

# Gosfield Community Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114727
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	378915
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kath Beck

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	138
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gill Hillman-Crouch
<b>Headteacher</b>	Antony Kern
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	The Street Gosfield CO9 1ST
<b>Telephone number</b>	01787 472266
<b>Fax number</b>	01787 478544
<b>Email address</b>	admin@gosfield-pri.essex.sch.uk

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Six lessons were observed taught by six teachers. A further five short observations, one in each class, were undertaken. Meetings were held with parents, carers, groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. There was also a discussion with a representative from the local authority. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's analysis of data about pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for safeguarding pupils and development plans. In addition, pupils' work, attendance records and the results of questionnaires from staff, pupils and from 85 parents and carers were taken into account.

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

- How effectively is the new senior leadership team working together to improve the quality of provision and raise standards?
- Is the quality of teaching consistently good in all classes?
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage are outcomes in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development as high as in other areas?

## Information about the school

This is a small school. Pupils come from the village and surrounding area. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils come of White British heritage. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that found in other schools nationally. Their needs include speech, language, behavioural, emotional and specific learning difficulties. All pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are taught in mixed age groups. The headteacher has been in post since September 2011.

**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

Gosfield Primary is a good school. Its aim to 'Build a love for life and learning' underpins its work, enables pupils to achieve academically and develop personal qualities that will help them in their future lives. A residential visit for Year 6 pupils enables them to work in teams, face challenges, such as canoeing or abseiling in a supportive atmosphere, and learn about social living away from home. High levels of attendance, a practical curriculum, good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning have resulted in a rise in standards in Year 6 since the previous inspection. They are above average in English and mathematics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for these pupils individually or in group work. They help them to concentrate, think through their ideas and complete activities successfully. The school works closely with other professionals, parents and carers to re-evaluate what is needed to support pupils with particular needs effectively.

In a short time the new senior management team has carried out a full review of the school's provision. Key strengths and areas for development have been identified and action taken to bring about improvements. Overall the quality of teaching is good, but it varies from satisfactory to outstanding for pupils in different year groups. While some staff have high expectations of what pupils can do, provide exciting experiences for them to write about and challenge their thinking by means of effective questioning, this is not always the case. Through performance management and rigorous analysis of individual pupils' progress, ambitious targets have been set to raise standards further. Changes to the way pupils are taught to read have been implemented recently. Early indications from parents, carers, staff and pupils indicate this is already having an impact on pupils' abilities and enthusiasm for reading. Pupils like the new way staff mark their work as it gives them confidence. It tells them easily and quickly what they have done well and the step they need to take when doing their next piece of work.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment at age five is above the national average in most areas of learning. Last year children did not do as well in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. The reasons for this have been analysed thoroughly. Changes have been introduced so that children are now receiving a good foundation for their literacy skills that they can apply confidently. It is sometimes difficult for staff to give children the freedom of the outdoor area because of limited facilities. They partly overcome this challenge and promote high levels of independence and

**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

extend all aspects of children's learning when they take them out into the countryside.

The governing body plays an important role in the strategic direction of the school. This together with strong teamwork among staff, rigorous and accurate self-evaluation and challenging targets for development, established quickly under new leadership and confirmed by the inspection, shows that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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

- By November 2012 raise the quality of teaching so that all is consistently good or better by ensuring all staff:
  - share high expectations of what pupils can do
  - provide inspiring experiences that motivate pupils to apply their writing skills imaginatively
  - improve the way they ask questions so they challenge and deepen pupils' thinking skills.
  
- Improve the outdoor learning area to offer all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage the best possible opportunities to enhance their independence through more child-initiated activities.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>2</b>
----------

Attainment when pupils start school is similar to that usually found. High attendance rates indicate pupils enjoy school. Their overall progress is good, but pupils' experiences vary as they move year groups depending on the quality of teaching. In an outstanding lesson in a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils drew on their knowledge of how the Egyptians carried out mummification to write a clear set of instructions. Before writing, their knowledge was clarified and deepened through excellent questioning by their teacher. They applied their developing literacy skills very effectively, remaining engrossed in the task and taking pride in their work. These mature attitudes enabled staff to work with individuals without interruption to increase their learning. In a less captivating lesson for pupils in Year 1 a few pupils found it hard to maintain their concentration as they were not sure what to do. This hindered their learning.

