

# Gonville Academy

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	136714
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	395691
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Narinder Dohel

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>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	532
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julie Booth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Ducker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Gonville Road Thornton Heath CR7 6DL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8684 4006
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8665 9207
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	25–26 June 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395691



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Narinder Dohel	Additional inspector
Olson Davis	Additional inspector
Nicholas West	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twenty-five lessons and nine shorter sessions were observed; three of these were undertaken jointly by inspectors and school leaders. Inspectors also listened to pupils read. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the academy's work, and looked at some of the academy's documentation. This included records of monitoring of teaching, information about pupils' attainment and progress, school improvement planning, policies, curriculum plans, pupils' work, attendance and safeguarding. Meetings were held with parents and carers and with a representative of Croydon Local Authority. Inspectors scrutinised 209 questionnaires received from parents and carers, and others from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

In May 2011, Gonville Primary School became Gonville Academy. It is led by the headteacher who is also executive headteacher of one other school in the Striving Together for Excellence Partnership, and supports a third. The governing body now also manages after-school provision as well as a breakfast club.

Gonville Academy is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The majority of pupils are of minority ethnic backgrounds; the largest groups are of Caribbean, African or Pakistani heritage. Approximately half of all pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils receiving support at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The academy has achieved a range of quality marks and awards including accreditation by Investors In People, Healthy Schools, and UNICEF (as a Rights Respecting School), and for inclusion, information and communication technology, and basic skills. It has the Activemark, Bronze Art Mark, holds the International Schools Award, and is a Fronter Champion School. The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. During the time of inspection, the academy was having an arts week.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The development of reading is a key strength, and the focus on writing and introduction of a new curriculum are having a good impact on progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage has seen significant improvement and is now good. The academy is not yet outstanding because in some lessons pupils’ misconceptions are not always addressed rapidly and questioning does not always extend learning.
- Achievement is good. From low starting points, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a very quick start to developing their skills in language, communication and numeracy. Progress is good throughout Years 1–6.
- The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are carefully planned to match the needs of pupils. Concise and effective marking gives pupils clarity about how to improve their work. They are given time to act on marking but this is better in English than in mathematics. The best teaching engages, inspires and motivates pupils to give of their best. Teachers and support staff work effectively together. Where, occasionally, explanations are not clear, the pace of learning is slower.
- The ‘Rights Respecting School’ ethos runs strongly through the academy, resulting in outstanding behaviour which underpins the pace and enjoyment of learning in lessons. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning, are polite, thoughtful and take their responsibilities seriously. They feel safe and valued. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. Leaders and managers, including governors, have high expectations and an uncompromising insistence on quality. The school is moving in the right direction but outstanding teaching is not yet consistently in place. Honesty and consistency of approach underpin the drive for getting the best for all children and bring about improvements that benefit pupils. The new curriculum is providing good

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opportunities for pupils to make gains in their learning, most notably in English and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- Improve teaching by making sure:
  - teachers use targeted questioning that challenges pupils and extends their learning
  - explanations are clear
  - misconceptions are identified quickly
  - in mathematics, pupils are given time to act on advice given in marking.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make rapid progress from low starting points. They make good progress across the academy so that by the time they leave in Year 6 attainment is broadly in line with national averages, though historically higher in English than in mathematics. Through regular tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress, the academy has been increasingly successful at closing any gaps in attainment between pupil groups. Early intervention, skilled teaching support and work in close partnership with parents and carers lead to the good progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Progress is equally good for pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds, including those speaking English as an additional language and for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children make good progress and that their needs are well met.

By the end of Year 1, most pupils have an appropriate awareness of how to make and blend sounds to help them in their reading and writing, and by the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils are achieving the expected standard in reading. Right across the academy pupils are interested and engaged in a wide range of reading activities so that by Year 6, attainment is above average in reading, and pupils are skilled in understanding how an author uses language and grammatical features in characterisation.

Pupils typically enjoy their learning, concentrate well and are keen to share their ideas and learning. This is most marked in writing where pupils use ambitious and creative language, showing good stamina and ideas. Pupils are able to work well independently as well as collaborate with others. This was particularly striking in a mathematics lesson where a group of pupils were seen confidently helping each other identify properties of three-dimensional shapes while using this information to decide how to produce their own very individual representations of the information.

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There is no doubt that the content and the skills-based approach of the new curriculum is beginning to have a real impact on deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they are learning and why.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers' high expectations, subject knowledge, and relationships with pupils are impressive. Consequently, the quality of teaching is good and sometimes better. Teaching is typically lively and focused on making learning meaningful. Teachers use a wide range of trips and visitors to capture pupils' interest when starting a new theme. This often adds to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An outstanding example was when Year 5 pupils were 'evacuated' to Devon and built survival shelters as part of their work on migration. This inspired some very creative and imaginative written work. Instructions are clear, and classrooms provide helpful prompts and materials to encourage independence and investigation.

