

Gorse Ride Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109924
Local Authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	356652
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Sidey
Headteacher	Eileen Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were visited and eight teachers were observed. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities and a representative of the governing body. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, inspectors examined 59 completed questionnaires from parents and carers and 11 completed by members of staff.

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

- Children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and how well children progress in Nursery and Reception.
- Pupils' current attainment in Year 2 and how well pupils progress in Key Stage 1, especially more-able pupils in writing and mathematics.
- The consistency of good teaching and learning across the school so that pupils make even progress.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders in tackling barriers to improvement such as recent changes in staffing.

Information about the school

The school is a little below average in size and mainly serves the immediate community. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, including the proportion with statements of educational needs. The majority of these pupils have speech, language, literacy and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are in the Nursery or the two Reception classes.

There have been significant changes since the last inspection. The headteacher was absent for over a term in the last academic year and over one third of teaching staff joined the school in September 2010. The school's awards include Activemark and Healthy School status. Pupils from the school are eligible to attend an after-school club managed by the junior school on the same site. This provision was not part of this inspection.

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

Gorse Ride Infants' School is a good school. Pupils thrive both academically and personally in a very welcoming and well-organised environment. The strong ethos of care and consideration leads to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and good behaviour. Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to stay safe and contribute well to the community in which the school plays an important part. The stimulating curriculum underpins pupils' enjoyment of school and their excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The great majority of parents and carers have a high regard for the school, and as one parent commented, 'My child is very happy and making good progress, especially in reading.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Nursery and make good progress in Reception. Their progress is good overall in Key Stage 1 so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average, although higher in reading and writing than in mathematics. In Key Stage 1, more-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should in mathematics because tasks are sometimes too easy for them. Consequently, by Year 2, fewer reach higher levels than do so in reading. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and those with speech and language difficulties make excellent progress in developing their speaking skills. Children in the Nursery are not given enough opportunities to make choices and learn independently and this limits their progress. The outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not used to its full capacity to develop all areas of children's learning.

The very good leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is pivotal to ensuring there is a constant focus on raising pupils' achievement. The substantial changes to staffing have been well managed and the rigorous focus on checking and improving teaching has led to much good teaching and learning. However, occasionally in Year 1, literacy tasks for lower-attaining pupils do not build so well on the reading skills they acquire in Reception. Excellent teaching of reading and writing in Year 2 leads to pupils' rapid progress in literacy across this year group. The curriculum provides a thorough structure for pupils to learn the basic skills. Practical subjects, for example art and design and technology, are used well to bring academic learning alive.

Good self-evaluation has led to the school having an accurate and honest view of its own performance. Leaders, together with staff, systematically use the school-wide assessment systems to accurately measure pupils' progress and identify any gaps in their progress towards demanding targets. Leaders are vigilant in helping pupils from all backgrounds to do well and have provided robust procedures for helping those who need to catch up. The school has a good capacity to improve, partly because everyone shares the senior leaders' ambitions. New middle leadership roles are developing well and members of the governing body make a good contribution to the school's future. There have been significant

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improvements since the last inspection in several key areas, such as attainment in writing for more-able pupils in Year 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing children in the Nursery with more opportunities to make choices and to learn independently
 - enhancing outdoor learning opportunities in Nursery and Reception so that they reflect the full curriculum.
- Increasing the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics and the consistency of pupils' good progress in reading in Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring teaching consistently challenges more-able pupils in mathematics
 - making sure that the teaching of reading is as rigorous in Year 1 as in Year 2 and tasks consistently build on pupils' prior attainment and learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils come to love learning and develop the will to achieve because they feel very safe, lessons are interesting and excellent relationships provide a very positive framework for learning. On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's starting points are lower than in most schools, especially in communication, language and literacy. Good progress in Reception lifts their attainment to broadly average, although this is still a little below average in reading and writing by the time they enter Year 1. The strong emphasis given to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout the school is an important foundation for all their learning. In Year 1, pupils do not build always build consistently on their starting points, particularly in mathematics for more-able pupils.

Pupils' learning and progress is good overall and particularly strong in literacy in Year 2. Working in ability sets for literacy and numeracy in Year 2 enables pupils who need extra challenge to work at higher levels and those who struggle to be taught with smaller learning steps. In a good literacy lesson observed in Year 2 for more-able pupils, good planning ensured both reading and writing tasks were well matched to their needs. Pupils' evaluative and independent learning skills were developed particularly well when they read interesting texts to find out how different 'describing' words made writing exciting. In the parallel Year 2 set, the very careful match of reading and writing tasks for the lowest-attaining pupils meant these pupils made rapid gains in reading and writing.

