

Gorefield Primary School

High Road, Gorefield, Wisbech, PE13 4NB

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress compares favourably with national figures.
- Teaching is consistently good, with early reading skills taught particularly well.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection.
- Reception children make good progress due to high quality provision.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Behaviour is good, and pupils have respect for their teachers and each other.
- Pupils feel very safe in school, and feel that they are listened to if they raise any concerns.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The senior leadership team and governors have high expectations, resulting in continued improvement. They take decisive actions to ensure that teaching and learning are at least good in all classes. They share a good understanding of the progress that pupils are making.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- With the exception of the teaching of early reading skills, not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils of an average ability do not make as much progress as lower- and higher-ability pupils. In addition, pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class have experienced a slowing down in their progress, though current evidence shows that this situation is being reversed.
- Although leaders have accurate information that shows how well teachers are doing, it is not collected regularly enough to give an early indication of any weaknesses in teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons. Four joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and examined display work.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor. A telephone call was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and talked to parents during the inspection. In addition six responses from a paper-based staff questionnaire were considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Andrew Read, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for children in local authority care and for pupils with a parent in the armed forces).
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching, and thus further increase pupils' progress by:
 - making sure that the quality of teaching provided at the beginning of Key Stage 2 matches that provided elsewhere in the school
 - ensuring that work is always well matched to all pupils' need, regardless of their ability.
- Further extend the capacity of the senior leadership team to obtain early identification of any weaknesses in teaching by:
 - increasing the amount of time spent reviewing the quality of work seen in pupils' books in all classes, particularly where information relating to pupils' progress shows that the pace of learning has slowed down.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- In the recent past, standards achieved in national Key Stage 2 tests have varied year by year. However, when considering pupils' different starting points, the proportions of those making and exceeding expected progress compares favourably with national figures. Cohorts are small (12 in 2012) and there is an overall trend of rising standards.
- Current information collected by the school concerning how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics shows that this good rate of progress is being maintained in most classes. In Years 5 and 6 progress is particularly strong. There has been a recent drop in standards in Years 3 and 4, relating to a single mixed-age class. At the time of the inspection these pupils were receiving additional intensive support, and the gap in their achievement was closing.
- The majority of children enter Reception with well below the expected levels of attainment, with few at higher levels. However, over the course of the year pupils make good progress, because provision is very good. By the end of Reception the majority are working within, or just below, expected levels. For example, children develop particularly well in their early language and reading skills.
- The good rate of progress present in the Foundation Stage is maintained into Key Stage 1. For example, in last year's Year 1 phonics check (an annual check to see how well children can recognise and sound-out letter combinations), results were much better than those of pupils nationally. Progress in mathematics is similarly good. During the inspection, pupils were applying different strategies to solve challenging number problems, using real-world examples.
- Taken as a whole, pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2, given their starting points at the end of Year 2. Standards in reading are better than in writing or mathematics, and build on the good skills developed in Key Stage 1. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well in English and mathematics, mirroring that of all pupils.
- In previous years, more-able pupils had not made enough progress, given their starting points. However, a higher proportion of these pupils are now progressing to advanced levels in both English and mathematics. At the time of the inspection, more-able pupils were working at high levels of attainment in both subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make a strong start in Reception. They maintain consistently good rates of progress across both subsequent key stages, doing particularly well when supported individually.
- The support given to pupils eligible for the pupil premium ensures that they achieve well. In the past, the standards attained by these pupils were typically up to a term behind in English, and up to two terms behind in mathematics. Current school information shows that this gap has closed considerably. Year 6 pupils eligible for the premium are now achieving at a comparable level to the school's other pupils in English, and are less than a term behind in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Over time the quality of teaching is mainly good, with a small amount that is outstanding. Where it is good or better it meets the specific needs of pupils, for example, where lower or higher ability learners receive additional support, or where younger learners embark upon small group

work doing letter and early reading activities.

