

Goosewell Primary School

Goosewell Road, Plymstock, Plymouth, Devon PL9 9HD

Inspection dates

10–11 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The headteacher and senior leaders have not secured the improvements necessary since the previous inspection to ensure that pupils are achieving well. Pupils' progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics is too variable across the school. Progress in mathematics is slower than in reading and writing.
- Monitoring by leaders does not focus closely enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.
- Middle leaders are not contributing fully to school improvement.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics lags behind that in other subjects. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to solve deeper mathematical problems using their reasoning skills.
- Improvements to the achievement of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have been too slow.
- Teaching varies too much in quality across the school. Teachers do not consistently check pupils' learning and challenge them sufficiently. As a result, some pupils, including the most able, are not fully stretched in their learning.
- The marking policy is inconsistently followed by teachers. Some teachers do not give pupils helpful guidance about how they can improve their work. As a result, pupils do not always know what their next steps in learning should be.
- Early years provision has not, over time, provided a sharp enough focus to address children's weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics so that they are ready for learning in Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- The personal development and welfare of pupils are good. Adults know individual pupils well and relationships are positive and caring. Support for pupils' social and emotional well-being is effective.
- Pupils who are in the specialist unit, The Hub, achieve well and are fully integrated into the main school.
- Governance has shown significant improvement in the last year.
- Pupils are polite, well behaved and show high levels of care for each other.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and, in so doing, raise levels of achievement in English and mathematics across the school by:
 - making sure that teachers use the information from checks on pupils' learning to plan tasks that promote their good progress systematically
 - using assessment information to sufficiently challenge pupils, especially the most able
 - ensuring all teachers consistently follow the agreed marking policy and make sure that pupils know how to improve their learning
 - improving the performance of disadvantaged pupils so that they attain at least in line with national standards.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years to better prepare the children for Year 1 by:
 - ensuring that the identified gaps in children's learning are closed quickly
 - increasing the level of focus on the prime areas of reading, writing and number.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders enable middle leaders to contribute fully to school improvement initiatives and that they are rigorously held to account for their areas of responsibility
 - the monitoring of teaching places a clear focus on how effectively individuals and groups of pupils learn and make progress
 - pupils, especially the most able, broaden and deepen their understanding in mathematics by enabling them to solve problems and explain their thinking.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not succeeded in bringing about sufficient improvement to the quality of teaching over time to ensure that pupils are receiving a good quality of education. Improvements have been too slow and are not yet secure despite a comprehensive review of the school's effectiveness. The headteacher has identified where improvements are needed and is tackling weak teaching. He has used support from the informal liaison he has with neighbouring large primary schools.
- Senior leaders track pupils' progress on a regular basis, checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments and identifying those pupils who are falling behind at their pupil progress meetings and 'teaching drop-ins.' These measures have resulted in better quality intervention work for pupils with special educational needs or disability, which is giving rise to improved progress, but still has room for further improvement. Leaders recognise that more needs to be done to improve teaching to provide a consistently good level of challenge for pupils, including the most able. The improvements that have been made have not yet had enough time to raise achievement sufficiently.
- While training and support have been provided for middle leaders, they have not had sufficient impact in improving the quality of education provided by the school. They lack confidence when analysing data and do not check sufficiently the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' learning.
- The school's self-evaluation shows that leaders have accurately identified the areas requiring development. Indicators show that both the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make are now improving. However, leaders have not provided class teachers with specific individual detail on how to improve their teaching. Leaders have not ensured that teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are high enough.
- Pupils' interest and enjoyment of their learning are boosted by the careful combination of subjects in the curriculum. Pupils' writing experiences have been broadened, and initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills are proving successful. Pupils are starting to take the initiative to improve their writing without being prompted.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a range of enrichment activities, including sport, drama, music and other cultural activities. The many and varied after-school clubs, day visits and residential visits all add to the rich experiences provided for pupils by the school. Leaders have created plans to develop even further the curriculum in mathematics in order to more fully meet the requirements of the new national curriculum and further enhance pupils' mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- The school is fully inclusive, ensures equal opportunities and has very effective systems to support families, particularly those facing difficult circumstances. As a result of its good support for pupils with special educational needs, it attracts a high number of pupils with specific needs who enter the school at various times during the year. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that they would recommend the school to others and they are very supportive of the school. This is illustrated by the '1 to 1' reading club, which is staffed by a large number of parent volunteers who are helping to raise the profile of reading and are contributing to improving pupils' reading skills.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Staff encourage pupils to show respect for each other and to recognise that each pupil is unique and should be appreciated. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain because leaders ensure that they have a good understanding of British values, such as democracy, tolerance, rule of law and respect for cultural diversity. For example, pupils understand the need for rules and expectations and the benefits they bring. They show respect for different faiths and beliefs.
- Systems to manage teachers' performance and to identify training needs and make decisions about teachers' salary progression are fully in place. Teachers are set suitable targets. The school has reviewed its systems for assessing pupils in line with the new national curriculum, but it is too early to see the impact of those changes in improved standards.
- The school is using the additional sports funding successfully so that pupils can participate in a variety of sports provided by specialist coaches, who also provide training for members of staff. This is having a beneficial effect on pupils' fitness and physical well-being and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.
- The school's service premium grant is used very effectively to target specific support to pupils from service families to improve their attainment and progress in English and mathematics. However, additional funding to improve disadvantaged pupils' academic achievement is not as well targeted. While it is used well to improve pupils' emotional health and well-being, it is less successful in improving disadvantaged pupils' academic progress.

