

# Gascoigne Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131775
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barking and Dagenham
<b>Inspection number</b>	341220
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	992
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Read
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bob Garton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Gascoigne Road Barking IG11 7DR
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<b>Email address</b>	office@gascoigne.bardaglea.org.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They visited 34 lessons seeing each teacher only once, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. The team analysed 412 parental questionnaires, 129 responses to the pupil survey and 48 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- evidence to show whether the emphasis on improving writing is having an impact
- how well teachers meet the needs of all pupils in their classes
- the impact of action taken to improve the quality of teaching
- the effectiveness of support for the academic and personal development of the more vulnerable pupils, including newcomers to the school.

## Information about the school

Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds in this very large primary school, with the largest groups being of Black African or Eastern European heritages. Most are from homes where English is spoken as an additional language and more than a quarter are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high and many more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average; their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy and to speech and language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and five Reception classes. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school hosts a privately-run breakfast and after-school club which was inspected separately.

**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

Gascoigne Primary is a good school. The continuous search for improvement has resulted in some outstanding features. The most significant of these is the high quality of the care, support and guidance, particularly for its more vulnerable pupils and newcomers to the school. Leaders and governors are aware that pupils could go by unnoticed in such a large school, and they work tirelessly and with great success to make sure that this is not the case. Governors and staff ensure that the safety of all those in the school is of paramount importance, the result being that pupils say how safe and well cared for they feel. This view is strongly endorsed by their parents and carers.

Children have an enjoyable start to their school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good progress, from having a level of skills which are much lower than expected for their age on entry, in a stimulating environment where close attention is paid to their individual needs. They develop the skills that stand them in good stead for the future. This good start is built on well in the rest of the school so that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or from different minority ethnic groups, continue to make good progress.

Several factors contribute to the pupils' good achievement, including:

- a considerable proportion of good or better teaching that fires their imaginations
- the provision of an environment rich in talk and language to support their development of English where it is not their home language
- their very positive attitudes to learning and desire to be successful
- the sharp focus on understanding the needs and circumstances of each individual and the tailoring of support accordingly
- the provision of outstanding links with other agencies that broaden pupils' experiences and provide additional expertise in support of the more vulnerable pupils.

The focus on improving teaching has made learning interesting and challenging in most lessons. Paired talk and group work are promoted well and questions are used skilfully to make pupils think and check their understanding. However, these techniques are not a consistent feature of lessons throughout the school. At times, teachers do too much of the talking and questioning does not always check pupils' understanding or engage all of the pupils in their lessons. Inconsistencies also remain in the way marking and other guidance helps pupils understand the steps needed to meet their individual targets. The successful focus on improving writing comes, in part, by providing more interesting contexts to stimulate the pupils' imaginations, with the whole school focusing each week on the same project such as 'My favourite teacher'.

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The pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and excellent behaviour support their learning and generate a harmonious and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils of all backgrounds work and play happily together and take great pride in helping newcomers to make friends and settle in quickly. This is not only a highly cohesive school, but is outward looking and takes very seriously its responsibility to the local community and the world beyond. This outstanding focus on community cohesion accounts in part for the excellent contribution made by the pupils not just to school life but also to the local area.

□ The school's good capacity for further improvement is based on effective self-evaluation. Procedures to check the school's performance and that of individual staff are thorough. Emerging concerns are tackled rigorously through carefully prepared improvement plans. The progress being made towards the school's targets are regularly checked and priorities are linked carefully to further staff training. The school can point to many examples where it has developed its staff from being inexperienced into effective practitioners.

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

- Accelerate pupils' learning and bring the quality of teaching more consistently up to that of the best by:
  - using more effective questioning techniques to check pupils' understanding and engage them in their learning
  - providing consistent challenge for the more able pupils.
- Give pupils clearer guidance about how to improve their work, meet their targets and take greater responsibility for their learning by:
  - ensuring that pupils are clear about their targets and receive clear written feedback on how to achieve them
  - providing time for pupils to respond to their teachers' marking
  - involving pupils in assessing their own progress and that of their peers.

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

Almost all pupils work with interest in lessons. They really enjoy their work and school life. They concentrate and persevere with tasks without adult help even when these are difficult. The pupils' collaboration as part of a team or when discussing ideas with a partner are key factors supporting their learning. The features also account not just for their good progress but also in building a firm platform for success in the future. The large majority of pupils who are at the school from Year 1 reach the national average by Year 6 in both English and mathematics. Later arrivals, often from abroad with very limited English, make at least good and at times outstanding progress but, because of their short time at the school, do not always reach expected levels by the time they leave for secondary school.

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Pupils show great consideration and respect towards each other and adults. They are interested in the diversity around them and are very keen to learn about the customs and values of others. Pupils, especially those who have particular responsibilities, are capable of resolving conflicts sensibly and promoting friendliness. Their clear understanding of their place in the world is reflected in their interest in environmental issues.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school and participate with great enthusiasm in cultural events organised for them. The 'worry box' system adds to their sense of security because they believe someone will listen and act upon their concerns. They understand what they should do to adopt a healthy lifestyle, making sensible choices over their diets and participating in many sporting events such as the 'Greek Olympics'. They have a considerable voice in developments in the school, raise funds for several charities and have expressed their views about traffic outside the school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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>2</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>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are stimulating and calm places in which to learn because of the helpful

<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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displays and the way pupils respond to their teacher's expectations of their behaviour. Most teachers use assessment information well to adapt lessons and deploy support staff to meet the pupils' needs, but not always to ensure consistent challenge for the more able pupils. Teachers' marking makes clear to pupils what they do well, but not what they need to do to improve their work to meet their targets through clear written feedback. Furthermore, teachers do not always give pupils time to respond to any comments and they have few opportunities to assess their work or that of others.

