



Gotherington Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115524
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279618
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector John English RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Lawns
School category	Community		Gotherington
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 9QT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01242 675454
Number on roll	207	Fax number	01242 675454
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Y Cosgrove
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Viv Church

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 279618
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Gotherington Primary School is an average sized primary school serving an advantaged semi-rural area. There are equal numbers of boys and girls, and only a very small proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is low. The school is led by a long-serving headteacher. It has the distinction of being part of a teacher training programme involving outstanding primary schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school believes that it is extremely effective, and inspectors agree. The pupils make excellent progress as they grow through the school. Standards on entry to the reception class are above average, but by the end of Year 6 standards are very high. In addition, the care and guidance the pupils receive enable them to make considerable progress in their personal development, so that they leave the school confident and self-assured. This is because the school has an outstanding headteacher with immense experience, who is very well supported by all the staff at the school. Teaching is outstanding. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and enhanced by a wide range of extra curricular activities, although additional equipment would further enhance learning in the reception class. The school makes very good use of all the resources available and gives very good value for money. The school has well developed processes of self-review. Forward planning appropriately addresses issues which have been identified as requiring improvement. Despite its current high level of effectiveness, the school has both the will and the capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the practical equipment available for children in the reception class.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Most children start school with above average attainment They make excellent progress in the reception class and by the end of the year they all reach the standards expected and many exceed them.

On entry to Year 1, pupils have very good skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' excellent progress continues through Year 1 and by Year 2, standards are high in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

By the end of Year 6, standards are very high. This is because of the quality of teaching and learning, and the pupils' attitude to work in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' work seen in this inspection confirms that outstanding progress is made in all areas of the curriculum, and particularly in English, mathematics and science.

More capable pupils, including those who are gifted or talented, achieve high standards, although more pupils reach the higher levels in literacy than in mathematics.

Challenging targets for pupils' performance in national tests are set, and are in most cases met or exceeded. In 2005 a small proportion of lower attaining pupils did not achieve the expected Level 4 in mathematics, and similarly a few higher attaining pupils did not attain a Level 5 in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They greatly enjoy their lessons and love learning. They flourish because of the school's strong family atmosphere and caring approach. Relationships are very good and this helps to develop pupils' self-esteem. From their first days in the reception class, children adapt easily to school and develop their thirst for learning. Pupils develop their problem solving skills and ability to work successfully in small teams because these life skills are taught systematically throughout the school. Their understanding of the world of work is well developed, for example through links with a famous supermarket. Pupils have many worthwhile opportunities to contribute to decisions about the running of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy eating because the school strongly promotes it. There is an excellent range of games and many opportunities for daily exercise in the playground. Pupils learn very well how to keep themselves safe. Attendance and punctuality are good and the school has very effective procedures to reduce unnecessary absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding throughout the school. In the Reception class exciting topics and stories capture the children's imagination. Stories are brought to life through drama and practical tasks. Teaching is of a consistently high standard during whole class and focused group teaching as well as in purposeful play.

In every year group the teachers match work to pupils' levels of understanding well. This is because the school has very thorough systems for checking what the pupils already know and can do. The teachers' subject knowledge is very good and ensures that they are able to teach subjects in the depth needed for so many very capable pupils. Lessons are thoroughly planned to provide interesting and stimulating activities. This leads to learning which goes well beyond facts and knowledge. The pupils debate, solve problems, and are challenged to think about the underlying issues that they are examining. The pupils often work in groups where the tasks are varied to meet their different capabilities. They are very well supported by additional teachers, trainee teachers and learning assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is broad, rich and relevant to the pupils' interests. It takes full account of the pupils' range of attainment and, from early days in the reception class, includes opportunities for more capable pupils to advance more quickly. Provision for pupils

with learning difficulties is excellent. The school's very strong provision for music and the performing arts greatly enhances learning opportunities.

The curriculum is brought alive through an excellent range of extra curricular activities and a rich array of visits and visitors. Resources are good. However, in the reception class there is a limited range of equipment for developing the children's low level clambering and balancing skills in the outdoor area. There are too few construction kits for developing the children's understanding of moving parts.

Pupils' learning is supported well through displays of work and a variety of reminders and guidance. Safety is a key concern, with warning notices posted when an activity requires particular care on the part of teachers and pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care of pupils is outstanding. All staff show very high levels of care and are committed to ensuring the pupils' well-being. The high quality personal and academic support the pupils receive contributes very effectively to their achievement. The school has excellent systems in English and mathematics to help pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve. Systems for checking and improving pupils' progress are excellent. There are some good opportunities for pupils to begin to develop knowledge and skills appropriate to their future economic and social well-being. The school has very effective procedures for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of its pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are exceptional. The school's very good relationships with parents and other agencies are significant factors in its success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has provided sustained excellent leadership over a long period of time, during which high standards have been consistently maintained. Her vision is shared by all staff. The school's consistently high standards of professional practice reflect the direction provided by the headteacher and senior staff. There is very strong team work throughout the school. Curriculum leaders make a considerable impact on pupils' achievement through the way that they maintain and improve standards in their subjects. All aspects of teaching are managed to the highest standard, including curriculum development, lesson planning, and the use of assessment data for planning and tracking pupils' progress. Teaching staff keep up to date through effective staff development.

The finances are very well managed, and the headteacher has budgeted for additional support staffing and a new computer suite. Governors provide good support for the school and take a strong interest in the progress of the pupils. They have ensured that all statutory requirements are met. The school communicates well with parents and most of them are delighted with the education provided. One parent wrote 'This is state education at its very best'. Inspectors agree with the majority of parents. A few

parents felt that the school was unwilling to consider suggestions for improvements from individual parents. Inspectors believe that the school takes full account of all such views where they are raised and takes action where it is appropriate.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Gotherington Primary School The Lawns Gotherington Gloucestershire GL52 4EP

4 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, and for being so friendly and telling us about your school in such a lively and interesting way. We enjoyed our visit very much, and thank you Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 for singing your school song so beautifully for us just before we left.

You told us that you enjoyed coming to school and that your teachers taught you interesting lessons and were very patient if you did not understand something. You said you felt safe and well looked after. After coming into your lessons and being in the school for two days we agree with you. We found your lessons were often excellent, giving you opportunities to learn in many different ways so that you had no time to be bored. You all knew what you had to do to improve which is always useful.

As a result of all of this, you are all doing well at school. It is good to hear that you feel you can always talk to a teacher if you have any worries about anything.

You obviously enjoy all the opportunities to be involved in visits, clubs and sporting activities. We were impressed by the choir rehearsing at lunch time, and by the number of you who stayed on after school on the first day of our visit for games on the field and the netball pitch. For those of you in the Foundation Stage, we have suggested to your headteacher that some more outdoor play equipment would help you make even better progress.

You are at an excellent school. Well done to all of you and all your teachers and the other adults who help you.

Yours faithfully

John English Lead Inspector