

# Gorseland Primary School

Deben Avenue, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, IP5 3QR

**Inspection dates** 16–17 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Most pupils achieve well and make good progress given their individual starting points.
- Pupils in the specialist support unit, who are disabled or have complex special educational needs, make especially good progress in their personal development.
- Behaviour around the school is outstanding; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good.
- Pupils show a fine example in their attitudes to learning; they cooperate very effectively and know how to keep each other safe.
- Pupils and adults show high levels of respect for each other; the quality of their working relationships is a strength of the school.
- Leadership, management and governance are good. There is effective teamwork and systematic approaches to improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Leaders at all levels have a cooperative and beneficial influence on school improvement.
- The large majority of teaching is good throughout the school. The quality of some teaching and learning is outstanding.
- The school aims to provide the best possible education for its pupils.
- Good opportunity is being taken, under the new headteacher, to build on the school's established strengths.
- The school is regarded highly by its families.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some aspects of teaching across the school require further development.
- The school's expectations of informative marking, and pupils' responses to this, are not achieved consistently by all teachers.
- Standards in mathematics are not yet as high as they are overall in English.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, teachers' pronunciation of the different sounds that letters make is not consistent.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, the school encourages families to support their children's learning through contributions to their 'Learning Journey' records, but with mixed success.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons, including ten which were seen jointly with members of the school’s leadership team. All 16 class teachers, and their teaching assistants, were seen working with the pupils. Daily registration time was observed and inspectors attended assemblies.
- Three sessions of the work of the specialist support centre were observed. This involved seeing all the staff concerned working with their pupils.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils selected at random by the lead inspector. These included those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Inspectors heard a sample of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read and explored the pupils’ reading records.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, various monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families and governing body documents.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the leader of the school’s specialist support centre, subject coordinators, class teachers, teaching assistants, the special educational needs coordinator, the school’s librarian, administrative staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took into consideration the 81 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke personally with a number of parents and carers at the start of the school day. The 20 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Terence Cook	Additional Inspector
Judith Dawson	Additional Inspector
Mina Drever	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school serving families mainly from its local community and surrounding area. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The headteacher took up his post at the start of the Summer Term 2013, and had been in post for less than a month at the time of the inspection.
- The school works with other local schools through the Farlingaye cluster.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average; this is due to the school's specially resourced provision.
- The specialist support centre caters for up to 25 pupils, aged from 5 to 11, with complex learning difficulties. There are some pupils with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties. There are currently 25 attending the unit, who come from across the local authority area.
- There is full- or part-time alternative provision, through the local authority, for pupils who may need additional support, and who are awaiting transfer to special schools. This is currently at the Centre for Behaviour Therapy (CfBT), a specialist centre in Ipswich.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

