

Gatley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106047
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	336606
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Sarah Drake

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stuart Foster
Headteacher	Ms Michelle Murray
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 25 lessons and observed 16 different teachers. They held meetings with two governors, many staff and four groups of pupils, as well as speaking informally with many pupils. They held telephone conversations with two parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised pupils' work as well as documentation relating to pupils' progress and school management. They also took into account the responses to questionnaires completed by 107 pupils, 28 staff and 111 parents and carers.

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

- the rate of pupils' progress across subjects and throughout the school to determine whether teaching is of consistently high quality
- the impact of changes to the curriculum on pupils' enjoyment of learning, understanding of how to improve their work, and their achievement
- the involvement of all stakeholders in school self-evaluation to determine the strength of pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of the leadership and management
- the extent of the school's provision to promote community cohesion.

Information about the school

This large school serves a suburban area where most accommodation is owner-occupied. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils that belong to a wide range of different minority ethnic groups and that speak English as an additional language are broadly average. The proportion that is eligible to receive a free school meal is half the national average. Well-below average numbers have special educational needs and/or disabilities but the proportion that has a statement of special educational needs is average.

In 2008 the school achieved Creative Partnerships Change School status and the local authority's extended school status. In 2009 it gained the Sports Active Mark, Eco Award and Investors in People status.

A privately-run childcare setting operates on the school site. This did not form part of this inspection but a report of its quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

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

This outstanding school has made remarkable progress since the previous inspection due to reflective, determined and skilful leadership and management. All elements of its provision are of high quality. The curriculum, in particular, is exceptional in the ways that it makes creative links between subjects and involves pupils at every level in directing their own learning. Changes to the curriculum over recent years have been a strong contributory factor to the outstanding progress that pupils of all abilities make during their time at the school. High quality care, guidance and support also play their part in ensuring that pupils can concentrate fully on their learning. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills as typically expected for their age for their age and achieve exceptionally well within that nurturing environment. By the end of Year 6, standards are consistently high in all tested subjects and also in other areas such as information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' personal development. Pupils become enthused by their lessons and, typically make comments such as, 'I love this school and the teaching is really good because they make lessons fun.' High quality teaching is the norm and underpins pupils' excellent achievement. Occasionally, teachers allow pupils to become so engrossed in practical activities that they lose sight of the main purpose of the lesson. Usually, teachers skilfully channel pupils' energies so that they make very good progress through experimentation, research, collaboration and problem-solving. From a very early age, pupils have an exceptional understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Most marking provides them with excellent guidance about the next steps that they need to take but this high quality is not wholly consistent across the school. Pupils' understanding of how to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles, their desire to contribute to the community and their mature approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues are all unusually highly developed. Such success is not easily achieved. Outstanding leadership, starting at the top and filtering down to many levels of staffing, is based on rigorous monitoring and analysis of the effectiveness of all the school's activities. Excellent support to help staff develop their skills has led to innovative practice and clear lines of responsibility. The school's procedures to ensure safeguarding are first rate. The governing body and a very wide range of stakeholders including, crucially, the pupils, contribute strongly to the school's self-evaluation and provide it with outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching, by:
 - making sure that pupils do not become so enthused by the interesting activities

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in lessons that they lose their focus on the desired learning outcome

- ensuring that the best marking practices are applied consistently across the school.

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

Typically, classrooms in this school buzz with the hum of busy learners concentrating hard on the task in hand. Pupils listen very well to adults and to each other and regularly take time to, 'consider where I am up to and think what I need to do next.' Good relationships and sensible behaviour mean that no time is wasted in lessons. From a young age, pupils discuss and negotiate well, for example, drafting ideas to create a recipe for a 'girl pie' or a 'boy pie' then editing them before writing the final outcome in their books. The great majority of pupils work with high levels of independence and concentration. They are experts at using skills learnt in one area such as ICT to enhance another, for example, selecting sound effects to back up an oral presentation about the experiences of those living through World War 2. Pupils relish a challenge, such as using their multiplication skills to negotiate a route from school to the local shop. Such enthusiasm, combined with high-quality support for those who find learning more difficult or who are at an early stage of learning English, means that pupils of all ages and abilities achieve exceptionally well. Standards at the end of both key stages are significantly above average overall and for different groups of pupils.

