

Goonhavern Primary School

Goonhavern, Truro, Cornwall, TR4 9QD

Inspection dates

15–16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding		1
Leadership and management	Outstanding		1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, other senior leaders and governors are always ambitious and lead the strong drive for improvement.
- All staff and governors work tirelessly as a team to sustain excellent relationships with parents, which help pupils to enjoy school and lead to above-average attendance.
- Teaching is typically good and continues to be strengthened by closely focused professional development for all staff. As a result, more outstanding teaching is helping a growing number of pupils to make better than expected progress as they move through the school.
- Strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils' good progress through the school are developed effectively by the frequent use of the school's stimulating outdoor learning facilities. Pupils benefit from plentiful opportunities to work practically and to learn by finding things out for themselves across the range of subjects.
- Teachers and teaching assistants always provide high levels of care and support in safeguarding pupils' welfare.
- Exemplary pupils' behaviour, relationships and attitudes to learning have been sustained over time and continue to underpin pupils' successful achievements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, teachers and teaching assistants do not place enough emphasis on making sure that all pupils are thinking and developing their understanding when listening to their questions and in discussing ideas with each other.
- Pupils' writing and thinking are not always the best pupils can do in some subjects.
- Pupils' handwriting and punctuation skills, although improving, are not yet equally good in all classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 18 lessons and were accompanied by the headteacher or the assistant headteachers during several of these observations.
- The inspectors observed morning playtime and lunch breaks, and also attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes. The lead inspector met with governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders, and took account of the 19 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors also took account of 64 responses to the Parent View on-line questionnaire and spoke informally with a number of parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Since the last inspection there has been a period of staff change and a new headteacher has taken up his post.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Suzanne Franklin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school is slightly below the average size for similar schools.
- Most pupils attending the school are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average overall, but is higher in some year groups. The proportion supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and, in particular, pupils' achievement in writing from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that adults' questioning and pupils' discussions always extend and build on understanding
 - more consistently developing pupils' handwriting and punctuation skills as the pupils move through the school
 - encouraging pupils to give of their best every time they write in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make an excellent start in Reception, especially in developing their speaking and communication skills and in securing the self-confidence needed to really enjoy learning at school.
- Pupils generally make good progress as they move through the school, and some is outstanding, especially when learning through practical exploration. As for example in Year 2, when pupils excitedly examined cow parsley plants in the classroom and then perceptively compared them with those growing in their natural environment in the school grounds. The way pupils become engrossed in practical, problem solving activities in mathematics also illustrates why they do well in this subject.
- Pupils also develop good writing skills, particularly during specific extended writing sessions, as seen for example in Year 6 when exploring and writing imaginatively about differing sea creatures.
- Although generally improving well because of the stimulating range of interesting topics investigated, pupils' progress in developing punctuation and handwriting skills is more variable across other subjects. This is because these skills are not emphasised equally strongly in all classes.
- Even so, over time, on leaving the school, pupils' overall attainment is above average and reflects good achievement from their broadly expected levels of skills when first starting the school. This is true of all groups, including the small number from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils make at least good progress in reading, especially over the past year following a strengthened approach to teaching the knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). The pupils' performance in last year's Year 1 phonics screening check, which was above the expected level, and the above average attainment in Years 2 and 6 assessments further reflects their well-developed reading skills and enjoyment and confidence in reading at school and at home.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also do well and benefit from additional adult support matched closely to their learning needs.
- Overall, the progress made by pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which also includes a few with special educational needs, is at least as good as other pupils in the school and continues to improve. This is because they have also received effective tuition, often on a daily, individual or group basis. The gap in the standards reached by these pupils when compared to other pupils nationally has improved well over recent years and has been closed in English and narrowed to just over one term's progress in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically, teaching is at least good and there is an increasing amount of outstanding practice, especially in Reception and when pupils learn by solving problems.
- Teachers are committed to improving their own teaching and pupils' learning, shown in the way all staff in Reception and Key Stage 1 classes have strengthened the teaching of reading and staff in Key Stage 2 are raising pupils' writing skills.
- Consistent strengths of teaching across the school include the excellent use of the school's outdoor learning facilities and developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across a stimulating range of subjects.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and all adults skilfully manage pupils' behaviour and sustain encouraging relationships with pupils to lift their self-confidence, including those with special educational needs.
- These features were evident in Year 3, for example, as pupils investigated Cornish place names,

in Year 5 where pupils estimated the age of trees and in Year 1 when pupils excitedly measured the growth of sunflowers.