In most lessons, perceptive and targeted questioning allows pupils to demonstrate and extend their learning. Where this was less effective, the pace of learning was slower and pupils were not always sufficiently challenged. In a few lessons, pupils' learning is satisfactory rather than better. This is usually where misunderstandings are not quickly addressed or explanations are not helpful enough. Marking is rigorous and consistent across subjects, and exemplary in writing. Pupils are told their next steps and given time to address these in writing, but less frequently in mathematics. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults are astute in knowing when and where to interject to move children's learning on. There is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities, and as a result, children are very confident and highly independent. Across the school, reading skills are well taught and systematically built on, enabling pupils to achieve well.

The academy is systematic in checking pupils' progress. Regular meetings identify targeted support and interventions, plans are drawn up and parents are informed. The good teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs can be seen in the informed and sensitive approach of teachers and additional staff when working with individual pupils and small groups. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view that their children are taught well. The established 'managed learning environment' means that pupils and families have constant access to homework, activities and information. While pupils can confidently navigate this, parents and carers are not all so much at ease with it.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are rightly proud of their academy and told inspectors that they had 'high expectations' of themselves and each other. Behaviour in and around the academy was impressive during the inspection and other evidence shows that this is typical. Pupils are very clear that behaviour is good in their academy. Parents and carers are extremely positive about behaviour and children's safety. A very few raised concerns about behaviour and how effectively the academy deals with bullying. Inspectors

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explored this through analysing records and speaking directly with a group of parents and carers and a number of pupils. They found these aspects were well resolved and not an issue. Some parental questionnaires stressed how the academy had got their children 'back on track'. Pupils feel safe and have very few concerns about bullying. They have a well-developed understanding of different types of bullying and how to deal with it. They feel confident that any very rare incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils are well supported in developing their confidence and self-esteem. As pupil advocates, they have clearly defined roles and take their responsibilities very seriously. They help others in and around school. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and are keen and enthusiastic learners who want to achieve well. Attendance is above the national average and improving. During breakfast and after-school clubs, pupils are welcomed, safe and well looked after. They enjoy their activities cooperatively and behave very well.

### **Leadership and management**

During a time of expansion and development of the partnership, it is the strong teamwork driven by the determination and vision of the headteacher and governors that has maintained a focus on improvement. Most notably, this focus has been on the Early Years Foundation Stage, the curriculum and on pupils' writing. The improvements that have resulted demonstrate that the academy has the capacity to improve achievement and the quality of teaching even further.

A strong culture of learning amongst staff emerges from an effective programme of support combined with good performance management. Procedures for monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are rigorous and effective. The sharing of skills and practice results in teaching that is good and improving with some that is outstanding. Work across partnership schools has resulted in greater clarity and consistency of approach in identifying what the academy does well and where it needs to improve. Subject leaders are systematic in monitoring their areas of responsibility to ensure that planning and marking leads to pupils making progress in their learning. The governors are well informed and work closely with the academy. They visit lessons and talk to teachers and pupils. They have recently refocused committees to better support and challenge the work of the academy. The academy's procedures for safeguarding are secure and robust. The academy tackles discrimination and promotes equal opportunity well. The pursuit of excellence for all pupils within and beyond the school community ensures that any gaps in attainment between pupil groups have closed quickly.

The reshaped curriculum or 'Discovery Time' is having a marked effect on pupils' engagement and enjoyment of learning, and is starting to have an impact on the progress they are making, for example in writing. It is extremely popular with pupils, and many parents and carers say they have noticed a renewed enthusiasm and excitement in learning amongst the children. The breadth and quality of provision ensures that promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is

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strong. Themes such as space and fitness have been selected to respond to pupils' interests. Pupils learn French from an early age and have access to a wide range of curriculum and extra-curricular activities such as film club, Spanish club and theme weeks such as science week and art week. As part of art week, inspectors were able to see how links are made across subjects. For example, in one outstanding assembly, pupils watched clips of puppets from Kenya and Vietnam, and were encouraged to think about different types of puppets, materials they are made of, cultural similarities and how to treat visitors who would be running a puppet workshop. In another, older pupils were asked to consider philosophical questions such as 'Is graffiti art?'

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



27 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Gonville Academy, Croydon CR7 6DL**

We would like to thank you very much for making us so welcome and helping us find out about your academy. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you. Your comments and poems about your academy helped us to understand what you think of it. We saw that you are rightly proud of your academy.

These are some of the good things we found out: You go to a good school and really enjoy being there. Your behaviour is outstanding because you think carefully about how to do the right thing and look after each other well. Your reading is good and your writing is getting better all the time because of the exciting things that you get to do and learn about in school through "Discovery Time". The children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a much better outdoor space for playing and learning than they had when inspectors last visited your academy.

The people who lead the academy want to help it continue to improve. We have asked your teachers to help your lessons get even better by making sure that:

- they ask you carefully chosen questions to make you think hard about what you are learning
- explanations are always clear
- they notice quickly and help when you misunderstand something (all of you can help here by making sure you tell your teacher if you are not sure about anything)
- they give you time to look carefully at your mathematics work and improve it after it has been marked.

Thank you once again, and my very best wishes to you.

Yours sincerely

Narinder Dohel  
Lead inspector

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