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

- :Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, and improve pupils' achievement, by:
  - ensuring the marking of pupils' work is more consistent, regular and focused more specifically on helping pupils to know exactly how well they are doing, and what to improve
  - ensuring that there is more consistency in giving pupils the opportunity to correct and develop their work, both to encourage them to work independently and challenge them even further.
- Ensure the momentum for pupils' improving progress in mathematics and numeracy is maintained across all year groups by:
  - extending the opportunities for pupils to use and apply their calculation skills across a wider range of subjects and through 'real-life' situations
  - providing a more consistent approach to the teaching of calculation skills across the school.
- Enhance children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 by:
  - ensuring a consistent approach by teachers to the pronunciation of the sound that letters and combinations of letters make
  - encouraging more parents and carers to contribute to their children's learning journey journals by including personal, family observations and photographs relating to their children's learning and development at home.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When children join the school, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectation. They make good progress, and this is gradually feeding through the school and securely raising both achievement and standards across all year groups.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children are used to being asked to explain what they are doing. This encourages good development of their speaking and listening skills. In the Reception class, children develop well their understanding of the sounds letters make including through enthusiastic singing, and the fun use of glove puppets. Where children are mastering writing, this is well-formed and their writing tools are held correctly.
- In terms of their overall points score (the measure by which all pupils are assessed nationally at the end of each stage of their education), pupils in the main school typically achieve well and make good progress across all year groups. Nationally published data for the school includes the pupils from the support centre; this does skew the apparent overall results by Year 6. In reality, the attainment of most pupils' is above average by the time they transfer to secondary school.
- Current Year 6 pupils are achieving particularly well in English and mathematics. Their work and school assessments show that most have made potentially outstanding progress, but this has to be tested through their final achievements in the 2013 national tests.
- Pupils' progress is aided by their above average standards in reading. Although fewer pupils than nationally gained expected marks in the Year 1 phonics screening test, the attainment of Year 2 pupils in reading is above average; this helps significantly in their learning. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading. They are supported in this by the school's excellent library. The librarian ensures pupils have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. The library is used very effectively, and helps ensure pupils' love of and value of books.
- Pupils who attend the specialist support centre have such a wide range of individual and complex difficulties that it is only appropriate to assess their achievement and progress individually. Such pupils make good progress, particularly in their personal development; this helps prepare them well for their future lives. They achieve so well because of consistently good, and often outstanding teaching, and the expertise of their learning support assistants. This is a fine example of how the school promotes equality of opportunity for its pupils.
- Discussions with two of the unit's older pupils showed they were able to relate well to adults because of the trust they have in the staff. They were keen to show off their vegetable garden, and the cakes they had made from the rhubarb grown there. They were proud of their written work about the garden. This made an important contribution to the development of their speech, language and communication skills.
- Most of the pupils attending the school who are eligible for the additional pupil premium funding, and who have a statement of special educational needs, attend the unit and make good progress. In 2012, the proportion of pupils in the unit making better than expected progress was slightly higher than for other pupils in the main school.
- Other pupils identified as being disabled or having special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make equally as good progress as their peers. Their teachers know and understand well their needs, and plan specifically for these. In summer 2012, the gap in attainment between pupils in the main school who were known to be eligible for free

school meals and similar pupils nationally, was the equivalent of less than a term in both English and mathematics; such pupils achieve well.

- Where pupils with specific individual or learning needs mean they are educated off-site, the arrangements for this are monitored well and their progress checked regularly by the school. Such provision supports their potential for learning well.
- Excellent progress was made by pupils in both Year 6 classes in their work on the 'Dragons' Apprentice'. This ranged extensively across careers, employment, literacy, numeracy, art and design and technology. Pupils considered in some depth the skills they possessed as future employees. They used their well-developed creative imagination to work in groups on some excellent designs for a new product. Pupils listened attentively to each other's contributions, and this helped stimulate the development of their ideas. It was hard work but great fun.

### **The quality of teaching is good**

- The influence of the teaching extends beyond lessons. The staff provide excellent role models for the pupils. Working relationships are of high quality. Pupils and staff strive to do their best for, and support each other. Pupils see their teachers and their assistants as a real strength.
- Most teachers use questioning very effectively, not only to check pupils' understanding but also to challenge them to explain their thinking and ideas. This is not only instinctive with some teachers, but also results from good planning and lesson preparation. As a result, pupils gain good levels of development in their critical, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Outstanding teaching was seen in a Year 3 history lesson. Here, the development of pupils' skills in investigating the past through artefacts from the Tudor period was promoted very effectively. In a subsequent philosophy lesson, pupils were challenged further to consider what might be 'real' or 'not real'. This made a major contribution to the pupils' spiritual development and showed just how well pupils respect each other's point of view.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school, but there are aspects for further development to help more teaching become outstanding. Although oral feedback to pupils is usually of good quality, there are inconsistencies in the marking. This is not always sufficiently regular, or provides specific enough information to reinforce exactly how well pupils are doing and what to improve. Pupils are expected to do corrections, but this is not always followed up systematically.
- In the Nursery to Year 1 classes, the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is regular. However, teachers are sometimes inconsistent in demonstrating the sounds made by individual or blends of letters, sometimes unconsciously putting an 'extra vowel' at the end, which is potentially confusing for some children and pupils.
- The assessment of pupils' work is accurate. Staff observations of children's work and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly good. However, there are not always sufficient contributions in children's 'Learning Journey' journals from family observations of children at home. The school does encourage this, but with mixed success.
- There have been important recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics. The school recognises the need to give more emphasis on the teaching of calculation skills, both mental and written, linking this work more closely to practical 'real life' situations where the pupils would apply such skills. A new policy has been developed, but it is still becoming embedded; this is starting to raise pupils' standards in numeracy, which are not quite as strong as in literacy.

