

Gooseacre Primary Academy

Gooseacre Avenue, Thurnscoe, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S63 0NU

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- Pupils achieve well from their individual starting points to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Reading is a notable strength. It is well taught and so pupils read widely and with good understanding.
- Teaching is good, especially at developing pupils' language and communication skills.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils work and play well together. They clearly enjoy school.
- School leaders make sure that pupils are safe and secure. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe too.
- Strong leadership of teaching has brought about improvement. This is why pupils make rapid progress and standards are rising.
- The Interim Executive Principal, the head of academy and governance have established good systems to bring about fast improvement to the quality of teaching and to raise achievement.
- The management board is ambitious for the school and knows its strengths and weaknesses.
- The head of academy has created a school where pupils want to do well. They say, 'It's easy to make friends here and teachers are lovely.'

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work in mathematics does not always match pupils' abilities or challenge the most able pupils. Pupils have few occasions in other subjects to practise and improve their mathematical skills.
- Pupils find it difficult to write at length.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough time to respond to developmental points in marking to improve their writing.
- The leadership and management skills of middle leaders are underdeveloped.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers.
- The inspectors held meetings with the Interim Executive Principal, the head of academy, the associate head of academy and middle leaders, the Director of Performance Outcomes and Improvement from the Navigate Academies Trust, the Chair and a member of the Academy Management Board.
- The inspectors also held meetings with two groups of pupils from Key Stage 2 to discuss their work and their views on school.
- Insufficient responses were available on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the lead inspector to be able to access them. The inspectors took the views of parents in a very recent school survey into account.

Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Melvyn Hemmings

Additional Inspector

Aileen King

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of Nursery and Reception-aged children.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high.
- The majority of pupils are supported through the pupil premium. This proportion is high. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school converted to academy status in September 2012. It is part of the Navigate Academies Trust.
- The school is currently led and managed by an Interim Executive Principal who oversees the work of two schools; and a head of academy who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. An Executive Principal has been appointed to start in September 2014.
- Governance is by members of the Trust Board. This was established very recently and replaces the former governing body.
- There have been several staffing changes in the last two years.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of all pupils, particularly the most able, in writing and mathematics by:
 - making sure that work in mathematics matches pupils' abilities and challenges them effectively
 - ensuring pupils practise and improve their mathematical skills in other subjects
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write regularly and at length in all classes
 - ensuring pupils respond to developmental points in marking so that they learn from their mistakes in their written work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by further developing the skills of middle leaders so they know how well pupils are doing and are better placed to help improve achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from individual starting points that are low compared to typical levels. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well.
- By the end of the Reception Year, the majority of children are close to the level typical of their age and approximately 50% reach a good level of development. This reflects the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since September 2012.
- Interesting indoor and outdoor activities, interspersed with specific teaching of skills, enable children to make rapid gains in their learning, especially in communication, language, literacy and in their personal, social, emotional and mathematical development.
- Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 have clearly benefited from this provision. As a result, their attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 with an increasing proportion reaching the higher Level 3. Attainment in the phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check at the end of Year 1 is also average.
- Achievement is good in Key Stage 2. Progress has been rapid over the past two years as pupils make up previous gaps in their learning. Attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average as a result, with an increasing proportion working within the higher Levels 5 and 6.
- Reading is a particular strength. Pupils read well. Younger pupils know how to sound out unfamiliar words. By Year 6, pupils are mature readers, with 15% working within the higher Level 6. They skim read competently for information. The most able pupils discuss in depth favourite books and authors, commenting, 'Your imagination is endless when you read a book.'
- Pupils make good progress in writing. From early on, pupils learn to write in sentences and to incorporate interesting vocabulary and punctuation to enliven their writing. Older pupils clearly relish using new words and descriptive phrases and this is reflected in their articulate speech.
- Performance in the national test for English grammar, spelling and punctuation at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was significantly below average. It is now broadly average, as a result of daily practise of these skills.
- However, pupils tend not to write at length and often repeat mistakes. This holds back the progress sometimes of the most able pupils. They observed, 'You write well if you have time to get into what you're writing.'
- Achievement is good in mathematics. Through concentrating on calculation methods and basic mathematical skills, pupils are quickly filling any previous gaps in their learning. Occasionally, pupils' progress slows, particularly that of the most able, when the work does not challenge them.
- Pupils who are supported through school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs achieve well. The work is closely matched to their individual needs.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding make good progress and outperform similar groups nationally in English and mathematics. They often do better than others in school who are not known to be eligible for free school meals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Teaching assistants are deployed well in every class to help pupils supported through school action, school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs to do as well as other pupils.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn new skills and use them in varied tasks and activities. There are good links between indoor and outdoor activities. A feature of this key stage, and throughout the school, is the extent to which role play is used creatively to develop pupils' language and communication skills.
- Staff are skilled at developing pupils' vocabulary through introducing them to new words, encouraging them to analyse writing and to 'steal ideas and make them better'. For example, a

mixed Year 3/4 class pointed out that a piece of writing needed 'more adjectives, adverbs and interesting verbs'. They suggested alternatives such as 'tangled, twisted, crumbling, intertwined'.