- The vast majority of the parents who met the inspection team, and those who responded to the online questionnaire, said that Goosewell is a very caring school, describing it as happy and safe. Parents commented on the staff's 'amazing commitment, encouragement and approachability'.
- Despite providing an accurate level of information and guidance, the local authority has not ensured that the school has acted with sufficient urgency or effectiveness to bring about the necessary changes fast enough. Support brokered from the informal partnership with large neighbouring primary schools is allowing leaders to learn from best practice.
- Decisive action by leaders, including the parent support adviser, has improved attendance, which is above average. Any unreported and extended absences are followed up rigorously.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors know that the quality of teaching is inconsistent throughout the school. They are improving their understanding of how to monitor improvement to raise standards more rapidly. Regular and comprehensive training has been provided and they have made good use of this time to improve their effectiveness. All governors now fully understand their responsibilities.
 - The governors have responded quickly to the slow rise in test results and increasingly question the school's performance. They have asked, for example, for information about the extent to which intervention programmes are speeding up pupils' progress.
 - The governors understand what national data says about the school's performance and know the priorities for improvement, particularly that teaching and learning must improve.
 - The governors fully understand the purpose of performance targets for key staff and hold staff to account for their performance, including by making appropriate decisions about when pay awards are merited or not.
 - The governing body makes sure that the budget balances. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities, including ensuring that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. There are effective links with parents and the local communities to support pupils' education.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. The learning environment is safe and calm, enabling good behaviour to flourish.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- There is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching, leading to varied rates of progress across classes and subjects. The most able pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Individual pupils often produce good-quality work in English and mathematics, but teaching across the school is not good enough to ensure that most pupils achieve well across all areas of their learning. Pupils' progress in all subjects is not consistently good because not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The teaching of reading is now good throughout the school. There is a particular strength in the teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds that they represent), starting in the early years. Effective training and monitoring of teaching have improved teachers' ability to teach reading skills well. School information shows that the pupils are presently on track to achieve better results in reading than in the previous year. Pupils say that they enjoy reading. However, individual pupils have not always made the progress in reading that they should have achieved in the past and, although they are now catching up, some remain behind the level expected.
- The teaching of writing and of spelling, grammar and punctuation has improved and is more effective than in the past. Pupils show an improvement in the quality of their writing, including greater vocabulary and better sentence structure, although they do not apply this increased confidence and independence equally well across different subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is being reviewed and strengthened. Opportunities have increased for pupils to apply their calculation skills. As a result, they are beginning to make better progress. However, they are not yet able to apply their skills confidently to solving more challenging mathematical problems. Teaching does not do enough to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts, or enable them to explain their thinking.
- Teaching now focuses much more carefully on meeting the learning needs of the different groups of pupils than has previously been the case. Some teachers are skilled at using ongoing assessment of pupils' progress to adapt their teaching to maximise pupils' progress. Such teachers regularly probe and

extend pupils' understanding by questioning them in detail and enabling them to think deeply. However, the most able pupils are still not challenged enough to ensure that they make rapid progress. This is because these pupils find tasks too easy when work is not precisely matched to their capabilities.

