

Gorseland Primary School

Deben Avenue, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, Suffolk IP5 3QR

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Over the last four years, the headteacher and leaders have led continuous improvement in the school highly effectively.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is excellent. Pupils display great enthusiasm for learning. They and their parents are exceptionally positive about all aspects of the school.
- The school provides a broad, interesting and highly engaging curriculum. This ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. As a result, pupils' personal development and welfare are a high priority.
- The school constantly reviews and plans for the needs of all its pupils. It is highly inclusive and as a result the pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make very strong progress. Pupils in the school's specialist support centre are supported very well and make excellent progress.
- Leaders' innovative approach to professional development leads to very effective teaching. There is a consistency of approach across different classes that helps pupils to make quick progress.
- Pupils of widely different abilities make very strong progress and attainment for pupils currently in the school is well above that seen nationally.
- The early years foundation stage is good. The areas for improvement for this stage given in the previous inspection report have been addressed well. There is clear and sustained improvement, but pupils do not yet progress as consistently well as pupils further up the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should ensure that there is further development in the foundation stage so that pupils' progress is as rapid as in key stages 1 and 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and two deputies form a highly effective team. They train staff to teach their subjects exceptionally well. Leaders monitor the progress of pupils across the full range of national curriculum subjects, ensuring that pupils make strong progress across them all.
- The curriculum is broad and well designed. The headteacher has a very deep understanding of the knowledge and skills needed for success in different subjects and is aware of current curriculum debates. New subject-specific assessment systems underpin pupils' progress across the full range of the national curriculum.
- The school's curriculum recognises the local context, for example giving a special emphasis to the importance in the local area of Anglo-Saxon civilisation and making effective use of the proximity to a major national telecommunications research centre to support and bring to life learning in science. A representative comment from a parent is: 'My child enjoys his time at school and is often excited to show me his work, and I believe he is engaged in class due to the innovative and challenging schemes of work, delivered in a "fun" way. For example, my child really enjoyed learning about space and aliens, and was thrilled to do the UFO trail at Rendlesham Forest recently.'
- Art and music have an important role in the school. For example, inspectors visited the choir rehearsal, where pupils were being trained well for their forthcoming participation in 'Young Voices at the O2'. There are a large number of extra-curricular opportunities extending children's skills in a range of artistic, creative and sporting activities. As a parent told inspectors: 'Some additional areas the school have added to the children's experience are the Year 6 video and filming week with the school Oscars at the end. This alone is a memory that will sit firmly in the children's minds. Plus, the voices national choir experience at the O2. These additional opportunities, and there are many more, are just a few things that make mine and other children's learning experience so perfect at Gorseland Primary School.'
- Leaders are continually striving to improve the school and their recent track record demonstrates their capacity to continue doing so. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has become consistently highly effective. As a result, the school now has a track record of pupils making rapid progress, resulting in above-average attainment by the end of key stage 2. The school strives for high achievement in all subject areas, for example in physical education (PE) and sport. The school has recently achieved a school games silver award.
- The school's view of its own performance is accurate and reflects the deep understanding that governors and the headteacher have of their school and its many strengths and possible areas for improvement.
- The pupil premium is used very well to support the progress of the small number of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders carefully identify the barriers for learning for each individual and put in appropriate support to enable them to have an excellent experience in school. As a result, they achieve well.
- Similarly, the sports premium is used very effectively to drive up standards in PE and

ensure that children enjoy the subject and achieve well. Money has been spent on an appropriate mix of training for teachers, the employment of sports coaches and membership of organisations such as the Ipswich Primary Schools Sports Association. The impact of this spending is that all pupils are engaged in activities to improve their health.

- Leaders ensure that spending to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used very effectively. They constantly review and evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. Teaching assistants are assigned to where they are most needed during different parts of the day. Pupils in the specialist support centre have provision that clearly identifies their needs and ensures their individual progress.
- The school promotes equality and diversity very well. As a result, all groups of pupils make excellent progress. All groups of pupils are integrated well into all activities, as was demonstrated in the several Christmas nativity performances taking place during the inspection.
- Leaders engage very effectively with parents through, for example, an extensive home-visit programme in the nursery. The school's strong ethos, combined with the pupils' voice exercised through the 'class meeting systems' where pupils from different years meet to discuss the meaning of values such as for example 'tolerance', means that British values are discussed, challenged and understood.
- The local authority works closely with the school, providing leaders with an additional resource for external review and moderation. The school receives regular visits to check on its continued progress and to monitor the provision for pupils in the school.
- The proportion of parents responding to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) was well above average. Parents, pupils and staff responding to the inspection surveys were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school, including its leadership. Very nearly all parents who responded would recommend the school. A typical comment was: 'It is a strong school community, with really good teachers and an ethos and attitude that encourages the children to learn, be happy and experience new things.'