Close attention is paid to developing basic skills while at the same time seeking to make the pupils' experiences more interesting by linking learning in different subjects through the 'creative learning journey'. The wide range of other enrichment activities during and beyond the school day adds breadth and much enjoyment to their experiences, including links with local secondary schools to extend opportunities for sport.

Programmes are adapted well to meet the learning and language needs of the pupils, and to extend gifted and talented pupils. □

□ The school has an extremely clear understanding of the circumstances of the pupils, and uses this and assessment data to identify the precise difficulties faced by pupils and to carefully tailor programmes for withdrawal and other intervention groups. The support of external agencies is sought where needed and is used to very good effect to help the school to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Arrangements to help the pupils settle into school at whatever time this might be, to transfer between classes and move on to secondary school are very sensitively handled and help to give a smooth transfer from one stage to the next.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has high expectations, and is supported in the drive to break down barriers to learning for all pupils by a cohesive and motivated staff team. He has established a clear direction and is taking staff with him in the drive to improve the pupils' achievement further. The school's targets are challenging and progress towards them carefully checked. There is an ethos where all members of staff strive to become more effective in their work. Having the opportunity to work alongside others has proved to be particularly successful in the development of their skills.

The staff team shares the headteacher's focus on promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Consequently, this is a very cohesive school, where everyone

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feels valued and where pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve equally well. The school has a very clear understanding of its context and has undertaken extensive work with key groups to encourage a sense of belonging and engagement. For example, the Albanian community project is valued very highly by parents who spoke favourably about how it has improved their lives. The evaluation of the school's community cohesion work has been used to identify the next priorities to be tackled in its drive to engage more with groups nationally and globally. □

Governors are fully involved in identifying priorities for improvement for the school and carefully check the impact of their policies. They ensure that procedures for safeguarding the pupils and vetting all those who work in the school are constantly under review and regularly updated to reflect changing circumstances. □

□ Parents are very happy with the links forged between home and school, which are used not just to help them to support their children's learning but also to point them towards additional services in the area. The school supports pupils and enriches their experiences effectively through its excellent links with a variety of outside organisations.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

The children are happy and enjoy all that is provided for them, developing very positive attitudes to learning. The environment both inside and outdoors is welcoming, stimulating and buzzing with activity. Through thorough assessment procedures, adults are able to plan to provide appropriate activities in each area of learning for individual children. These are balanced well between those where adults take the lead and



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opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their own learning. Through this provision, they develop independence by selecting resources and initiating activities themselves, work collaboratively and learn to share and take turns, while treating others with consideration. Their behaviour is outstanding.

Adults move learning forward through their comments and questions, although not all use these strategies skilfully. Children new to English develop their skills quickly by being immersed from the start in an environment rich in language through displays, plenty of opportunities to use talk, and very good modelling by adults. There is ample outdoor space with plans for further shelter. These areas are used creatively to develop learning and for the children to explore and investigate the natural world, again with language skills at the forefront.

□ Assessment information is used carefully to analyse the performance of different groups and to identify priorities for the development of the provision. Adults in this large team work well together, benefiting considerably from frequent training in which to hone their skills. Great care is taken to safeguard the welfare of the children and to help them to learn how they can take care of themselves. Close links with home help to smooth the children's start and careful attention is paid to helping them to see their movement up the school just as part of a journey.

*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	2
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**

Responses to the questionnaire show that parents are happy with the school's work. Parents are almost unanimous in saying that their children enjoy school. The inspection team concurs with their positive views, particularly those about the good quality of the teaching which helps to prepare their children well for the next stage of their education, that individual needs are carefully met and that the school is well led and managed.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gascoigne 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 412 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 975 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	242	59	160	39	5	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	196	48	206	50	7	2	2	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	174	42	213	52	16	4	2	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	153	37	230	56	21	5	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	162	39	233	57	14	3	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	136	33	230	56	37	9	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	130	32	237	58	30	7	6	1
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)	124	30	242	59	16	4	5	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	100	24	270	66	19	5	2	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	112	27	252	61	26	6	5	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	82	20	269	65	27	7	4	1
The school is led and managed effectively	111	27	270	66	7	2	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	167	41	219	53	10	2	3	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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](http://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"><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.**



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gascoigne Primary School, Barking, IG11 7DR

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that Gascoigne Primary is a good school. You clearly enjoy school and we agree with you that your teachers take very good care of you. Your behaviour is excellent, and those of you who have special jobs, like members of the school council, carry out your duties responsibly. We were also struck by the way you all help newcomers to the school settle in and make new friends quickly.

You make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. Those of you new to English develop your skills well and soon make similar progress in all subjects as others in your classes. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make good progress because of the support you receive, particularly from classroom assistants.

Everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. The two things we have asked the teachers and other adults to do are to:

- bring all teaching up to the quality of the best
- help you more through their marking to understand what you can do to reach your targets.

You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and show pride in your school.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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