

Gosbecks Primary School

Owen Ward Close, Shrub End, Colchester, CO2 9DG

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress requires improvement in mathematics.
- In mathematics, lessons do not clearly follow on from each other, and activities are sometimes too easy or too hard for pupils.
- Marking does not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders and managers do not check carefully enough how well teachers think the pupils are doing in mathematics.
- The governing body does not check the accuracy of the school's view about how well pupils are doing in mathematics.
- Behaviour in the playground is not as good as behaviour in lessons.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved over three years and is now in line with national averages.
- More-able pupils make good progress.
- The school is successful at settling children into the Reception Year, where they are taught well.
- In the majority of English lessons, pupils make good progress, because they are stimulated by exciting activities.
- Staff consistently treat pupils with courtesy, which results in pupils showing each other consideration and respect during lessons.
- The school has brought about rapid improvements in the behaviour and achievement of some disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, who have joined the school later than usual.
- Leaders, including the governing body, have been successful in tackling inadequate teaching and, as a result, progress in English has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' social and moral development is well catered for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons or part lessons, taught by 13 teachers. Seven lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including the school’s documents on self-evaluation and safeguarding. They observed the school’s work, looked at pupils’ books and the tracking system used to monitor their progress.
- Inspectors considered the 22 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Miranda Perry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Piers Ranger

Additional Inspector

Noureddin Khassal

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gosbecks is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- At Key Stages 1 and 2, some classes are mixed age.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The school has a higher level of pupils joining or leaving it outside the usual times than the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve mathematics teaching to consistently good and so accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - increasing continuity of learning from lesson to lesson
 - ensuring that work is set at the right level for all pupils
 - marking books in a way that means pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the leadership and management of mathematics so that it is at least good through:
 - Leaders, managers and phase leaders ensuring, as a result of effective monitoring, that assessment in mathematics is accurate and fit for the purpose of informing planning
 - the governing body developing its understanding of what the assessment data in mathematics are telling it, and as a consequence, holding the school to account for improvements in mathematics.
- Improve behaviour in the playground, through the application of the behaviour management strategies that are effective in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception Year with knowledge, skills and understanding below those typically found. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because routines for learning are established early. For example, in a Reception class, pupils were able to access a computer programme and make gains in their understanding of three-dimensional shapes, because they knew how to organise themselves to take turns.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their reading. Phonics (letters and sounds) are taught in an engaging and exciting way. For example, in a class for Years 1 and 2, pupils had to run to the correct sounds displayed in the room's four corners. By the end of the activity, pupils who at first had been unsure of the sounds particular letters make consistently chose the right corners.
- In the majority of year groups, pupils make good progress in English. Effective questioning results in pupils deepening their understanding of texts. In English lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to review, reflect on, and improve their ideas.
- There are no gaps in progress between White British pupils and their peers. In lessons, pupils work well in groups, support each other's learning, and help each other understand how well they are progressing.
- Since the last inspection, progress for more-able pupils has improved so that it is now good. In mixed-age classes, the younger, more-able pupils are stretched by working with their older peers. For example, a pupil in Year 5 said of their friend in Year 6, 'He's clever, so I always try and get onto the work that he's doing.'
- The majority of pupils who join the school later than the usual times have special educational needs. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress well because the school is quick to diagnose what their special needs are, and puts interventions in place which help to remove their obstacles to learning. Pupils supported by the pupil premium make as good progress as their peers.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics has improved for three years in a row. This is largely due to the high expectations of teachers, leaders and managers.
- Progress in mathematics is rarely good. The progress of more-able pupils in mathematics has improved since the last inspection, but the progress of other pupils requires improvement.
- Assessment of progress in mathematics is often not accurate. This makes it difficult for the school to have a clear picture of the progress pupils are making and to plan accordingly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In good lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and pupils are excited by learning. For example, in a class for Years 5 and 6, pupils were so interested in how a light source creates shadows that their questioning was of an order you might expect from pupils two years older.
- Teaching in the Reception Year is consistently good. Children enjoy a broad range of activities that keep them engaged and stimulated. Their classrooms are well organised for

effective learning. For example, when the children come in from outside, they automatically look on the board to see what 'jobs' they can choose from, and are independently able to select their own activity.

