

Gillibrand Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119324
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358534
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2011
Reporting inspector	John Heap

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Thain
Headteacher	Ms Sharon Bryson
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
School address	Grosvenor Road Chorley Lancashire PR7 2PJ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed and these were taught by six teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation that included: the school's improvement and action plans, records of pupils' achievements, samples of the work in their books, minutes of the governing body meetings, teachers' lesson planning, safeguarding documents and records relating to the budget. Forty parental questionnaires were returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether attainment is high enough and progress good enough in writing and mathematics to judge whether the use of assessment is rigorously matching work to pupils' needs and there are enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical and writing skills.
- The achievement of groups of pupils at both key stages to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- How well the school is promoting and developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural traditions and issues.
- The quality of the school's evaluation of the Early Years Foundation Stage and why it may be an area for improvement.
- The ways leaders and managers are embedding ambition and driving improvement, given the recent changes to personnel and reported improvements since the last inspection.

Information about the school

Gillibrand is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and a small proportion is from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class. The two classes in Key Stage 1 have single-age groups. In Key Stage 2 there are three classes with mixed-age groups of Years 3 and 4, Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6. In Key Stage 2, pupils are taught literacy and numeracy in sets that are made up of pupils with similar levels of ability. Since September 2010, there has been a 50% turnover of staff, including a change of deputy headteacher. The school has earned the Healthy School status, the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) Quality Mark and the Artsmark.

The school is a member of the local cluster of schools. This group provides extended activities for pupils and professional support.

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

Gillibrand is a good and improving school. Leaders have shown an ambition and determination to improve this previously satisfactory school. Their efforts have been rewarded. In particular, there have been significant improvements to the quality of lesson planning; the marking of pupils' work and the use of assessment information to challenge pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the work done by the school and a typical view is, 'Our children are very happy there. The staff are well-motivated, happy and approachable and the school is well run.'

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is a particular strength and, as a result, behaviour is good and the majority of pupils are very regular attenders. The strong care, guidance and support promote pupils' good knowledge and understanding of how to be healthy and their expressed view of feeling safe and secure in school. Pupils make a good contribution to the school through, for instance, the active school council and in the many worthwhile jobs they do in the school.

Inspectors agree with the school that the Early Years Foundation Stage is a satisfactory, but improving area of the school. Improvement has been slower than in other aspects of school life because leadership and management have lacked rigour. Children enter with skills and abilities that are a little below those typical for their age. Sound teaching and an adequate learning environment ensure that they enter Year 1 with attainment that is broadly average. The development of early writing skills, particularly those of the boys, is weaker than the other areas of learning promoted. This is because opportunities for children to write are missed, particularly in other areas of learning.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, mostly good teaching builds effectively on this solid foundation so that pupils' progress and achievement are good. The school's own data and the work in books show pupils to be well on track to achieve securely average attainment. Pupils are well prepared for their future learning because they have well-developed personal qualities and speaking and listening skills, with improving literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills that they apply in a range of contexts. Their attendance is average and punctuality is consistent. Assessment information is mostly used well. Progress in reading and mathematics has accelerated in recent years. However, there is a small group of more-able pupils who reach very secure average attainment in writing and could more often achieve above average levels. This inconsistency is sometimes due to less precise expectations of their capabilities, occasionally missed opportunities for all pupils to write in other subjects and, at times, less sharp measures of success in the school improvement plan. Though the curriculum is satisfactory, provision for the development of pupils' cultural awareness is under-developed.

