

Gorsemoor Primary School

Gorsemoor Road, Heath Hayes, Cannock, Staffordshire WS12 3TG

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the senior team. While they have identified how to raise standards, their actions have been either too recent or are not yet fully in place to have made a significant difference.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently strong across all year groups and subjects. Not enough pupils are making the progress needed to reach the standards expected of them.
- Teachers do not routinely identify pupils' misconceptions in lessons and then use these to help pupils learn. In some classes, teachers do not provide enough guidance to enable pupils to improve their work.
- Governors are not sufficiently strategic or robust in checking the key priorities of the school. They do not use the information they have well enough to help drive improvements or hold school leaders to account.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles. They are still developing their skills and have not yet been able to demonstrate impact in their areas of responsibility. While they have identified how to raise standards in their area of responsibility, actions have been either too recent or are not yet fully in place to have made a significant difference.
- There is variation in the quality of phonics teaching.
- Not all teachers use effective questioning to deepen pupils' understanding and develop their reasoning skills.
- Pupils' achievement has recently improved, especially in writing and mathematics. However, progress across the school, and especially that of boys and disadvantaged pupils, is variable and still requires improvement.
- Children in the early years do not make rapid enough progress because not all adults focus closely enough on the development of children's speech, language and communication skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have a precise understanding of what needs to improve at the school. They are taking decisive action to bring these improvements about quickly.
- Pupils' conduct around school is good and teachers keep them well informed about how to stay safe.
- Opportunities for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good.
- Leaders have taken effective action to address issues in safeguarding. Keeping children safe is central to the work of the school and leaders have created a culture where all staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that pupils make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable. Do this by:
 - having high expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving children’s learning in the early years by making sure adults intervene consistently with children and engage them in conversations that stimulate their learning
 - ensuring that misconceptions are identified, through effective questioning, and then corrected quickly and ensuring that teachers provide sufficient guidance to help pupils improve their work
 - ensuring greater consistency in the quality of phonics teaching.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening governance so that governors carry out their roles and responsibilities successfully and contribute to improving the quality of education pupils receive
 - making sure that leaders at all levels, particularly those new to their roles, receive further support and training to develop their skills and extend their responsibilities
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels closely monitor the quality of teaching so that appropriate support can be introduced to make teaching consistently good across the school.
- Secure sustainable improvement in outcomes for all groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and boys, by continuing to embed, evaluate and refine the new systems now in place.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There has been considerable change in leadership since the last inspection. The appointment of the new headteacher has added stability and is already beginning to have a positive effect on the school. The headteacher and her deputy have been honest in their evaluation of the quality of education that the school currently provides. They have drawn up a detailed action plan for improvement, the overarching theme of which is improving teaching and learning. They have been unwavering in implementing the plan but it is too recent to have had a significant impact.
- Middle leaders, some because they are relatively new to their roles, have had limited opportunities to develop their skills and work alongside colleagues to improve their practice. However, they feel well supported by senior leaders and are beginning to focus their actions more sharply on improving teaching and raising standards.
- Leaders have a clearer picture than in the past of where improvement is needed. In some areas, such as mathematics and the teaching of phonics, recent initiatives are already securing better progress, and this is evident in pupils' books. This is being supported well by the sharper use of in-school assessment information to identify where targeted support is needed to help pupils in danger of falling behind, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- The systems by which senior leaders manage teachers' performance are now robust. Teachers work closely with senior leaders to evaluate their classroom practice. Where weaknesses are identified, teachers receive effective training and support. Those teachers who met with the inspectors said that they appreciate the increased rigour with which leaders manage their performance, and the increased opportunities for training that have come about as a result.
- Leaders are effective in promoting a strong ethos to support pupils in aspects of their preparation for life in modern Britain. The school's curriculum has a clear focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and provides them with opportunities to understand key issues of life in modern Britain. Starting in the early years, pupils rapidly come to appreciate the importance and value of rules, and the obligation to treat adults and their peers with respect and kindness. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility as members of the school council.
- The new headteacher recently invested in an external review of the use of the pupil premium funding. This has helped to ensure that the use of such funding supports pupils' progress more robustly. The funding is also used to support pupils who experience problems with emotional and social issues, through lunchtime activity provision.
- Leaders use the additional funds from the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium to employ sports coaches and provide a range of activities. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sports and competitions, including football and tag rugby. The coaches work alongside teachers to help them improve their skills in teaching PE. As a result, the quality of sports teaching has improved.