This is a happy school in which the overwhelming majority of pupils say they feel safe. Recently, pupils helped to plan a 'Healthy Us' week which led to, for instance, school councillors initiating surveys to promote healthy snack and lunchbox choices. Eco councillors have organised competitions to promote energy conservation through switching off computers or recycling paper. The creative council has decided how teachers should spend the funds allocated to each classroom, agreeing to wall paintings 'to make the Nursery environment more inviting' but turning down a class pet 'because it wouldn't be fair to other classes if they didn't have one too.' The school operates as a harmonious community in which pupils from a variety of different backgrounds get on very well with each other. They behave well, although they are sometimes noisy and do not always show respect for others. However, they do reflect on their actions and can empathise with others, for example, through role play activities. Punctuality is excellent and attendance is above average. Pupils leave the school believing in themselves and exceptionally well equipped with skills to support their future well-being.

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	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use their strong subject knowledge, excellent awareness of individuals' different abilities and meticulous planning to create lessons that inspire in pupils an excitement about learning. Adults' open questioning and valuing of pupils' responses encourage them all, whatever their ability, to think hard about what they are doing and, in turn, to pose their own questions and find ways to answer them. Teachers skilfully incorporate pupils' questions into the week-by-week planning and ensure that, over time, they develop all the necessary key skills to a high level. They make clear at the outset of lessons their expectations of what pupils must, should and could do. Most marking is excellent. The best marking, which is particularly apparent in English books, guides pupils towards the next steps in their learning, but this quality is not yet consistent throughout the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 regularly use their individual target cards to select which level of difficulty they are going to attempt when undertaking an activity. In Year 6, pupils use charts at the back of their literacy books to decide which rung of the target ladder they are aiming for. Lessons move at a good pace with imaginative use of resources, ranging from radio and video clips to soil, sand and stones, that fire pupils' enthusiasm. Occasionally, teachers allow pupils to discuss and experiment for too long rather than ensuring that they remain focussed on the purpose of the task. Far more frequently, a judicious question or swift sharing of ideas and discoveries are enough to re-establish really purposeful activity.

The vibrant curriculum is organised exceptionally well with many innovative activities that catch pupils' interest and cater for their needs. For example, some are currently honing their technology and cooperative skills by creating willow domes in which pupils

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throughout the school can reflect on and discuss their own and others' poetry. Rigorous monitoring of individuals' progress, based on termly assessments, leads to a wide range of small group and one-to-one sessions designed to support their particular needs. This includes nurture sessions for those who find self-discipline difficult, who lack self-esteem or who just need to talk about what is bothering them. Activities such as welly walks' or conducting surveys of local residents' opinions on issues such as parking, bring learning to life for pupils. Many opportunities to develop musical, other artistic and physical skills add further enrichment. The entire provision, including careful support at transition times, is firmly and successfully founded on ensuring that pupils flourish academically, physically and emotionally.

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?

