

Gorse Ride Junior School

Gorse Ride South, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 4JJ

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not tackled the areas requiring improvement from the last inspection with sufficient rigour. As a result, some aspects have not improved.
- Leaders, including staff who hold additional responsibilities, do not use school performance information well enough to set an all-inclusive strategic direction for improvement.
- Although leaders allocate additional funding for disadvantaged pupils appropriately, they do not check closely the difference that funding is making to pupils' achievements.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, this group are falling even further behind in writing.
- Most pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. However, across the school, standards are lower in writing.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Tasks are not consistently well matched to all pupils' abilities, particularly in writing and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not catered for well enough. Teachers do not always make reasonable adjustments and some pupils find it too difficult to access learning tasks.
- Some disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not attend school regularly. This impedes their progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's website meets statutory requirements.
- Most parents and carers are satisfied with the school's provision. However, some expressed concern about the school's provision, particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

The school has the following strengths

- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and governors hold a high degree of expertise in this aspect. As a result, the school's approach to keeping pupils safe is comprehensive and well understood by all.
- Governors know the school well. They are highly skilled and contribute positively.
- Leaders have successfully strengthened the quality of the school's curriculum, as well as the reliability and range of pupils' performance information.
- Most pupils are polite and considerate of one another's feelings. They are kind and helpful.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - developing the roles of subject leaders, including those with responsibility for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, so that leaders have a greater influence on improving outcomes for pupils
 - evaluating the impact of pupil premium funding in order to rapidly improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - making greater use of pupils' performance information to inform school improvement planning and staff appraisal
 - making sure that pupils, particularly the disadvantaged and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, attend school regularly
 - ensuring that the school's website makes available all statutorily required information for parents.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and accelerate pupils' progress in writing, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, by ensuring that:
 - teachers and teaching assistants have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - teachers make use of assessment information to plan tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities
 - staff make reasonable adjustments so that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well.

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

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked systematically, establishing new approaches to many aspects of the school's provision, including assessment procedures, school improvement planning and staff appraisal arrangements. Although at an early stage, this has been helpful as there are now much firmer foundations on which to build. However, leaders' work in other areas, including aspects that were highlighted as weaknesses at the last inspection, has been less successful.
- In recent times, leaders have not managed to recruit replacement staff when vacancies arise. In addition, the challenge of catering well for pupils with additional needs is becoming more pronounced as the school is not meeting these pupils' needs well enough. The local authority, including advisers from the special educational needs team, has provided support, and this has gone some way towards supporting leaders. However, the impact of this support has not been effective enough. Leaders continue to face a variety of challenges.
- At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to close the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, particularly in writing. Spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is planned for and targeted sensibly to improve pupils' outcomes. However, school leaders do not evaluate the impact of their actions swiftly enough or use their findings to adapt and modify the school's provision when necessary. For example, the school's pupil premium plan was not reviewed in May 2018 as originally planned. Work in this aspect is unsuccessful and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is becoming more marked.
- Leaders were also asked to improve the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The leader for SEN and/or disabilities is relatively new to post and is still establishing a way forward. The success of planned interventions is variable and not fully understood. This is because the impact of such support is not monitored robustly enough to ensure that it is having a positive impact or matched well to pupils' individual needs.
- Nevertheless, leaders have established helpful 'panel meetings'. During these, leaders and class teachers helpfully discuss pupils' progress. Although there is a growing awareness of individual pupils' needs, the school's provision in action is unconvincing. This is because teachers and teaching assistants do not adapt tasks precisely enough to meet pupils' starting points. As a result, some pupil groups, particularly the disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are underperforming and falling further behind their peers.
- Leaders now gather richer and more comprehensive information about how well pupils are performing. This is helpfully shared widely and regularly, including with staff and governors. However, leaders' analysis of this information is at an early stage. Greater reflection, at timely points, is required for this information to feed more overtly into shaping leaders' school improvement actions, including that reflected in staff performance targets.
- Leaders have helpfully adopted a more cyclical and methodical approach to school improvement planning. Taking on advice, the senior team has established sharper and

more measurable targets on which to evaluate school strengths and weaknesses. However, these, including those used within the school's staff appraisal system, are not always sufficiently challenging. Leaders know this is an area they can further strengthen.

- Although the clear majority of school policies are kept under watchful review, the school's website does not contain all the necessary information, such as that relating to governors' financial and business interests and also the school's provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders are successfully ensuring that the school's curriculum is kept under review and offers appeal to pupils. One parent commented: 'They [my children] always want to go to school and look forward to the projects they undertake and school trips that are based around their subjects for the term.' Pupils respond well to topics based on class readers, becoming hooked into authors, and stories such as 'Goodnight Mr Tom'.
- Most parents are satisfied with their child's experience of school and the quality of leadership and management. A small minority expressed concerns, particularly about the school's provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Governance of the school

- Following a review of governance, the governing body has strengthened the quality of its work considerably. Governors have restructured their committees and, as a result, now align their work more precisely to what is needed. Governors are determined to support the headteacher well, and in doing so set a positive tone to school improvement work.
- Governors have set about methodically improving their effectiveness, drawing on training and the expertise of others. This is highly evident. Governors have a sound grasp of the school's key strengths and weaknesses. Roles and responsibilities are fully understood.
- Governors receive comprehensive school performance information, an improvement since the last inspection. They interpret this well and, consequently, provide helpful challenge to school leaders. They acknowledge that there are pockets of underperformance, including for disadvantaged pupils in writing.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff, including supply staff, are checked appropriately before commencing employment. The school's single central record is well maintained and checked regularly for compliance, including by governors. This aspect of the school's work is of high quality.
- Leaders and governors keep close oversight of pupils' safety. Leaders are aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe and secure. They are alert to ensuring that all visitors to the school site are checked and managed well during visits to the school. For example, there is a comprehensive system to manage the whereabouts of builders on site who are currently repairing the roof. Pupils' safety is well considered at all times.
- Staff understand their responsibilities and have familiarised themselves well with the

latest government guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018'.

- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that the school keeps their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to plan effectively for all pupils to progress sufficiently well. They do not make accurate use of assessment information to plan tasks that are at the right level for different groups of pupils, including pupils who have fallen behind and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The school's 'panel' meetings have helped develop a growing awareness of some pupils' barriers to learning. However, teachers' expertise at overcoming these remains underdeveloped. As a result, progress is not rapid enough for some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, to attain the age-related standard that they should be capable of.
- Teaching assistants are not having sufficient impact on pupils' learning, particularly those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Some pupils do not receive the high-quality support that is required in order for them to understand what is expected and get to grips with new learning. Sometimes, activities are not adapted appropriately.
- Teachers do not always model what is expected with sufficient precision, particularly in writing. This leads to confusion and misunderstanding, such as in the teaching of handwriting in lower key stage 2.
- Questioning is sometimes used effectively in lessons, and pupils learn to explain their thinking. When this happens, pupils develop a deeper understanding of key concepts and skills. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Most pupils enjoy reading, both at home and at school. For example, pupils in a Year 6 English lesson were able to discuss the author's choice of vocabulary maturely, using technical terms such as antonym and synonym when referring to descriptive words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of the difference between falling out and bullying and they report that there are no incidents of bullying. The majority are satisfied with how staff deal with incidents. One parent noted that their child reports, 'Gorse Ride is amazing, and the teachers always look out for you if you are worried or scared.'
- Pupils conduct themselves well, adopting a mature and thoughtful outlook. Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are positive and, as a result, most pupils demonstrate a good level of social awareness and skill. Very occasionally, pupils report that lessons can be disrupted when some pupils' complex behavioural needs are not met well enough.

- Most parents are satisfied with the school's approach to caring for its pupils. One parent commented: 'The behaviour of the children overall is commendable, and the children seem happy. The school offers a real sense of community and the head and other teachers genuinely care for the children.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Overall, pupils' attendance is broadly average. However, leaders' strategies to improve attendance for vulnerable pupils, which are comprehensive and far reaching, are only making a positive difference to some. Consequently, persistent absence, particularly among disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, has risen sharply over the last two years and is now above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of fixed-term exclusions has risen, and particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff are not yet fully successful in managing a minority of pupils who exhibit more challenging behaviour. Leaders' strategies in managing this aspect are not yet effective.
- Most pupils behave well and are courteous and respectful towards their peers and adults. Pupils conduct themselves maturely and demonstrate a good awareness of one another.
- Staff keep detailed records and logs of incidents of any poorer behaviour, racism or bullying. A small proportion of pupils in the past year have exhibited particularly challenging behaviour. Leaders are yet to take hold of this issue and explore the full range of appropriate strategies to reduce such incidents.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although the quality of teaching has begun to improve, it is not yet of sufficient quality to enable pupils who had previously fallen behind to catch up quickly. In some year groups, pupils who had previously fallen behind are not yet working at age-related expectations, particularly in writing. Challenges with recruitment also mean that some classes are subject to temporary arrangements.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school do not achieve well, an issue that was highlighted at the previous inspection. Leaders have not addressed the wide gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, particularly in writing. In writing, disadvantaged pupils are falling further behind. Although the gap in reading and mathematics is beginning to close, disadvantaged pupils are still achieving less well than their peers in all subjects.
- Some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good progress from their starting points. Although their achievement is tracked closely, and progress is checked regularly, the support on offer lacks precision and does not match pupils' needs well enough. The standard that this group of pupils achieve in reading, writing and mathematics is declining. Some pupils are further hampered by low attendance or part-time attendance.
- Provisional information shows that outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 improved and are likely to be above those seen nationally in reading, writing and

mathematics. Last year's Year 6 cohort were well prepared for the transition to secondary school.

- The most able pupils achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics. Teachers plan activities that stretch and challenge pupils, and in lessons pupils relish the opportunity to go beyond what is typically expected.
- Most pupils achieve well in reading. Pupils enjoy reading. Most of them, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are able to talk knowledgeably about their reading, including about characterisation, plot and their favourite authors.

School details

Unique reference number	109877
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10052909

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynda Dows
Headteacher	Eileen Rogers
Telephone number	01189 732 666
Website	www.thelifecloud.net/schools/GorseRideSchools
Email address	admin@gorseride-jun.wokingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 June 2016

Information about this school

- Gorse Ride Junior School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is just below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school entered a hard federation with Gorse Ride Infant School in September 2012. The headteacher is the executive headteacher of both schools and there is a shared governing body.
- The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2016 and is currently teaching a Year 4 class for three days per week. At the end of the summer term 2018, the lower key stage 2 leader left. The school's inclusion manager joined in January 2018 and

works across both the junior and infant schools.

- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders with significant responsibilities. The lead inspector also met with three governors. Correspondence from the chair of governors, who was absent during the inspection, was also considered.
- Inspectors visited 18 lessons or part-lessons, visiting every class. The majority of observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors listened to three pupils read in Year 4, looked at work in pupils' books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and also met with six pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the 85 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 55 free-text comments.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire or pupil survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised records and documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, leaders' monitoring activities and school improvement planning.
- Inspectors reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Simon Francis

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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