- Parents who spoke to the inspectors or who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, are typically happy with the quality of education and care their children receive. Although many welcome the changes instigated by the new headteacher, there are a minority who have identified the need for improved communication to match the rapid pace of change within the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are not sufficiently strategic or robust in checking key priorities of the school. They acknowledge they have not, until recently, sufficiently challenged the school's leaders about the progress pupils make at the school. Following a recent review of governance, they are redefining their roles and have a desire to be a far more effective force in the leadership of the school. The most recent minutes of meetings show that governors are beginning to challenge leadership.
- In the past, governors did not check the impact of the pupil premium rigorously enough. However, the spending is now appropriately designated to staffing and educational support for pupils.
- The governor responsible for safeguarding attends school regularly and ensures that arrangements are robust and that the school's policies and procedures keep pupils safe in every respect. Governors make sure that the school conducts the right checks on staff when they are appointed, and that training in how to protect children is kept up to date. They have recently obtained the funding to improve the perimeter fence, which has added to the physical security of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that checks and vetting procedures are fully in place, including for staff, volunteers, governors and visitors. In addition, mandatory training in current child protection procedures has been provided for all staff. As a result, those who work in, or visit, the school have a good understanding of how to refer pupils to the designated safeguarding leaders if they feel they need to.
- All staff, including newly qualified teachers, are trained regularly to an appropriate level and understand the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. Referrals to the appropriate agencies are made and followed up swiftly.
- The school site is safe, well maintained and well supervised. The new headteacher has taken measures to ensure that entrances to the school are secure and pupils feel safe and well looked after. Children are encouraged and supported in keeping safe and in playing safely from the moment they enter the Nursery. They very quickly become aware of how to keep themselves safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, despite recent changes led by the senior team which have improved the quality of teaching, it is not yet good enough in some classes.

- Teaching and the use of assessment are not yet consistently good throughout the school. Some staff do not routinely identify pupils' misconceptions in lessons and then use these to help pupils learn. In some classes, teachers do not provide enough guidance so that pupils can improve their work. Consequently, pupils sometimes repeat their mistakes, which prevents them from becoming secure in their understanding.
- Where teaching is better, for example in Reception and upper key stage 2, pupils make progress step by step and achieve well overall. In other parts of the school, however, the quality of teaching and learning is too variable, with pupils in some classes progressing faster than in others.
- There is an inconsistency in the standard of phonics teaching. In some classes where pupils make good progress, the teachers have good subject knowledge and briskly move pupils on. However, this is not evident in all lessons. Leaders have recognised this and have implemented a systematic and whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics.
- The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is improving. In the past, teaching did not ensure that additional adult support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities was effectively helping their learning. As a result, these pupils did not always persevere in their work and gave up too readily when they found learning difficult. Work seen in current pupils' books indicates more positive attitudes to learning, but this aspect is still not consistently good.
- Teachers' questioning is of variable effectiveness across the school. Too often, teachers do not ask questions to check that pupils have understood the work or to probe and deepen their understanding. On occasions, adults intervene too quickly to provide pupils with the answer, rather than allowing them to work it out for themselves.
- In reading, learning on occasion is slowed through tasks not being set at a level appropriate to pupils' development and activities not being purposeful. This has led to pupils not making good progress across the school. New approaches to the teaching of reading have increased pupils' interest in books and their desire to read.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is inconsistent both across year groups and within classes. Often, the work is too easy for some pupils and too hard for others. Expectations are not consistently high enough. At times, the pupils complete work that does not require a more complex approach or skill, particularly in lower key stage 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy school and are willing to take on responsibility and participate enthusiastically in a range of school activities. They know about the importance of being healthy and enjoy the wide variety of physical activities, both during lunchtime and after school.
- Pupils said that they are well supported to feel happy and safe. They show a good understanding of bullying, including cyber bullying, and said that this is not tolerated by staff. They also said that they have confidence in staff, who deal quickly and

decisively with disputes.