- A relative weakness is the limited time that pupils are given to write. This means that the most able pupils, in particular, take a while to learn to explore ideas through writing without interruption.
- Strengths include good relationships between staff and pupils, good management of behaviour and very good systems to teach reading skills. In Year 5, for example, the most able pupils listened to each other read and then discussed how each might improve.
- The school makes use of hand-held computer technology to enable pupils to follow personal skills' programs that help them to spell and use grammar correctly, as well as consolidating mathematical skills.
- However, opportunities are missed across the curriculum for pupils to practise and improve their mathematical skills further, which sometimes slows the learning of the most able pupils.
- Marking is good in that it clearly shows pupils what to do to improve their work. However, not all staff require pupils to act on their suggestions to improve their writing or mathematical skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils arrive in good time, ready to learn. Lessons start on time and proceed at a good pace because pupils are well organised.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and are clearly keen to learn. They say, 'Even if it is hard for you, you have to try to enjoy what you do.' These positive attitudes are reflected in their good achievement.
- Lunch and break times are happy occasions. Boys and girls play well together, organising games of hockey or making intricate wristbands out of colourful elastic bands. They say, 'There are lots of interesting things to do.' Play leaders ensure that equipment is distributed and put away safely.
- Pupils agree, 'Behaviour is usually good but sometimes people are a bit silly.' The school's behavioural records endorse this view.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and their parents agree. Pupils know about the different forms of bullying. They are sure that bullying happens rarely and, if it does occur, then it is dealt with well.
- Pupils accurately observe, 'All the teachers and dinner ladies look after us. The playground is well supervised.'
- The school council and eco-council give pupils experience of taking responsibility. Older pupils are well prepared for the future through submitting applications for responsible jobs in school, for instance.
- The primary school sport funding has enabled the school to offer a much wider range of sports' activities. As a result, pupils feel they have 'improved in PE'.
- Attendance is below average but improving at a good rate. The pastoral team works closely with pupils and families to improve attendance further.

The leadership and management are good

- The Interim Executive Principal and the head of academy give a clear lead. Their main aim is to raise achievement further and to make a first-rate academy. In two years, they are well on the way to doing so.
- The head of academy has a realistic view of the school's performance. Self-evaluation is accurate and the priorities for development are clearly the right ones for the school.

- Attention to detail by the head of academy, combined with the strategic overview of the Interim Executive Principal, make for strong leadership by example. They have identified that the next step is to develop the role of middle leaders so they can make a stronger contribution to improving achievement.
- The associate head of academy has started to develop the leadership skills of middle leaders but, as yet, they are not closely involved in checking pupils' performance and analysing what they need to do to improve further.
- The strong focus on leading teaching through observing lessons, coaching and mentoring staff, checking pupils' work in books and sharing effective practice has resulted in good teaching and a shared commitment to raising achievement.
- The systems to check teachers' performance and effectiveness are used well to set performance targets, to give continuing professional development and to support weaker teaching when needed. Staff are held to account for their pupils' performance through twice-termly pupils' progress meetings.
- The primary school sport funding is used well to enhance extra-curricular clubs, to introduce pupils to a diverse range of sports and to coach staff in teaching different sports. Pupils are enthusiastic about sport as a result and keen to win competitions.
- Safeguarding fully meets current government requirements.
- The curriculum is carefully tailored to meet the needs of pupils and to ensure that those who are supported through the pupil premium are equally advantaged. The school has a wide range of educational visits and visitors to school in order to broaden pupils' life experiences.
- The academy sponsor keeps a close eye on how the school is progressing and gives good quality support to ensure continuing improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The very recently established management board has a purposeful agenda to ensure continuing improvement through more strategic governance. Although this is as yet untried, it is clear from scrutinising the former governing body minutes that past governance has been supportive and asked searching questions. For example, governors asked questions about teaching quality and its impact on pupils' performance in mathematics and writing. These qualities provide a sound basis for the future. Members of the management board understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have a good grasp of data and the relative performance of pupils supported through the pupil premium compared to those who are not known to be eligible for free school meals. They have a firm grasp of how performance management is used to strengthen teaching.

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	138415
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	425692

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol White
Headteacher	Kay Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01709 893569
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