

Gorseland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124625
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	340615
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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	507
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Johnson
Headteacher	Jan Seaborne
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons taught by sixteen teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at monitoring of pupils' progress, curriculum plans, samples of pupils' work and school improvement plans. The views of 156 parents and carers were also taken into account.

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

- the success of the school's actions to improve progress made by pupils, particularly in science
- how well teaching and the use of assessment is used to provide support and sufficient challenge for pupils to raise standards
- the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of the impact of its work

Information about the school

Gorseland Primary school is a larger-than-average primary school. It serves the local community and the surrounding area. A large majority of pupils are White British and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. There is a local authority specialist support centre for pupils with complex needs. As a result the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is above average, while the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible to claim free school meals is below average. Recently the deputy headteacher has left the school with a new person appointed for September. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools Status and has started the process for gaining the International Curriculum accreditation.

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

Gorseland Primary School is a good school. Pupils achieve well after entering the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age and enjoy going to school as reflected by outstanding attendance. The overall feeling is summed up by one pupil who said, 'I enjoy school because it is fun and I have lots of friends'.

Despite a slight dip in national tests in 2009 standards overall remain above average by the end of Key Stage 2 as they have been for the last three years. Progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good because the school puts a lot of emphasis on the development of literacy skills across the curriculum. As a result many pupils become confident and competent readers; writing shows an imaginative use of an extensive vocabulary and is a key factor why pupils are well-prepared for their transition on to the next stage of their education. While the progress made by pupils is often good some could do even better, particularly in science; some teachers do not have sufficient subject expertise and are not providing sufficient practical and real opportunities for pupils to explore and discover scientific answers to events around them. Most parents are pleased with the education their children receive, as one parent notes, 'Our children have thrived here with a successful balance of a challenging and exciting curriculum.'

Behaviour is satisfactory overall but pupils are usually keen to learn and try hard with their work in lessons. Teaching is predominantly good and in the best lessons is particularly successful because work is challenging and independent thinking is actively encouraged which ensures they make fast progress. Teachers know their pupils well because assessment is generally used effectively to identify pupils' individual learning needs. They work closely with support staff to make lessons enjoyable for pupils with the result that the teaching of pupils with particular needs, including those pupils taught in the specialist support centre, is good. However, in some classes where teaching is less effective the planning of lessons is not detailed enough to consistently challenge pupils' thinking, teachers' knowledge of pupils' capabilities is not clearly known and marking does not tell pupils how their work can be improved, nor accelerate their learning. Pupils benefit from an effective curriculum which enables them to develop key skills successfully and significantly contribute to the life of the school and wider community. There is a wide range of after-school clubs and this boosts pupils' enjoyment and adds breadth to the curriculum.

The headteacher and staff know their pupils very well and provide good support, especially for the more vulnerable. Good leadership throughout the school results in development plans that are relentlessly focused on raising standards further and areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been thoroughly

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addressed and consequently there is good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in some lessons by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan their lessons carefully
 - use assessment to ensure that tasks are always challenging.
- Raise standards further by ensuring that pupils;
 - know how they can improve their work
 - have more practical and investigative opportunities, particularly in science.

■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is strongest in literacy and there is much excitement and enthusiasm shown by pupils when actively engaged in developing reading and writing skills. For example, in a Year 6 class pupils energetically discussed and anticipated questions a fictitious community may ask when faced with a proposed development. Pupils are adept at writing sentences with clear structure and exciting and sometimes technical vocabulary, but handwriting sometimes lacks fluency. The proportion of pupils gaining higher levels in national tests in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 has been variable. However, the thorough tracking of pupils' individual progress linked with increasingly consistent good teaching is helping to improve pupils' skills in these areas throughout the school. Data indicates that girls have in the past done well in Key Stage 1 but less well by the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that girls now perform consistently well overall. Standards in science are above average but lower than in English and mathematics. While pupils can make detailed observations of a range of scientific events they find it difficult to complete investigative processes successfully such as fair testing. This is because practical opportunities to explore science are limited.

Pupils feel safe in school although some pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt that not all pupils behaved well or treated others appropriately but did feel that problems would be handled well by adults. Pupils understand what it means to live a healthy lifestyle knowing what makes a balanced diet and welcome the opportunities the school gives them to be active such as the wide range of clubs on offer. There are good opportunities to take on responsibilities in the school and wider community including Year 6 pupils through the 'Pal' system who routinely help younger pupils at playtime setting up activities and games and helping them to successfully play together.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as reflected in their knowledge and keen and genuine interest in learning about other people's lifestyles and customs, prompted by planned events such as 'Bungle in the Jungle' when actors encourage pupils to think about and be positive about differences.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	3
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most parents and pupils are happy with the quality of teaching. Teachers manage their classes well, selecting and using resources carefully to interest pupils. Most of the time teaching assistants work well with their groups and assessment is used well to accurately target this support. In some classes, pupils are given good guidance on the next steps in their learning, but sometimes marking is limited to praise or corrections and support staff do not always respond quickly enough to pupils' needs for additional guidance after the start of lessons. Effective questioning of pupils and the good relationships between teachers and pupils combined with skilled behaviour management create happy and positive lessons.