- A few parents expressed concerns about the school's management of behaviour. However, pupils said that bullying is rare and that adults deal with unsafe or disruptive behaviour quickly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school safely and show respect for others and their environment. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils play happily alongside each other and share equipment well. One pupil told an inspector, 'Nobody is left out; everybody is included.'
- There are few instances of poor behaviour. The systems that are in place to support behaviour in school are understood and consistently applied. This means that everyone is clear about what is expected. Occasionally, pupils become restless, but this is linked to teaching that is not well matched to their needs. School behaviour records are well kept and are in good order.
- Attendance rates are consistently in line with national averages. Leaders work effectively with parents and offer regular incentives to promote good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, progress in reading and mathematics in key stage 2 was below average, especially for disadvantaged pupils and for boys. Results of national assessments showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 was below the national average in reading.
- Outcomes in 2017 were stronger for younger pupils. In 2017, the proportions of key stage 1 pupils reaching or exceeding the standards for their age were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check declined in 2017. Pupils' phonics knowledge in the early years and key stage 1 is improving, but it is not yet good due to the variations in teaching.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils varies throughout the school. Disadvantaged pupils make better progress than their peers when they receive additional support outside lessons. However, this progress is not seen consistently across all year groups because support is spread too thinly.
- Over recent years, boys' achievement has consistently been much weaker than that of girls. The school's self-evaluation considers these variations and leaders are tracking these groups carefully. Evidence seen during the inspection showed differences between boys' and girls' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is variable. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are achieving better than those in other year groups. Recent improvements to teaching have led to an acceleration in progress. However, for some pupils, teaching has not enabled them to achieve well enough over time.

- Pupils make better progress in other subjects, including science. This is due to the provision of more opportunities for pupils to undertake investigative work. In science, the proportion of pupils who achieved the age-related standard was broadly in line with the national average at the end of key stage 2 and well above at the end of key stage 1. Pupils' books illustrate that pupils' progress and provision in science are strong across the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- In 2017, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was broadly average. However, progress is not consistently strong across the early years setting. Currently, children make slower progress in the Nursery classes than in the Reception. In the Reception classes, adults respond quicker when children have finished a task or are ready for the next stage of their learning. This means that the improvement in skills is more rapid in these classes.
- The early years leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision. Leaders have developed detailed action plans to raise the quality of provision in the early years but there has not been enough time to fully implement all of the planned actions. As a result, the provision remains underdeveloped, especially the outdoor learning environment.
- Leaders work closely with the nurseries that children have previously attended before joining the school's early years provision in the Reception Year. This helps leaders to have a precise understanding of the needs of each child.
- Overall, teaching in the early years requires improvement. Tasks are planned carefully and there is a range of activities for children to enjoy. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to engage in sustained play, especially when they have opted to work without the support of an adult. Staff do not always focus closely enough on developing speech, language and communication while children are learning.
- The early years team has positive relationships with parents and encourage an open-door policy. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's learning and contribute to their learning journals. Arrangements to support children when they start school are effective.
- Children behave well in the early years and quickly learn routines. There is a happy atmosphere in lessons. Staff have high expectations of manners and courtesy, which they model well for the children. As a result, children learn and play together well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Policies and procedures, including the use of mobile phones and first aid, are understood by all staff and consistently applied.

School details

Unique reference number	124183
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10025353

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	583
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Walden
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Evans
Telephone number	01543 274788
Website	www.gorsemoor.staffs.sch.uk/
Email address	headteacher@gorsemoor.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- In September 2017, a new headteacher and two newly qualified teachers joined the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons or parts of lessons across the school.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes and breaktimes, as well as in lessons. An inspector observed an assembly.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, the SEN coordinator, the early years leaders, the mathematics and English leaders and the office staff.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. He had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 102 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors met parents at the start of the school day. They considered the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 129 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Max Vlahakis, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Khalid Din	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Karen O'Keefe	Ofsted Inspector
Adele Mills	Ofsted Inspector

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