- Some expert teaching was seen with younger Reception to Year 4 pupils from the specialist support centre during a 'Rumble in the Jungle' exercise in the hall. Pupils built very successfully on their understanding of the concepts of 'tall' and 'short'. The use of a large soft toy giraffe provided a fun focus for physical stretching exercises. Pupils were aided well in developing a sense of space around them as they imitated successfully various jungle animals.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The foundations for pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning are laid securely in the Nursery and Reception classes. Learning is exciting, because activities are imaginative, interesting and enjoyable. The ability of teachers and their assistants to support pupils' learning is much enhanced by the excellent working relationships between all members of the school community. This is recognised not only in the highly positive responses to Parent View, where 100% of those responding would recommend the school, but also through the school's own survey.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are underpinned securely by their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are enabled to express their thoughts and ideas, in any situation, without fear or favour. They know that their views will be given fair consideration by adults and other pupils.
- The school is a harmonious community within which pupils can work and play in safety and confidence. If pupils do have a problem they know who to go to. They understand the importance of saying 'No' to any hint of bullying or racism. In this, and many other ways, pupils are excellent ambassadors for their school.
- Pupils are polite, courteous, considerate, and understand their responsibilities to each other. There is a sensitive approach to behaviour management which ensures that adults have the highest expectations of the pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond quickly to this, right from their first day at school. This helps reinforce effectively pupils' understanding of right and wrong.
- Life at the school is never dull. Pupils want to come to school, and this is reflected in above-average attendance rates. Pupils feel that, whatever their background, they are treated fairly and no one is made to feel different. This is mirrored in the excellent ways pupils from the specialist support unit are enabled to become involved in the life and work of other classes.
- In one of the assemblies, pupils sang the Olympic Anthem 'What have you done today to make you feel proud'. They did this not only with real meaning but also as a challenging question of both themselves and each other.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The new headteacher is already having an important impact in building on the work of his predecessor and the deputy headteacher who managed the school for the previous term. Discussions with staff show there is a formidable team with a good capacity for improvement.
- There is also good leadership of both the Early Years Foundation Stage and the specialist support centre. Together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, they ensure the quality of teaching and learning is monitored, maintained and supported well.
- There are particularly good links between the specialist support centre and other such primary school units across the authority. There is close liaison with the pupils' families. The unit's leader

is keen to extend the school's partnership with the families by helping them to develop closer links with secondary schools and help their children in making the transition to Key Stage 3.

- Discussions with a representative of the local authority show it is not a school considered at any risk, therefore contact and support has been regular but 'light touch'. Closer links are now being forged in partnership with the new headteacher. The local authority also values highly the work of the deputy headteacher. She has been instrumental in organising a conference for other deputies across the authority on issues ranging from Ofsted inspections to succession planning.
- The school's leaders and governors are grasping the opportunities for change and development offered by the appointment of a new headteacher. Although these are at an early stage of development, there is some imaginative thinking to ensure that the improvements in pupils' achievement continue successfully as they move through the school.
- Pupils are taught a broad range of subjects which engage them in their learning. A wealth of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' experiences. This is being enhanced by the school's exploration of proposals to restructure posts of responsibility. This is with a view to ensuring the implementation of the new national curriculum before Summer 2014.
- Systems and processes for safeguarding pupils are fully in place. Any pupil whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable are given extensive support by well-trained staff and, through them, access to other, relevant professional agencies. The level of care for pupils is high.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is well informed about the school's performance. Governors are provided with a helpful range of data. This enables them to compare and contrast the school's performance with others nationally. Governors are questioning as well as supportive and make an important contribution to the school's everyday life and work.
  - There are systematic checks on the effectiveness of teaching and teachers' performance management targets. Together with the senior leadership team, the governing body ensures these targets are linked directly to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors recognise the importance of professional development and rewarding good teaching.
  - The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding is allocated and produces a statement showing how it is spent. This is being used well not only to support pupils in the specialist support centre, but also to contribute to the cost of a mathematics support teacher. This is a further example of the way the school is working to raise attainment in mathematics.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124625
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	412275

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	509
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Melvyn Markham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Darron Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 623790
<b>Fax number</b>	01473 625178
<b>Email address</b>	office@gorseland.net

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