Data available to the school show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their performance is better than their peers nationally, especially in mathematics. This is because their progress is checked carefully, one-to-one tuition is provided as appropriate and computer programmes assist their learning. Boys and girls do equally well and those who are more-able reach the higher levels of attainment expected of them.

Pupils know how to maintain healthy lifestyles. They participate in the required

**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

amount of sport in school time and in clubs after school. The majority take up the option to eat the high quality, nutritious school meals prepared on site. Pupils know to avoid harmful substances, how to keep safe when using the internet and feel safe within school. Those with responsibilities such as members of the school council or buddies who support pupils at the 'playground stop' carry out their duties enthusiastically. Recent changes, where pupils who have a packed lunch can sit with their friends while they eat a cooked lunch, stemmed from the school council. Pupils play an active role within the community and through their own or young enterprise schemes raise money for those less fortunate than themselves. Their knowledge of cultures and communities very different to their own is developing through pen-pal communications and visits to a school in inner city London.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers use a range of methods to capture pupils' interests. Information and communication technology is used well to help pupils' concentrate on the introduction to lessons. It also provides prompts to help them complete their work successfully. Innovative ideas, such as the role-play of a homeless person, enhance pupils' abilities to gather information, write sensitively and at length. It also adds much to their personal development. However, such inspiring experiences are not reflected consistently throughout the school hindering opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills creatively. Each teacher has full access to the computer programme that tracks pupils' progress. Consequently they are aware of the impact of their teaching on the progress of pupils in their class. Regular assessments, pupils'

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**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

progress meetings and the new marking scheme are enabling staff to match work more closely to pupils’ needs. In some cases these assessments have raised significantly staff aspirations for their pupils, but expectations are not consistently high enough.

The curriculum provides many opportunities for a broad range of experiences that contribute well to pupils’ academic and personal well-being. It is being reviewed to take account of pupils’ suggestions so that it is even more relevant to their interests. Good cross-curricular links make learning meaningful. Information and communication technology is often used by pupils in lessons to research information, draw pictures, and take photographs to illustrate what they have learned. Pupils from Year 3 to 6 learn to play the recorder. Creativity in art and clay work allows pupils to express their own ideas through a wide range of processes. Residential visits, others to places of interest, visitors to the school, and events in conjunction with local schools enrich pupils’ learning.

The school works well with other professionals, especially speech and language therapists, and educational support services, to enable pupils with specific difficulties to overcome their barriers to learning. Additional support for these pupils and effective partnerships with parents and carers is helping pupils to make better progress. Termly meetings with parents and carers keep them informed about their child’s progress. Good arrangements ease the transfer of young children into school and prepare older pupils for their move to secondary school well.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

In a short time, together with the governing body and all the staff, the headteacher has established a shared and ambitious vision for the school. This stemmed from rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and data about the school’s performance. Expectations of staff to secure improvements are high and their views are included in the new school development plan. Through performance management, staff are fully aware of their personal targets for improvement with regard to their teaching, as well as those for the pupils. They have accurate assessment information about the progress of pupils in their class. Teachers know they are accountable for the progress their pupils make.

The governing body is good and uses its expertise skilfully to benefit the school.

**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

Through the recruitment process for a new headteacher, it set a very clear direction for the school. Members of the governing body have debated and explored fully decisions relating to the purchase of laptop computers and a wireless network and new ways to teach reading and mark pupils’ work. Arrangements to monitor the impact of these initiatives with staff are underway. The governing body is rigorous in ensuring that pupils and staff are safeguarded well. New staff and volunteers are vetted appropriately and risk assessments are thorough. Parents, carers, pupils and staff have been trained in internet safety. Any concerns about safety issues are taken seriously. To support those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, and to raise their own level of expertise, staff and members of the governing body work in close partnership with other schools and services. This is a good example of the school’s inclusive nature and the emphasis it places on equality of opportunity for all pupils. Careful monitoring of the progress of different groups ensures that all pupils achieve well and any potential underachievement is identified and tackled promptly.