- Teaching in Reception is consistently good or better. Children are given a wide range of activities to choose from. Although they are taught in a mixed-aged class alongside older Year 1 pupils, their individual needs are well met. For example, the deployment of support staff is good, and group tasks are well matched to the children's needs. The use of the outdoor area is good, and the classroom is well resourced.
- The teaching of early reading in Reception and Year 1 is outstanding. The teaching of reading remains a focus in all other year groups, and pupils become confident readers by the time they are in Year 6. Older pupils have a wide range of texts to choose from, and talk about their books with high levels of enthusiasm.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, the teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection. Most pupils progress well, because teachers equip them with a wide range of strategies to use when undertaking problem-solving and number work. For instance, good use is made of real-world examples.
- More-able pupils receive good levels of challenge in all key stages, because they, like their less-able peers, benefit from individualised support. In contrast, where teaching is less effective, middle ability pupils work in larger groups with adult support that is less well-tailored to individual need. In such circumstances, pupils complete tasks quickly, but are not always moved quickly enough onto their next steps in learning.
- Writing has also improved since the last inspection, as a result of the good subject knowledge of the subject co-ordinator. Provision is strongest in Years 5 and 6, where imaginative and well-structured teaching provides pupils with good opportunities to practise their writing skills. While the quality of the teaching of writing is more variable in other year groups, it is improving fast.
- Marking is undertaken regularly, and is effective in helping pupils to obtain a clear understanding of how to improve their work. Pupils know their learning targets set by the teachers, which are helpfully recorded in the front of pupils' books.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive extra help from teachers and support staff which enables them to make good progress. The funding has been used sensibly and effectively to give them extra learning resources and trips to extend their learning opportunities.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across all year groups is good. Pupils have extensive opportunities to express their feelings and discuss moral issues. Since the last inspection the school has developed good links with other schools, thus widening pupils' awareness of children living in other cultures. The spiritual development of the pupils is good, and curriculum opportunities are used effectively to explore the beliefs of other religions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupil's behaviour is good. Disruption in lessons is very uncommon and where it does occur teachers use consistent methods to address it. Pupils agree that behaviour is good in school, and are particularly positive about the way adults listen to their ideas. For example, new playground equipment has recently been purchased following requests from pupils.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and say that they find lessons interesting and feel safe. Pupils' attendance is closely monitored, and any unplanned absences are followed up.

- Pupils work very well together in groups because they have high levels of respect for the views of others. When asked to work collaboratively in lessons they support each other's learning, particularly those of a different age in mixed-age classes. In this respect the school is very inclusive, with pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds treated equally well by every member of the school community.
- The outdoor areas are safe, stimulating and well maintained. Pupils particularly value the swimming pool that was built through funds raised in the local community. Pupils have a good awareness of risk, including when using the internet and other forms of technology. They are aware of how to reduce the risk of harm when around unknown adults, and travelling to and from school. Even the youngest pupils are able to describe a good range of strategies at their disposal, should they feel unsafe.
- The process by which incidents concerning perceived racism, or those involving accidental injury, is recorded and investigated, is effective. The school is very good at identifying pupils at risk, and maintaining records that show the effectiveness of any help. Discussion with parents during the inspection showed that the majority of parents feel that home-school communication is a strength of the school, and that senior leaders are very approachable.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers have made considerable improvements since the last inspection. An experienced assistant headteacher has been appointed, and the structure of the governing body has been reviewed. The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and is now leading a team with a good capacity for continued improvement.
- The coordination of English, mathematics and science is very good, and leaders ensure that all teachers have a good understanding of different subject areas. This is because their own specialist subject knowledge is very good, and mechanisms for transferring this expertise to other teaching members are well developed.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good, and is based on a good level of specialist knowledge that has been obtained through accredited training. Pupils' progress and welfare are therefore closely checked, and pupils receive support that is proportionate to their need. The parents of pupils with special needs are particularly positive about the support that their children have received.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is very good. The leader has a deep understanding of the needs of young children, and ensures that provision is closely matched to children's needs. Assessment and tracking practices are well thought through and as a result no children fall behind in their learning.
- A local authority officer has been providing effective challenge, through the monitoring of end-of-key-stage national assessment data, and meetings with the school's senior leaders. Specific and effective assistance has also been provided to improve further the co-ordination of science.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have an overall understanding of how well pupils are doing, due to the termly collection of assessment information and the review of work in pupils' books. However, in the past such information has not been collected frequently enough to identify mid-term changes in teachers' performance. As a result, for a short period, under-performance in one class recently went unchallenged. Additional provision given to these pupils

has subsequently accelerated the progress that they are making.

- The school's teaching programmes provide positive experiences and broad opportunities for good-quality learning. They contribute well to pupils' academic achievement and their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A wide range of activities and experiences are planned; for example, the school has a flourishing link with a school in Ethiopia, further broadening the pupils' awareness of different cultures.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils exceed statutory requirements and are a strength of the school, and are also testament to the efficient organisational processes put in place by the school administrator and school bursar.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good, particularly where direct action is required to tackle under performance. The governors feel that the governance structure is now better aligned to school improvement. This is proved by the good level of challenge provided by governors concerning how well the school is doing. Such challenge is based on their good understanding of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. For example, governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent, and that it is leading to better levels of attainment for the pupils eligible for this funding. The governors have supported the headteacher in direct action to address areas of weakness in teaching, thus demonstrating their capacity to improve the outcomes for pupils by managing the performance of teachers. Governors have deployed an effective school bursar, helping them to ensure that the school remains on a secure financial footing.

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	110634
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	400076

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Bullard
Headteacher	Alyson Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2013
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