The school's successful actions to address any underachievement ensure that girls and boys and pupils with autumn, spring and summer birthdays achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and small group work for pupils who struggle in English and mathematics contributes to their good achievement. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are helped very well and the incidence of poor behaviour is extremely rare.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in this cohesive and harmonious school. Of special note is pupils' respect for other cultures, religions and backgrounds. Pupils develop a pride in their school and themselves and are polite and well

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mannered. They become confident and willingly and responsibly help in many ways, including in their duties as 'school councillors' when helping the school to make some decisions it has to make. Reflecting the school's national awards, pupils develop positive attitudes to health, eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise. Pupils' average attendance and the extent to which pupils build and apply their basic skills prepare them well for the future.

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	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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?

Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations for behaviour. Whiteboard technology and practical resources are successfully used to make lessons interesting. All pupils are encouraged to play an active part in lessons. This was seen in a good literacy lesson for Year 1 pupils, when, as a class, they eagerly read a text to find answers to questions: 'Who? What? Where and When?' The teacher's questioning ensured pupils of all abilities made good progress in reading and thinking. Planning and teaching methods often reflect pupils' different learning needs well. Assessment is accurate and usually used effectively to provide pupils with well-matched work. However, in the few lessons where teaching was only satisfactory it was because learning tasks were not fully adjusted to meet pupils' needs, including for the consolidation and teaching of key reading skills to lower-attaining pupils. Pupils are fully engaged in reviewing their own learning and help to set their own targets. Support staff are very effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to

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pupils' learning, including during literacy and numeracy sets, when further ability groupings ensure learning is well matched to their needs.

Information and communication technology supports pupils' learning well, for example in literacy and science when pupils use computers to write about their science findings and label parts of skeletons they have drawn. A worthwhile array of visits and visitors brings relevance to learning and enlivens the curriculum. Pupils are looked after well and good induction arrangements when pupils join and when they move on help ease transition between each stage. Adults provide very strong support for the social and emotional development of all pupils, including those with challenging behaviour. They work successfully to support and include pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. As a result, they fully participate in learning and the life of the school and make similar progress to the others.

Good partnerships with a range of other schools and agencies help support pupils well. Very strong links with the junior school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fostered by the special needs manager operating across both schools. Good back-up is given to parents and carers to enable them to help their children learn and the school works hard to assist families and pupils in difficulties.

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?

Strong leadership and management have maintained the good quality education and care identified at the previous inspection and also secured important improvements. The headteacher has communicated her clear vision to staff very well. There are clear systems and structures for managing the school and senior leaders work closely together to maintain, improve and check provision. The rigorous systems for tracking pupils' attainment and progress and analyses involve all teaching staff. Professional development is used well to improve teaching and this has ensured new staff have fitted in well. Several middle leaders are new to their roles. The thorough systems, including coaching by senior staff, are quickly enabling them to play their full part in leading and checking provision in their subjects in order to further raise achievement. The governing body play a full part in the strategic management of the school and closely monitor each action point for improvement. Governors are well organised, provide good support and are well informed, including about achievement matters.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. These are prioritised and firmly established in policies, working practices and the ethos of the school. This is affirmed by the high degree of endorsement from parents and carers in the questionnaires returned and pupils'

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unequivocal view that they feel safe. The school is vigilant in tackling discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity, although some more-able pupils are not achieving as well as they might in mathematics. Community cohesion is developed at all levels. The school celebrates the diversity of its community and has strong links further afield, for example with a charity and a school in Uganda, and work is developing at a national level.

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

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers returning the questionnaire was lower than average. A very large majority of these agreed that they were very happy with their children's experience at school and that their children enjoy coming to school. Inspectors found that the school keeps their children safe, listens to their concerns and that their children are happy and making good progress. A few parents and carers expressed concern that pupils do not always behave well enough. The inspection team found that pupils' behaviour was good and well managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gorse Ride Infants' 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	83	10	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	78	13	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	46	30	51	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	53	26	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	54	26	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	53	25	42	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	61	22	37	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)	24	41	28	47	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	54	24	41	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	36	27	47	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	45	23	40	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	63	21	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	64	21	36	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 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 2009/10 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.



4 February 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Gorse Ride Infants' School, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 4EH

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and finding out about the interesting things you do.

Firstly, you need to know your school is good one. Here are some of the many things your school does well.

- You make good progress and you reach levels that are above average in reading and writing by the time you leave for the juniors.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a good start and enjoy all of the activities.
- You help to make your school a very friendly place because you are polite, helpful, work hard and behave well.
- You keep very active at playtimes and know lots about eating healthily.
- You have many interesting opportunities for using computers and doing practical work, for example in design and technology.
- Your headteacher leads you all really well and all the staff and members of the governing body think very carefully about what is best for you.
- Staff take very good care of you. You get extra help if you need it so you can learn new things as quickly as possible.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve.

- Make sure you make as good progress in the Nursery as in Reception and give you better opportunities for learning outdoors in Nursery and Reception.
- Help those of you who are more-able in Key Stage 1 to reach similar standards in mathematics as in reading.
- Help your teachers to always plan activities for you that build on what you already know.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and to work hard in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector

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