- The teaching for pupils with special educational needs or disability is closely tailored to their particular learning needs and ensures that they appropriately develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This is especially the case in The Hub.
- Since the previous inspection, the quality of marking has improved. However, the marking policy is inconsistently implemented. Work is marked, but does not always give pupils the information they need to move learning along at a faster rate. This is particularly true in writing, when pupils are not reminded how to use their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills accurately. Consequently, they continue to make the same errors, which hinders their success.
- The effectiveness of teaching assistants is too variable. While some work sensitively and skilfully with pupils and enable them to keep up with their learning, others do not check on and refocus pupils' learning. They sometimes give too much support by answering questions for pupils, or prompting pupils too quickly, which slows learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Parents spoken to and staff confirm that pupils are safe and well looked after. Pupils say that they feel safe because 'staff are always there and help us'.
- Staff are diligent in the way they supervise pupils both in and out of school. Staff are checked rigorously prior to appointment. Adults implement health and safety procedures consistently and regularly review them to ensure pupils are kept safe and secure.
- Staff are well trained and all procedures for checking the suitability of staff and visitors are robust. Leaders ensure that all adults are alert to the dangers of radicalisation and have suitable systems in place to respond to concerns, should they arise.
- The school successfully supports pupils who are admitted to the school at different times of the year, including those who demonstrate particularly challenging behaviour or are looked after by the local authority. This helps pupils settle quickly and get a good start to school life.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and talk about how they have been taught to use computers safely.
- Many pupils feel well supported by the 'KIT' club, where they are able to talk about things that worry them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including, for example, verbal, racist and cyber-bullying. The school rules are well understood, and pupils are confident that adults apply these fairly. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare but if it does happen, they have complete confidence that staff would deal with it immediately and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are well mannered, take good care of each other and show great respect for adults.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they work hard. Positive attitudes towards learning can be seen in their levels of concentration in lessons. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the way their teachers make learning interesting with activities to help them learn in different ways. They indicate, though, that if work is not stimulating, some pupils lose interest.
- The playground is a happy, busy place. Pupils of all ages play together extremely harmoniously. Pupils new to the school are helped to feel welcome and settle in quickly.
- Many of the older pupils take pride in taking responsibilities and discharging their duties well, such as those on the school council, or 'eco warriors'.
- Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils want to achieve well and always try their best.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' progress has been too variable, especially as they move through key stage 2. As a result, by the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics, though rising, was significantly below the national figure in 2015. Not enough pupils reached the higher levels because teachers did not consistently enable them to develop the necessary basic skills to achieve better.
- In 2015, pupils did not perform as well as expected in English, grammar, punctuation and spelling. The school's information for this year and work in pupils' books indicate that current Year 6 pupils are making better progress, and some good progress in all subjects. However, across the school, teachers are still allowing errors in writing to go uncorrected.
- Achievement for the most able pupils is not good, especially at the higher levels in mathematics and in grammar, punctuation and spelling, because they are not routinely provided with sufficient challenge.
- Children start school in the early years with basic skills, knowledge and understanding below the levels typical for their age, especially in communication and language. They make some progress and join Year 1 with standards much closer to what might be expected, though still below those reached nationally.
- In 2015, key stage 1 results were significantly below average, though they have risen slowly since the previous inspection. Leaders identified the reasons for this and implemented improved and earlier support for pupils with specific needs. As a result, current pupils' progress and attainment are accelerating in reading, including phonics, writing, number and shape and space.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was below that of the previous year and below the national average. Pupils who did not achieve the standard are now being given effective support, leading to improvements in reading in the current Year 2.
- An unusually high number of pupils, often with special educational needs, join the school in Years 5 and 6; these pupils make similar progress to others in the school.
- Pupils are making better progress since the previous inspection due to the sharper focus on improvement by leaders. Despite remaining weaknesses in mathematics, previous differences between the performance of girls and boys are being reduced throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability are very positive in their approach to learning, including those pupils who are in The Hub. They receive well-targeted, effective individual and group support and are making good progress. The service premium grant is used effectively, especially for helping new pupils from service families settle into their classes and to assess any gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils who are supported through this funding attain at least as well as other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. A gap still exists, however, in their achievement compared with that of other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Over time, early years provision has not been effective in enabling all children to make at least good progress so that they were ready for Year 1. In 2015, just over half the children reached the good level of development needed to be ready for Year 1 work. This was an improvement from 2013, although it was the same as for 2014 and remains below the national average. The achievement of this group of pupils, especially boys, was weakest in reading, writing and number.
- Currently, school information shows that the children are on track to achieve higher results than in 2015 for a good level of development.
- The school's information confirms that when children start school, the majority have skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age in the areas of language, and personal, social and emotional development, and that their literacy skills are particularly weak. Much focus is given to developing the children personally, socially and emotionally. The children happily engage in activities and enjoy playing and exploring.
- The early years staff have benefited from significant help and training from their support school. The strengths in the teaching and range of activities provided for children indoors and outside ensure that the provision is now much better.
- Teaching in the early years is now building more helpfully on children's initial skills on entry. The