Governance of the school

- Governors play a key role in the school's success. They have balanced the academic success of the school with retaining its community character.
- Governors support leaders and staff very well, but are also rigorous in challenging the reports brought to them. For example, while welcoming the excellent progress of girls, governors have set the school the challenge of ensuring that boys reach similarly exceptionally high attainment.
- Governors check that all levels of staff are rewarded through pay increases that reflect their achievement of targets.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors and leaders are rigorous in ensuring that all safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.

- Pupils feel safe. Records of the school's contact with other agencies and schools are exemplary. Nearly all the parents who responded to Parent View believed that their child was safe. Pupils and staff agreed.
- Attention to pupil safety and well-being permeates the school. It extends to the school's website, where pupils or parents have the opportunity to utilise the 'whisper button' to alert one of the school's designate safeguarding leads to any concerns.
- 'Prevent' (anti-extremism) training has enabled all staff to feel confident to challenge any views or behaviour from pupils that could cause concern. E-safety policy guidance and teaching result in pupils being well aware of the potential dangers when online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Lessons are characterised by excellent working relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils of all abilities feel very well supported by teachers, who care deeply about their progress.
- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge that lends confidence to their teaching. This is true across a wide range of subjects. As a direct result of the policies of the leadership team, staff feel trusted and confident to take risks.
- Parents are quick to praise the 'hard-working' and 'excellent' teachers. For example, a representative parent told inspectors: 'I think teachers in this school do fabulous job. I never expected my child to progress the way he does. He is doing so well only thanks to determined staff this school has.'
- Clear and established routines enable lessons to run smoothly. The brisk transitions between different classroom activities make the most of learning time. Classrooms are exciting and vibrant, yet calm and purposeful.
- Planning for lessons makes links to pupils' prior learning. Teachers know the pupils' abilities really well through the various assessment activities. As a result, work is set that challenges pupils of differing abilities. This includes effective questioning and is true across the full range of subjects.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils to improve their learning. Parents appreciate teachers treating each child as a unique individual, for example telling inspectors, 'They seem to cater for the children's individual needs, making my child feel important and not just one of hundreds of children.'
- Feedback to pupils, in a variety of forms, helps them understand how to improve. It is quick and effective and as a result, teachers are appreciative of leaders' efforts to reduce their workload.
- There is effective use of specialist teachers, for example to support disadvantaged pupils in mathematics or to teach PE. Inspectors observed a mathematics intervention group in Year 6 which was very effective. There are appropriately high expectations for pupils with low starting points.
- Parents and pupils are positive about the nature of homework. Leaders have worked with parents to ensure that homework is supported and appropriate to the needs of the pupils.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and take a pride in their work. A typical parental comment is, 'My son's confidence has grown considerably at Gorseland, which is down to the great environment created there.'
- Through the curriculum and assemblies, pupils develop an understanding of different faiths and cultures in modern Britain. The school makes effective use of the community and the parent body to promote this understanding, but leaders have rightly concluded that 'the monocultural makeup of the school means that further development will enhance our provision'. All staff are trained in anti-radicalisation. Concerns are rare, but are acted upon swiftly. Pupils are given a weekly opportunity to talk about issues and current events in 'class meetings' where any ideas can be explored, and extreme views can be identified. Pupils and very nearly all parents say that they are safe in school.
- Pupils are very respectful of one another and accept each other's differences. Fundamental values of democracy, tolerance and respect for the rule of law are modelled well. Pupils can discuss and debate quite complex issues well and feel safe and happy in school. Any problems that do arise are quickly and effectively dealt with primarily through restorative justice.
- Pupils have a deep understanding of what does and what does not constitute bullying. They are aware of its different forms. They are confident that if it were to occur it would be dealt with well. They know who to approach and how to draw attention to any concerns. A very small number of parents reported to inspectors that bullying was not dealt with well. This was an exception to the overwhelmingly positive confidence of staff, pupils and other parents.
- The school prepares pupils to participate in the economic world. Examples include the 'dragon's den'-style competition where Year 6 pupils presented their innovative ideas to younger pupils, the winning design being a glowing pet collar designed to help customers avoid losing their cat or dog. Additionally, pupils produced a video interviewing adults about their jobs. This helped pupils to learn about the qualifications and experience needed for different careers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Around the school at break and lunchtimes pupils get on really well together. For example, at lunchtime the dining hall is exceptionally orderly.
- In lessons, pupils' love of learning shines through. Pupils quickly settle into the school's culture so that any instances of teachers needing to manage behaviour are rare. Pupils, staff and parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. As a result, their attendance is above average and all groups attend equally well. Pupils are very punctual to lessons. As a result of strong attendance procedures, close working with the family liaison officer and the

educational welfare officer, leaders have transformed the attendance of a significant number of persistent absentees.