First-class leadership provides the keystone to the school's success. Thoughtful evaluation of the current situation and debate about the vision for the future led directly to the adoption of the creative approach to providing for pupils' needs, the outcomes of which are so impressive. The recent introduction of curriculum teams is proving effective in devolving responsibilities and providing opportunities for many individuals to develop their leadership skills. Monitoring and evaluation days, along with regular meetings of staff, the groupings of which vary according to the meeting focus, contribute to decision making about future action and secure general consistency of approach. The governing body provides strategic guidance and excellent support for the school and is prepared to take robust action when necessary. Outstanding procedures are in place to safeguard children from harm. These include rigorous checking of any visitors to school and the involvement of pupils in risk assessing potential hazards. Imaginative use of funding and outside expertise means that the school provides excellent value for money. Close partnerships with many external agencies greatly enhance staff members' professional development, the curriculum and the support provided for individuals. This ensures equality of opportunity for all whether they are particularly gifted or have additional needs. The school promotes community cohesion very effectively in its immediate locality and, after conducting a thorough audit of its current provision, is taking good strides towards extending its work both nationally and globally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children thrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make excellent progress in their learning. This is because the adults encourage them to decide what they would like to know more about, for example, 'Under the Sea', and skilfully adapt both the planning, to ensure the provision covers all areas of learning, and their questioning, so that they provide equal challenge and support according to children's different needs. High-quality leadership and management have created an excellent staff team whose members share a strong sense of purpose and are ambitious for continuous improvement. From a very early age, children confidently express their thoughts and talk about their experiences to the whole class. The great majority make positive choices about what they wish to play with and some concentrate for lengthy periods on one activity. They assess whether they themselves or other children have achieved a given task, such as accurately repeating each other's news, or how they could have improved on it. Children's skills are broadly as expected for their age when they join the Nursery but well above average in all areas of learning by the time they join Year 1. Their personal development and creative skills are particularly impressive. Indoors and outside, the activities closely reflect each other and are extremely well structured to extend children's imagination, skills and risk taking within a safe, nurturing environment. Children have a very good knowledge of hygiene routines and thoroughly enjoy their sociable snack times. Close working with parents and carers prior to children starting each year group, plus workshops and weekly newsletters, ensure that the school and home work in partnership to support children's learning.

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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

Around one quarter of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Of these a very large majority expressed great satisfaction with the school's provision, with an overwhelming majority agreeing that their children enjoy school. Opinions are more mixed about the success with which the school communicates with parents and carers or acts on their concerns. Some praise the 'very accessible and approachable staff' whilst others write of 'limited information' and that 'the school listens to suggestions but I don't know that they are always acted on'. The school's own survey, conducted in the summer of 2009, highlighted similar concerns. Inspectors find that, since then, the school has taken positive action to provide more regular information and increased opportunities for parents and carers to become partners in their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gatley 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 436 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	63	43	34	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	61	42	33	4	3	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	58	46	61	48	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	41	62	49	10	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	68	54	53	42	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	50	52	41	9	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	57	46	36	7	6	1	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)	53	42	60	47	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	40	68	54	4	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	42	60	47	7	6	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	37	62	49	11	9	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	51	53	42	6	5	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	56	48	38	3	2	3	2

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.



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gatley Primary School, Cheadle, SK8 4NB

Thank you for being so friendly to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Particular thanks should go to those of you who talked with us in detail about all the exciting opportunities that you have to learn new skills and to take on responsibilities. You are very lucky to go to a school where the adults take so much notice of your views. You told us that your school is, 'amazing, interesting, lively, fun, exciting and friendly'. We agree with you and judge that it is outstanding.

We were impressed by every aspect of the school's work. We were particularly pleased to see how cleverly the teachers organise things so that you have great fun whilst you are learning, use your skills in lots of different ways and make excellent progress throughout the school. This means that the standards you achieve are well above those that most children of your age reach. Children in the Nursery and Reception have a great time experimenting as they learn and it was good to see that older pupils do this too. It was also good to discover how much you know about living healthily and keeping yourselves safe. You generally behave very well but sometimes are rather noisy and forget to show respect for others. In lessons you listen extremely well to the adults and each other. We were delighted to see how confident you are about evaluating your work and deciding on ways to improve it.

The senior teachers know very well how to keep on making things even better for you. We have asked them to make sure that all teachers check in lessons that some of you do not become so engrossed in the interesting activities that you forget the reason why you're doing them! You can help with this by concentrating hard. We have also asked all teachers, not just the very best, to give you clear guidance when marking your work about what you need to do next to improve it.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sarah Drake

Lead Inspector

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