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The headteacher is well supported by her new deputy headteacher, senior staff and members of the governing body. Improvements owe much to a successful emphasis on rigorously checking both pupils' learning and the quality of the staff's work. As a result, pupils are making more progress and the quality of teaching has improved to good. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans identify the correct issues for the school. Subject leaders report regularly on their areas of responsibility and contribute well to the drive for improvement. Governance is good. The governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses and play a significant role in checking on the school's work and pupils' learning. All of this has led to good improvement since the last inspection and shows the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the curriculum by:
 - providing pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills across subjects
 - developing pupils' cultural awareness and their understanding of global issues.
- Enable the small group of the most able pupils to more consistently reach above average attainment in writing by:
 - ensuring there is a more precise picture of what they need to do to reach their full capabilities
 - making sure regular opportunities are provided for them to write more widely, particularly in other subjects such as history and geography
 - developing measures of success in the school improvement plan that make it clear when the school has met its targets for these pupils.
- Further improve the outcomes and provision to good in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - increasing opportunities for children, especially boys, to practise their early writing skills in the other areas of learning
 - raising the quality of teaching and learning to consistently good
 - implementing a more rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation activities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, pupils are developing good basic skills, most evidently in reading, mathematics and ICT. This is due to predominantly good teaching and the stronger elements of the otherwise satisfactory curriculum. Where the teacher used ICT well, as in a Year 2 sounds and letters lesson, pupils were seen to be watchful and enthusiastic learners. The graphics helped the pupils to understand what was going on and misconceptions were dealt with quickly. Overall, the majority of pupils make good progress in writing, reaching at least average levels. Basic skills are very secure. Progress in writing is a little slower for a small minority of the most able pupils because there is slightly less precision in the setting of pupils' learning targets so that they can achieve the higher attainment levels. The quality of teaching and learning in the ability groups for literacy and numeracy is mostly good.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from good support in lessons and are making good progress. The progress of yet other, smaller groups of pupils, including looked after children are checked assiduously and their overall progress is the equal of the majority of pupils.

Results in national tests, generally, confirm the picture of good progress. Scores in tests vary from year to year because of differences in the size of groups and the abilities of different cohorts of pupils. In 2010, boys and girls had similar attainment at the end of Year 2, but girls did better than the boys at the end of Year 2. Nevertheless, there was little difference in the progress they made, particularly in mathematics.

Pupils say they enjoy school and their parents and carers agree. Inspection evidence confirms pupils' views that they find lessons and other activities interesting and challenging. Pupils say they feel safe. It is clear that older pupils, in particular, play a significant part in this by effectively taking on roles such as the 'Buddies' who look after the Key Stage 1 pupils and the 'Pals' who look after those in Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Their knowledge and understanding of pupils who face challenging circumstances are informed by good links with, for instance, local special schools. Pupils' strong attitudes to learning and their good behaviour make significant contributions to the predominantly good lessons observed. Cultural development is satisfactory, with strengths in pupils' learning about the locality and the work they have done about a wide range of religions. However, the satisfactory curriculum provides fewer opportunities to learn about national and global issues.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching seen during the inspection was good. There were no inadequate or outstanding lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge; they teach the basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well and test pupils' knowledge and understanding through strong questioning. For example, in a good Year 5/6 lesson, good questioning about the most appropriate words to link together two sentences enabled a wide range of pupils to contribute at their own level of understanding. This method also proved to be an effective way to informally judge how well pupils were doing and progressing. Teaching assistants play an important role in helping pupils to learn. They are fully involved in lessons and know when to intervene to have the biggest impact. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teaching assistant helped targeted pupils in the introductory part of the lesson and pupils were encouraged to show increasing oral accuracy and enthusiasm for the task.

Overall, there has been a major improvement in the checking of pupils' learning, the effective setting of learning targets and the strong marking skills. Pupils know their targets, what they do well and what they need to do to improve further. Assessment information is used well to identify pupils for the different literacy and numeracy groups. This arrangement is raising attainment and beginning to accelerate progress. However, for a small minority of the most able pupils, assessment is, on occasions, not used precisely enough to increase their rate of progress from a very secure average to a consistently higher level.

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Staff provide a good range of extra activities that enrich and extend pupils' learning experiences, including a range of visits and visitors. Parents and carers clearly appreciate this and one written comment was 'My child has had the opportunity to take part in many sporting and musical events with some teachers devoting a lot of their own time to allow the children to participate.' The school monitors attendance at clubs in order to foster equality of opportunity. Visits are encouraged, such as ones to listen to the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and to the Science Museum in Manchester. Pupils identified as gifted and talented benefit from local school cluster activities that are funded by Chorley Children's Trust Project. Across the subjects, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills, for instance, in history and geography. Moreover, the curriculum provides only limited insights into the variety and diversity of cultures both nationally and globally.