- Reception children persevere in the development of their basic skills. For example, children encouraged their despondent classmate, engaged in a demanding cutting out activity, to complete the task and so make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from teachers and other adults working as a team. In a class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, a team of staff used examples, gave encouragement, rephrased instructions, and recapped on knowledge so pupils with special educational needs made good progress in their understanding of odd and even numbers.
- Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of pupils who arrive outside the usual times. Every attempt is made to celebrate their success and help them to learn as well as their peers.
- The teaching of English is better than mathematics. In English, teachers have strong subject knowledge, and pupils benefit from lessons which build on the progress they made in previous lessons. For example, in a combined Year 3 and 4 class, pupils devised a picture map of their stories. The next day, they were able to translate their map into a detailed, well-structured story plan.
- There are some examples of good mathematics teaching. However, the majority of mathematics teaching requires improvement. Pupils do not always learn mathematical concepts in a sequence of lessons that help them to progress.
- Some teachers do not have an accurate understanding of how well their pupils are doing in mathematics. Therefore, planned activities are not pitched at the right level for all pupils. Marking in mathematics rarely helps pupils move forward in their learning. Often, pupils are given an area for improvement which is too vague and hard for them to put into practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils at Gosbecks behave positively in lessons. They have the confidence to ask each other and their teachers for help. In a Reception class, one boy suggested to his friend that if she wanted to find out whether her name was written on a worksheet, she should go and sound out the letters to the teacher. She did.
- Around the school buildings, pupils are consistently polite and courteous. They are proud of their school. When pupils in Key Stage 2 gave a tour, they said, 'You just won't have time to see everything that is brilliant here.'
- Parents feel pupils are safe, and they agree. Pupils are confident in their understanding of e-safety and, unprompted, hand the e-safety handbook to anyone who enters the information and communication technology suite.
- Most pupils are well versed in their steps to avoid different forms of bullying, although this is understood better by the older than the younger pupils.
- If pupils who enter the school outside normal times have particular behavioural needs, the school is successful in improving their behaviour over time. Staff liaise well with other agencies to make sure they understand the context of a pupil's behavioural issues, and put in place strategies that bring about swift improvement.

- Overall, parents are happy with behaviour at the school. However, they express concerns about behaviour in the playground. Pupils agree that sometimes their peers are too boisterous. This can make them anxious and interrupts their play.
- Younger pupils feel that if they go to a member of staff, the over-excited behaviour of their older peers is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but that the playground is sometimes just too lively for them.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School staff are fully supportive of the changes the headteacher and the senior management team are making to bring about improvement, including the school's drive to improve progress and attainment in English.
- Management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong. The school measures children's attainment on entry to Reception very thoroughly. Areas of weakness are well addressed, because the Early Years phase Leader has a good understanding of how children in Reception learn best.
- Leaders and managers have worked to eradicate inadequate teaching. They have done this through well-focused training, sharing of expertise from outside agencies, and effective role modelling.
- The headteacher sets targets for staff that make them accountable as a whole for progress in all year groups, not just the year group that they are teaching. Staff understand that the raising of standards is a collective responsibility, and they share good practice to help achieve this.
- Pupils enjoy subjects which take them out of the classroom. They love showing off what they have achieved at 'pond club.' They have cleared the pond, successfully cultivated vegetables and maintained the flower beds.
- The school promotes good relationships between pupils, and tackles discrimination. The partnership with a school in the Gambia helps pupils to understand the importance of equality of opportunity, as they learn to value the opportunities available to them in comparison to their Gambian counterparts.
- The local authority has supported the school well to bring about improvements in teaching, and in progress and attainment in English, across both key stages.
- Leaders' and managers' monitoring programmes have not identified quickly enough inconsistencies in the assessment of mathematics. Therefore, progress data in mathematics have been an unreliable information source on which to base planned actions to tackle underachievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - prioritises pupils' achievement when making decisions regarding financial deployment
 - takes its responsibilities with regard to safeguarding seriously
 - has not successfully held the school to account for improving progress in mathematics.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	114742
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	401463

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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil McCusker
Headteacher	Jayne Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2012
Telephone number	01206 575407
Fax number	01206 369856
Email address	admin@gosbecks.essex.sch.uk

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