Community cohesion is promoted well within the locality and by means of a link with a school in London. Money pupils raise brings benefits to an orphanage in Kenya. Parents and carers are very supportive. A very active Parents’ Association provides social events for adults and pupils. Funds raised add significantly to the school’s provision. Parents and carers also help regularly in class, especially listening to pupils read. A new Parents’ Forum has enabled them to share their views and ideas for improvement with the new headteacher.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management mean that action has already been taken to improve children’s communication language and literacy skills. Plans for



**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

improvements to the outside area have already been drawn up. The limited facilities and resources outside reduce the opportunities for children to initiate their own activities to promote independence.

Children achieve very well in their creative and physical development, as well as problem solving and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because when they are taken into the countryside to learn they often have problems to solve. For example 'Teddy has fallen out of the tree and hurt himself so he cannot walk. How will he get to hospital?' In solving the problem children collected sticks of the right size and length, to tie together with string to make a stretcher and carry him to safety. On other occasions children have devised shelters of different sizes from a range of natural materials, whittled sticks on which to cook marshmallows over a campfire and devised rope swings and zip wires. These activities have taught them to climb, balance, think through their ideas and keep safe.

In another high quality play activity, children 'rescued' the owner of an Indian restaurant when the cooker failed. Children set the tables, folded napkins, wrote the menus, welcomed customers, took their orders and served the food and drink. This gave them the opportunity to apply developing literacy skills, and participate in role-play to enhance communication skills. It also added much to their social development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Over two thirds of parents and carers, a much higher proportion than usual, responded to the questionnaire. The majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. The responses indicate that they are very pleased that their children enjoy school and that they are kept safe. Parents and carers consider that teaching is good and appreciate the way that the school keeps them informed about their children's progress. Written comments also praised aspects of the school, including the new approach to teaching reading. A very small number of parents and carers raised issues about the levels of challenge in the work for their child, the behaviour of a few pupils, and support for their child's particular needs. These were followed up during the inspection. The school is aware of the issues raised by parents and carers and is taking action to try and resolve them. Inspection evidence endorses the positive views expressed by parents and carers.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gosfield Community 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 138 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	66	24	28	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	72	22	26	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	47	55	34	40	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	44	41	48	4	5	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	48	56	33	39	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	46	54	31	36	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	55	34	40	1	1	2	2
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)	46	54	29	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	37	44	38	45	6	7	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	48	34	40	6	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	40	39	46	7	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	53	34	40	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	58	68	21	25	1	1	2	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



24 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Gosfield Community Primary School, Gosfield, CO9 1ST**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you too for answering all our questions. In your questionnaires you all said that adults help you to improve your work. You mentioned that you really like the way teachers mark your books as it tells you straight away what you have done well and what you can do in the next piece of work to do even better. You also said that the adults care about you and listen to your views. We noticed that the way you are being taught to read is also helping you with your writing. You do your best writing when you have fascinating things to write about, such as the biography of a homeless person or how to make an Egyptian 'mummy'. We noticed that when lessons are as interesting as this you behave really well. A few younger children lose their concentration when they are not as interested. We also noticed that your attendance is high, so you really enjoy school.

Your school is a good school. Your headteacher, the governing body and all the staff want to make it even better. Teaching is good, but in some classes it is even better. We have asked everyone to make sure that in all classes you have work that challenges you and inspires you to want to write as well as you can. We have also asked the adults to ask you the type of questions that make you think hard about what you are learning. We know you will help by always doing your best with your handwriting when recording your imaginative ideas.

The youngest children had great fun going to the countryside to rescue 'Teddy' when he fell out of a tree, and when running an Indian restaurant in their classroom. The area outside their classroom is not as exciting. We have asked the staff to improve it so that the youngest children can be more independent, play out their own ideas as well as work with grown-ups.

Yours sincerely

Kath Beck  
Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**