Significant time is allocated to developing ICT skills but sport, music and opportunities to be creative also receive a strong emphasis. For example, Batik work by Year 5 pupils showed considerable understanding of colour matching. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by attendance at the 'Crucial Crew' experience where pupils have to make choices and decisions covering a variety of situations, including keeping themselves safe. There are some strong elements in cross-curricular links and enrichment activities. This was reflected in an interesting lesson in Year 4 when pupils' knowledge of the sea was used to develop their skill of identifying the key features of a text about pirates. Music is well provided for with a wealth of instrumental tuition on offer which pupils readily take up. Clubs are popular amongst pupils with a wide range offer including

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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nature club and archery, one saying, 'they're brilliant'. However, some curriculum areas such as religious education require further refinement to ensure pupils' knowledge is secure.

Pupils are well looked after on a daily basis and considerable time and effort are given to meet their needs, particularly those who are vulnerable. Those pupils who have additional needs are quickly identified and supported. The school has developed very effective links with extended services and partners to ensure good attention is given to all aspects of pupils' care, guidance and support. The care the school provides extends to transition arrangements within the school and the local secondary school which are smooth and support future learning and development.

There are many examples of significant successes in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome difficulties to achieve well. This was seen to good effect during the inspection; some pupils who are included in small group work, attend the specialist support centre where they were actively engaged in letters and sounds work using magnetic and interactive whiteboards.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has incisively communicated a desire for improvement since the last inspection, using and deploying resources well and making the most of effective partnerships to support pupils learning and well being. Through a thorough review of teaching, curriculum planning and assessment processes the leadership of the school embeds ambition and secures improvement well. Consequently progress rates are consistently good. The programme for monitoring and developing teaching and learning is good, but is not always sufficiently focused on the impact on the quality of learning. Governance is good because of able leadership by the chair of governors and a well established programme of meetings and committees coupled with specific governor links with areas or subjects that helps to inform governors about the work of the school. There is a robust attitude and approach to safeguarding ensuring pupils are kept safe. The school adopts effective procedures and practices in caring for pupils, promoting equality and eliminating discrimination and works well with parents and carers to help them support their child's development. The school effectively promotes community cohesion by drawing different groups into school activities as exemplified in the partnership with the senior citizens of Alice Grange. The school has good international

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links with a partner school in Kudawella, Sri Lanka, and works well within the local community and this helps develop pupils' moral, social and cultural understanding. Exciting new links on a project with a school in rural Suffolk have begun but the school acknowledges that this is at the early stages of development.

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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction procedures and early, detailed assessments of children's individual learning needs are used effectively to quickly match teaching to children's learning. This helps the children to settle soon after they begin school and get a confident start to their school life. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed by skilled practitioners who are ensuring good progress across all the areas of learning through a good blend of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Teaching is good and well-planned activities keep children motivated and encourage them to enjoy their learning, to be independent and well engaged. This is because regular training, identified by the leadership of the setting, helps staff to possess the necessary skills to support children in their learning and understand the features of effective provision in the early years. However, the outdoor area is limited to use in good weather as there is no cover for the Reception classes and this reduces opportunities for children to use the wheeled toys that promote physical development. There are many opportunities for children to enjoy learning, make choices and cooperate; for example the 'Sun Cafe' provides a wealth of exciting situations to take turns in ordering and preparing picnics and ice creams. Systems are robust for checking what the children know, understand and can do. Adults

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are continuously involved in observing and assessing to ensure that the activities are matched well to the ability of the children to continuously challenge and excite them.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were happy overall with the school. There were many supportive comments from parents about how much their children enjoy school. A very small minority of parents and carers thought that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, take account of their suggestions and concerns or that the school is well led and managed. The inspectors found that behaviour is dealt with satisfactorily and that there are examples where suggestions by parents are taken seriously and acted upon where possible.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gorseland 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 156 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 507 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	55	65	42	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	50	77	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	66	43	86	55	2	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	40	78	50	11	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	41	79	51	6	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	65	42	77	50	9	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	39	93	60	1	1	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)	60	39	74	48	8	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	37	81	52	7	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	28	78	50	12	8	9	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	25	90	58	16	10	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	60	39	76	49	12	8	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	44	79	51	7	4	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 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. 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.



12 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gorseland Primary School, Ipswich, IP5 3QR

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and you all helped us get to know your school really quickly. Your school currently gives you a good education.

You make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.

Your attendance is outstanding - well done!

Your behaviour is satisfactory.

You told us how much you enjoy coming to school.

There is a good range of clubs on offer, many of which help you keep fit. As a result, your knowledge of keeping healthy is good.

You have a good awareness of how to stay safe.

Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because some of you have the opportunity to be 'Pals' to the younger pupils and the school has a good link with Kudawella in Sri Lanka helping you to understand different lifestyles.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to make your school even better by making sure all teachers help you to understand how to improve your work and plan lessons more thoroughly. I have also asked that the school encourages you to always behave well. We know you will help your teachers make these improvements. You can start by telling your teachers if you do not know how to improve your work and by always behaving appropriately in and around the school.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

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