- High quality questioning, followed by a strong emphasis on pupils explaining their ideas and extending their understanding, typified the best teaching seen. For example, during a combined English and science lesson in Year 4, the teacher's modelling of a rich range of vocabulary extended the pupils' use of terms such as acid and alkaline and their understanding of chemical reactions.
- On other occasions though, learning slows because not enough attention is given to making sure that all pupils are fully involved in adult led question and answer sessions, and in ensuring that pupils extend their thinking and understanding in the way intended when sharing ideas with each other.
- Most marking and guidance to pupils are of a high standard, especially, for example, when pupils complete their weekly extended writing tasks. Pupils are taught to become skilled at reviewing and improving their own work. However, such good practice and high expectations are not yet as consistent when pupils record their ideas in other subjects, limiting the development of pupils' basic writing skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The parents' overwhelmingly very positive responses on Parent View and all those expressed in discussions with the inspectors accurately describe the pupils' excellent behaviour and the very supportive way the pupils interact with each other whilst at school.
- The pupils themselves also emphasise the high quality of care they receive from adults, with pupils on the school council confidently stating, 'We feel very safe, there is no bullying and any falling out is quickly sorted out by the teachers.'
- Pupils clearly indicate that they could recognise the different types of bullying if they did occur, for example cyber bullying using computers, and that, 'Adults trust us and act on what we have to say and look after us very well.'
- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes and were fully engaged in learning in most of the lessons seen. Their behaviour was also exemplary in assemblies and during lunch and break times. School records show that this has been the case over time, with the few pupils with behavioural needs being very sensitively supported.
- Pupils are particularly courteous and respectful towards visitors and show pride in their school. The pupils and their parents also expressed appreciation of the kindly relationships that they share with all staff and these are further seen in the pupils' enjoyment of school and in their continuing above average attendance.
- Pupils show great understanding for the needs of others and talk knowledgeably about their wider cultural links with pupils in schools in Birmingham and Uganda and, by so doing, show their good communication skills and mature development towards being responsible citizens.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, for example as members of the school council visiting classes to seek and act on pupils' views, to promote safe use of the outdoor facilities and to lead brief acts of worship.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The talented headteacher provides the energy and drive which, following a period of staff change, have secured a strong team approach to leadership and management. As a result, senior leaders, including governors, continue to strive for all that is best for the pupils. Together, they check school performance accurately and identify areas to improve correctly.
- This is illustrated by the determined development of practical, outdoor learning facilities and activity and the creation of stimulating and successful investigative learning opportunities across

the range of subjects. For example, the joyful learning experienced in the school garden and 'pavilion' area, weather permitting, on a daily basis especially for younger pupils, also reflects the school's beneficial promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Strong leadership also ensures that high quality care and safeguarding of pupils' welfare sustain the pupils' excellent behaviour and relationships across the school.
- Very supportive links with parents and other agencies, including the adjacent pre-school, reflect the school's promotion of strong partnerships to advance pupils' progress.
- The respected headteacher has high expectations and, working closely with senior colleagues, implements robust plans to link teachers' progression through the pay scales with staff training to improve teaching and learning.
- Staff welcome this approach, as seen in the high level of approval and morale evident in their responses to the Ofsted questionnaire and in their willingness to take on extra responsibility.
- Over the past year, for example, training for all staff in teaching phonics and in developing pupils' writing skills is enriching their progress and supporting the current drive to improve pupils' handwriting and punctuation.
- The headteacher, in close consultation with senior leaders and governors, prudently ensures that spending of the additional pupil premium funding provides those pupils eligible for support with the extra adult support needed to allow them to do as well as their peers.
- Additional funds for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are also used effectively to promote good progress for pupils with such needs, further showing the school's determination to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunity.
- The local authority provides beneficial training for governors and remains ready to respond to any requests that this good, and improving, school wishes to make.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors have improved the way they check the work of the school since the previous inspection and now have an excellent knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, governors provide detailed reports of their frequent focused visits to observe pupils' learning and receive comprehensive evaluations of school performance from the headteacher. This enables them to compare school data of pupils' achievement with those found nationally. Guided by an experienced Chair of the Governing Body and enriched by a wealth of fresh expertise, governors take full advantage of training opportunities, for example in safe recruitment of staff and managing finance. Governors are both supportive and suitably challenging and, as seen in the detailed minutes of their meetings, diligently hold the school to account through sharp questioning of senior staff, which includes the monitoring of finances. By these means, governors ensure, for example, that expenditure on new information and communication technology, such as tablet computers, and additional funds, such as the pupil premium, are used to strengthen pupils' progress and narrow any gaps in achievement.

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	111864
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	412375

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Bulford
Headteacher	Craig Hayes
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2008
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