- Leaders have done a lot to ensure that the school's environment, including the outdoor space, stimulates learning. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors that the school offers lots of activities to help pupils enjoy their learning and playtime together.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In 2017, pupils' attainment in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics combined was above average. The school's accurate monitoring information shows that the progress of current pupils is well above average. Leaders and teachers plan and monitor achievement across a wide range of subjects. As a result, pupils are prepared exceptionally well for secondary education.
- In 2017, pupils' progress from the end of key stage 1 national tests to end of key stage 2 tests was expected in mathematics and better than expected in reading and writing. When inspectors visited lessons and looked at work in pupils' books they concluded that the progress of current pupils is even better than this. Inspectors found that progress is consistent across classes and year groups. Pupils can see and talk about their progress in lessons due to teachers' systematic approach.
- Outcomes for current pupils in mathematics are particularly strong. Pupils are adept at using arithmetical skills well in different situations. They have a lot of practice in consolidating these skills. Pupils also develop resilience with problem-solving because they are given interesting problems to solve. Pupils love problem-solving in mathematics and work well together to arrive at solutions. Pupils can explain clearly what they are doing. They use mathematical language accurately and confidently.
- Leaders have created a 'mastery' document making clear the expectations for different ages across the full range of subjects. Teachers say that the assessment in each subject is manageable and these assessments indicate that pupils, including the most able, make strong progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make progress in line with all pupils and those in the special unit make strong progress. Pupils in the unit arrive with low levels of attainment. They make excellent progress within a year of joining the school. Progress in speaking and listening and in social and emotional development are particularly strong.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils make comparisons with other pupils difficult. National information shows these pupils making progress broadly in line with other pupils nationally.
- The school develops a love of reading in pupils across all year groups and includes boys and girls. A larger proportion of Year 1 pupils than found nationally reach the expected level in the phonics screening check.

Early years provision

Good

- There is a carefully planned learning environment with good-quality resources, including the stimulating outdoor area.

- The system for communication with parents is used well. The computer-based system is used more by the school than by parents, but parents have effective links with the school through their attendance at events such as the Nursery and Reception nativity productions, where inspectors noted a high attendance. Additionally, open mornings and home visits build relationships between school staff and families.
- Pupils join Reception with skills and knowledge typical for their age, make good progress and are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Pupils' early reading skills are developed effectively, which provides a secure foundation for their above-average attainment in Year 1. Pupils are skilled in reading unfamiliar words because of their good knowledge of phonics and their ability to combine this approach with other techniques.
- Pupils make good progress as a result of very good attitudes to learning and behaviour. There is effective support from teaching assistants. There are very well-established classroom routines. There are well thought out and interesting learning experiences. A parent summed up the foundation stage as follows: 'Our daughter is in the nursery class and looks forward to her sessions, making good progress in all areas. She talks about her time at nursery with enthusiasm and enjoys a wide variety of experiences including visits to the library, PE lessons, forest school, cooking to name a few.'
- There has been strong improvement in the early years since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is good but, for example in boys' writing, their progress is not quite as consistently strong as in key stages 1 and 2.

School details

Unique reference number	124625
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10044841

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	508
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Johnson
Headteacher	Darron Jackson
Telephone number	01473 623790
Website	www.gorseland.net
Email address	djackson@gorseland.net
Date of previous inspection	16–17 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The school works with other local schools in the area and with other schools that have a specialist support centre. The school has undertaken research with the Prince's Trust Institute ('valuing pupils' time at lunchtime'), the Education Endowment Fund ('catch-up maths') and is a partner school for the local Initial Teacher Training provider (SCITT).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. However, the proportion who have moderate learning difficulties and/or complex special educational needs is above average; this is due to the school's specially resourced provision. The specialist support centre caters for 25 pupils, aged from 5 to 11, with complex learning difficulties. There are currently 25 attending the unit, who come from across the local authority area.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in a range of lessons, some of which were seen jointly with a senior leader. In addition, several short visits were made to a further range of lessons. Inspectors observed pupils at break and lunchtime and before and after lessons. Inspectors observed two nativity performances. Inspectors observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read. Pupils' books from different year groups were checked to see progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, two groups of pupils, a group of teachers, the chair and two members of the governing body and a phone conversation held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the 167 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the 88 written text comments on the same questionnaire and the school's records of staff and pupil questionnaires based on Ofsted's model.
- The inspection team scrutinised information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, looked at the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, read minutes of the meetings of the governing body and scrutinised pupils' work in lessons.

Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachael Judd	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Morley	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Asker	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Hopkins	Ofsted Inspector

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