of the variety of ladybirds found by Reception children on a 'mini-beast' hunt.

Teaching and learning is outstanding in both classes. This is because both class teachers are highly skilled practitioners who work as a cohesive team. They know their pupils well, and are able to plan individual programmes of work for every child in the class, through regular and thorough use of assessment. Well qualified specialist teachers add yet more value in French, religious education, music and sport. Curriculum planning is excellent, with exciting, motivating themes and excellent development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Writing is a particular strength throughout the school.

The school's small size is advantageous in establishing a family atmosphere, where everyone is well-known and valued. Behaviour is excellent throughout the school, underpinned by well-established expectations and routines. Younger pupils quickly learn from older ones what is acceptable, and what is not. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly place for learning. Pupils spend three or four years in each class, so they and their teachers know each other really well. They feel safe and well cared-for because they know they have someone to talk to, if they have problems. Pupils develop as responsible, caring young people, who know how to live safe and healthy lives. They enjoy competitive sport with neighbouring schools, but all matches have to be away fixtures, since their own facilities for outdoor team games are very limited at present.

Spiritual development is excellent. The Christian values which underpin the school's ethos enable pupils to gain a clear perspective on life from which to compare and respect other people's feelings and values. The focus on gaining more understanding of the wider ethnic mix in Britain has enabled pupils to get a very good insight into similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures. This issue from the

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school's previous inspection has been fully addressed. The use of highly accurate self-evaluation, based on sharply focused monitoring, has led to the maintenance of high standards and outstanding provision. A parent commented 'the school seems to go forward all the time, even when I think they can do no more'. This sums up the school's excellent capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- There are no aspects of the school's provision which need improvement, but pupils' involvement in outdoor games has been curtailed by the loss of a large proportion of its playing field. To improve provision, governors should explore ways of finding better facilities for outdoor competitive sport.

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

Pupils' outstanding literacy and numeracy skills are hugely important features of their learning, which enable them to succeed in all areas of the curriculum and be extremely well prepared for their secondary education. In the infants' class, pupils made excellent progress in learning letters and sounds, based on the story of 'The old lady who swallowed a fly'. Reception children delighted in sequencing the items swallowed, Year 1 wrote sentences containing 'sw' words and Year 2 used dictionaries to look up the meanings of more complex words. This use of a common theme, with different tasks and objectives to match the learning needs of pupils in different years, is used throughout the school with great success, because it is so well planned that not a moment's learning time is lost. A Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson started with a 'battleships' game which tested the mental abilities of the whole class. Then each year group was given work from the whiteboard, or became a focus for a short period of concentrated teaching. All pupils were completely focused on learning for the whole time, completely challenged by the work given, and going on to their personal programmes if they had time to spare.

This way of working is successful because pupils understand from an early age that they come to school to learn. All say they enjoy lessons and it is obvious that they do. They love to be busy and take a great pride in their work. They behave in a most responsible way towards learning, younger ones benefiting from the example set by their older classmates. Pupils' social skills are very well developed; they work and play harmoniously together and take on responsibilities willingly. They understand how to live a healthy lifestyle, eat healthy snacks at break- time and enjoy sporting clubs such as rounders. The school council is very active in the school self-evaluation process, seeking improvements to provision, such as short afternoon breaks to aid further concentration. They organise and lead the school in charitable giving.

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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers capture pupils' interests by imaginative planning of work around stimulating themes. For example, reception children and infants were delighted to receive a letter, supposedly from the parents of the school's pet guinea pigs, wanting to know how well their children were settling in to their new homes. This proved a great stimulus for letter writing. Older girls and boys spoke with equal fascination about their study of Turner's painting of the 'Fighting Temeraire', well chosen to stimulate their weekly extended writing project. Teachers plan individual programmes of work for every pupil, which identifies their particular strengths and areas for improvement. Targets are set and regularly checked and modified to enable all pupils to make rapid progress. Teachers' marking is exemplary, with much praise, but areas for further development also clearly identified. Teaching assistants give valuable support and guidance, for example, in Reception with children's 'learning journeys' and reading records. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have regular short focused sessions out of class, which enable them to keep up with the rest of their year group and make similar progress.

The curriculum is exemplary in the way it is matched to the specific learning needs of individual pupils. Topics reflect the interests and national curriculum subject requirements of each key stage. Repetition is avoided by themes in history or geography, for example, the Egyptians or deserts, being taught only once in every four years in the junior class, but different key objectives are planned for each year group. The excellent development of literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum is a notable strength. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of clubs for a small

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school. Governors and parents assist in running these. The school makes the best use it can of its partnerships with local schools to enhance the curriculum, particularly in sport, but has to play all matches as away fixtures because it no longer has a viable field for sporting events.