children's speaking and listening skills are better developed and early reading and writing skills are given a higher profile than previously; for example, phonics teaching has been introduced earlier. The improved teaching of phonics is helping to accelerate children's early reading skills in preparation for joining Year 1. This was seen when the children were asked to describe the noise of bacon cooking; they were able to tackle spelling the word 'sizzle'.

- The learning environment for early years children is well organised, with outdoor learning planned well to develop the children's social and emotional skills, although less effective in developing reading, writing and number. A clearer structure for learning, including through purposeful play and direct teaching, is being established.
- The children have good opportunities to be creative and sustain concentration, both independently and when working with others. This was seen when a group of children worked together to compose their own stories around the number of jumps the frog was making on the lily pad during a number session.
- Staff have good relationships with the children and work hard to promote good behaviour. Children are learning how to consider others, take turns and share, and most engage well in tasks. Occasional interruption from a minority of children with challenging behaviour is dealt with effectively, due to the early identification of children's learning and social needs.
- The needs of groups of children are now being met more effectively through more accurate ongoing checks on their learning. The early years pupil premium funding is now being used to this end.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Risks are managed well and staff are vigilant. Statutory welfare requirements are met and specialist outside support is accessed where necessary to improve children's early years' experience and development.

School details

Unique reference number	113345
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10009236
This inspection 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	627
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Manning
Headteacher	John Stephens
Telephone number	01752 482960
Website	www.goosewell.plymouth.sch.uk
Email address	jstephens@goosewell.plymouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 February 2014

Information about this school

- Goosewell Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- It has 21 single-age classes, which include three Reception classes for children in the early years.
- The school has a special educational needs support unit for 10 pupils with communication and interaction difficulties called The Hub.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- There are almost a third of pupils with parents and carers in the armed forces and this contributes to an unusually high mobility rate. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. This is greatest in Years 5 and 6.
- The school hosts a pre-school class, which is managed privately and is inspected separately.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is average. The pupil premium is extra government funding to help the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- In this school, pupils from service families are eligible for the service premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club, called the Gosling Trust, during term time and the holidays. This is inspected separately.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Early years provision is full time in the Reception classes.
- Goosewell Primary School is part of an informal support group of large primary schools in Plymouth, where it gets support in relation to leadership and other aspects of the school's needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons. These included two lessons jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons to check the quality of provision and its impact.
- The inspectors heard individual pupils read and discussed their individual reading preferences with them.
- They carried out a detailed scrutiny of the work in pupils' books across a range of subjects and classes.
- Pupils' behaviour both inside and outside the classroom was observed.
- The inspectors held meetings with the chair of the governing body and five members of the governing body, the school leadership team, school staff and members of the school council.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors also talked with a number of parents and carers as they brought children into school.
- The inspectors viewed a range of documents, including: information on pupils' achievement; the school's data on current and recent progress and attainment; and the school's self-evaluation report. They also looked at the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding, and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The inspectors took account of the 132 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 48 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff. The school's website was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

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