Care, guidance and support are good and effectively promote pupils' personal development. Pupils know they can rely on staff when support is required. Specialist outside agencies are well deployed at appropriate times when pupils with extra needs require them. The school can point to individual pupils making significant gains in their academic and personal development when working in concert with these agencies. New pupils are made welcome and induction processes are good. The speed at which most settle is testimony to this. Furthermore, the school provides extra guidance on specific safety matters, such as the Right Start Pedestrian Training in Key Stage 1 and Cycling Proficiency Training in Key Stage 2.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior staff and strong governing body have successfully driven forward a number of improvements, such as: pupils' good achievement; more effective teaching and use of assessment information and; the stronger monitoring and evaluation of provision. There has also been the re-establishment of an effective Parent Teacher Association which is a key factor in the school's good engagement with parents. This group, in turn, is also bringing about improvements by acquiring and donating funds for much needed resources that impact well on pupils' learning, such as new ICT equipment. Partnerships with outside agencies are good. The curriculum is extended by links with the local high school, for example, in French, where staff visit to teach pupils and deliver model lessons for the benefit of teachers. Effective links also exist with support services, for example, the educational psychology service and family services. These partnerships impact well on individuals and groups of learners.

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The school's recognition that all pupils need to progress as well as each other has been a significant driving force behind the good improvements in the assessment of pupils' learning; the tracking of pupils' achievements and in the grouping of pupils according to their prior ability. Consequently, a good range of strategies have been implemented, although the impact of these strategies has not been fully felt across all groups, for example, a very small group of the most able writers. This means that the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory with good features. Planning for the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The strengths include the work done by the school council within the extended structure of the local cluster of schools in areas such as gathering ideas for the Key Stage 2 playground markings. Moreover, there is good work on a wide range of religions which has resulted in some good writing and so has impacted well on pupils' achievement. However, the development of national and global perspectives is relatively weak. The school is in the early stages of pursuing a partnership with a school in Sri Lanka. Safeguarding procedures are good and robust. Regular risk assessments are made and governors take their responsibility for health and safety seriously.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The broad range of activities both indoors and outdoors provide opportunities for children to make a sound start to their education. Satisfactory teaching and leadership ensure that children make the expected progress in most areas of learning. The adequate tracking of children's achievements points to better progress in reading and calculating. However, there are slower gains in early writing, particularly for the large number of boys. This is because of missed opportunities for children to make their marks when doing their other work in the full range of learning areas. Children settle quickly and work willingly in the appropriately balanced mix of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children. Most

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children are beginning to make choices from the activities provided and are showing independence and the ability to persevere for extended periods. For example, in one lesson, children used the outdoor area effectively to build a 'den' using natural materials and large blocks. Interesting discussions related to solving ways of joining materials. Regular teaching of letter sounds provides the children with a firm foundation for learning to read. Teachers and support staff have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding about working with this age group. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has sound and improving leadership and management skills. These ensure that prevailing strengths and areas for development are identified through an adequate range of monitoring activities that include: discussion; parent and carer questionnaires; and analysis of achievement data. However, the gathering of information and its use lack sufficient rigour yet this issue is beginning to be addressed. All safeguarding practices and training meet requirements.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are supportive of and positive about the school's work. They are particularly happy with: the good teaching; the information they receive and opportunities to be heard; the way the school keeps their children safe; how well the school promotes healthy lifestyles; the good preparation for the future and their children's enjoyment of school. The vast majority of returns express satisfaction in the way that the school is led and managed. A very small minority of respondents suggest that: the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour; their child's particular needs are not met and not enough progress being made. Inspectors looked closely at these issues but found little evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gillibrand 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 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 155 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	65	15	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	67	14	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	58	18	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	58	17	40	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	58	18	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	51	20	47	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	65	15	35	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)	22	51	20	47	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	53	19	44	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	47	22	51	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	47	21	49	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	65	15	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	70	12	28	1	2	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



25 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gillibrand Primary School, Chorley, PR7 2PJ

The inspection team thoroughly enjoyed its recent visit to your good school. We appreciated particularly the warm welcome, courtesy and help that you all provided.

What we really liked about your school:

- the effective teaching that leads to the good progress you make in lessons and during the time you are in school
- your good behaviour and the good attitudes to school and work
- the good support the school provides for pupils who have extra learning needs and the good progress they make
- the effective partnerships developed with the community that adds to your learning and your enjoyment of school, such as those with the local high and special schools
- the good care and welfare that is provided by all adults and how this helps you to feel safe and confident
- the way the strong school council helps in the running of the school
- the good leadership and management of the headteacher, senior staff and governors.

In order to make your school even better, the school will:

- help some of you to make more progress in your writing, particularly those of you who find learning easier. You can help in this by ensuring that you know your targets, read comments from your teacher carefully and act upon them
- make further improvements in the Reception class with more opportunities for the youngest children to have a go at writing and more checking of what is going on and judging how well things are being done.

Have a great summer and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Heap

Lead inspector

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