Very well targeted support for all pupils enables them to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. All pupils are well known as individuals by adults in the school and know they always have someone to talk to if they are worried. Exemplary guidance is given to pupils when they start school and leave for secondary education. When needed, the school's work with children and families facing challenging circumstances is outstanding.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is an outstanding leader who has the highest possible expectations of all the children in her care. She and the Key Stage 2 leader share this ambition; their teaching styles complement each other perfectly. They frequently monitor each other and the specialist teachers, in order to keep up the high standards. School self-evaluation is excellent, and results in constant action to maintain the impetus for sustained improvement. Very challenging targets are set for all children, which results in a significant proportion making three levels of progress in Key Stage 2, when two is the normal expectation.

Governors are highly committed to the school. They play a significant role in the self-evaluation process and hold the school to account. They are vigilant in ensuring that safeguarding retains its high priority. They regularly and thoroughly assess all potential risks and take developing technologies, such as the internet, into account. Governors also help in practical tasks, such as listening to children reading, cookery and building maintenance.

This is a school where everyone has equally excellent opportunities to succeed, and is expected to do so. Every child has an individual programme of study. Gifted and talented pupils have the opportunity to be advanced a year and given a challenging enrichment programme in partnership with a local secondary school. There is a strong partnership with parents. All who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire reported complete satisfaction with their children's experiences at the school.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a strong focus on improving pupils'

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knowledge and understanding of the wide ethnic mix in modern Britain. The school is in a rural environment which is virtually all white British. Leaders have done their utmost through assemblies, visits and visitors to give pupils first-hand experience of a mixture of cultures. The outstanding work of the governing body in producing an extremely comprehensive 'Gayton Community Cohesion Charter' has consolidated the school's work in this area. The school is highly regarded by the village and contributes to many local events, particularly those reflecting its strong links with the church. It also has links with schools in Germany, New Zealand and Africa.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities similar to those expected for their age, but a significant proportion is below this in most years. Consistently excellent teaching by the headteacher and all adults who work with the children ensures that they make outstanding progress and thoroughly enjoy learning. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Due to the importance the headteacher places on the development of literacy, children's reading and writing skills improve rapidly. They read regularly to the well qualified teaching assistant who keeps meticulous records of their progress. The advantage of being in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2 is the constant presence of older role models and an exciting variety of books. In daily writing sessions, children are taught the correct way to form letters, to write accurately on a line, to make finger spaces between words. They thoroughly enjoy writing and are very proud of the finished result.

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Children are confident and happy in this secure and welcoming environment. They fully understand the class routines, knowing, for example, that their written postcards have to be finished before they go outside to build a sun-shelter for their guinea pigs. Afterwards, they take very little time to settle attentively on the carpet, ready to discuss their learning with the rest of their class.

Planning is excellent and includes activities across all the areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All children have individual programmes which are meticulously recorded in their 'learning journeys'. A major strength is the outstanding provision for the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. There is a well-equipped, purpose-built learning environment indoors and immediately outdoors. Children are allowed to develop independence in the outdoor area where a video camera allows their activities to be observed without continual adult presence.

The headteacher teaches reception children in the infant class and all aspects of leadership are excellent. Assessment is used very effectively to set challenging targets for all children. The teaching assistant is very well used to supervise independent learning. The safety and care of all children has a very high profile. Excellent relationships with parents and carers extend children's learning into their homes.

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

There was a higher than usual return of completed questionnaires from parents and carers, who expressed very positive views about the school. All who responded wrote that they are happy with their children's experience, feel their children are safe, helped to have a healthy lifestyle and are taught well. Several wrote praising the school for its values and the quality of education. Those spoken to were also very positive and expressed complete satisfaction with the school. A few thought that inappropriate behaviour was not dealt with effectively. The inspector cannot comment on this, as no inappropriate behaviour was observed. The behaviour incidents book had no entries this year. Pupils themselves judged behaviour in the school as 'always good, but we get a bit excited just before holidays'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gayton Church of England 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 45 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	79	5	15	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	68	11	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	53	16	47	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	62	11	32	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	65	12	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	59	12	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	62	13	38	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)	15	44	16	47	3	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	68	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	56	10	29	3	9	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	50	14	41	3	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	62	11	32	0	0	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	68	11	32	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



2nd July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gayton Church of England Primary School, Northampton, NN7 3EU

Thank you very much for being so helpful to me during my visit. It was good to see you all so happy and enjoying your learning. I think you are very lucky to go to Gayton, because it is an outstanding school.

Your headteacher and governing body do an excellent job in running the school. Teaching is excellent, so you enjoy your lessons and work hard. Your teachers expect all of you to do well, and so you do, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. This helps you succeed in other subjects and prepares you really well for work at secondary school. Your behaviour is excellent and your attendance is well above average. You come to school wanting to learn, and this helps you make the most of your school days.

All the adults take excellent care of you and in turn, you take care of those younger than yourselves. You can always talk to someone if you are worried. You learn how to keep yourself safe and have definite opinions about many aspects of your education, which you express through the school council.

You have excellent links with the local community and church and know a lot about people in places further afield, who have different cultures and customs. You enjoy sending emails and getting to know some new friends in schools abroad.

There are no particular things that need improving in your school, but I have asked governors to explore ways of getting better facilities for outdoor sports.

I wish you all well in the future and know that you will keep on working hard, because you enjoy learning so much and want to do well.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead inspector

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