

# Goodnestone Church of England Primary School

The Street, Goodnestone, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1PQ

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- After a period of turbulence, the interim executive headteacher has successfully got the school back on track. There is rapid improvement as a result.
- This is a very happy, caring, small school. Parents and pupils appreciate the family ethos and the fact that all pupils know each other and are very well known by all staff.
- Pupils are a credit to the school. They have very positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic in all they do. They are welcoming and friendly. Pupils behave extremely well and are respectful to adults and each other.
- Leaders, staff and governors are united in their determination to do the very best for pupils. The school's vision and values underpin all of its work.
- Effective leadership of teaching means that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good and improving.
- The provision for children in the early years is strengthening. Children get a good start. They are nurtured, thrive and make good progress.
- Leaders set great store in developing teachers' expertise and leadership skills. Teachers welcome this.
- Pupils generally achieve well and are currently making good progress from their starting points. The levels of challenge presented to pupils, and the expectations of what they can achieve, are not always of the same high standard.
- Leaders and governors accurately evaluate the strengths and priorities of the school. Governors hold leaders to account well and provide appropriate challenge and support.
- Pupils' well-being and safeguarding are high priorities. Pupils feel very safe in school.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires them to learn. Leaders have started to review the curriculum to ensure that it supports greater depth and richness in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding for all subjects.
- Attendance is improving. Leaders work relentlessly with pupils and their families to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the curriculum provides rich opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills to greater depth in all subjects.
- Ensure that high expectations and standards are consistent across the school so that pupils are always challenged to achieve their best.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Following a turbulent period of change in leadership and staffing, the determination, skills and highly effective leadership of the interim executive headteacher have ensured rapid improvements in the school.
- He has significantly strengthened leadership and increased capacity to make further improvement.
- Staff and governors are committed to the shared vision and aspiration. The interim executive headteacher has ensured that a range of leaders contribute to the school's improvement. He draws on expertise and skills from other schools as well as those of the local authority's adviser for the school.
- There is a shared understanding of what is going well and the priorities to tackle next. There are clear milestones for when things will be achieved. These help leaders and governors to assess the impact of their actions. Leaders, including governors, are provided with the necessary training and support to develop their skills and be effective in their roles.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching have helped to plug gaps that existed in pupils' learning, particularly for older pupils. Leaders have built on the positive culture and ethos within the school and raised expectations.
- All of the staff work very well together, in a determined and supportive way, to provide the best possible experiences for pupils. This small school generates a very caring, positive and happy atmosphere that is appreciated by pupils and parents. Parents value the school greatly. Several parents spoke of the school as 'a special, caring and inspiring place'. One parent commented, 'This school has been turned around, after a few problems,' and another stated that: 'It is a pleasure to be a part of this school community, for both my children and myself.'
- The interim executive headteacher is committed to the professional development of the staff. They welcome the opportunities to develop their skills and expertise as teachers and leaders. Teachers who are new to the profession are very positive about the support the school provides, and are highly responsive to the advice they receive.
- The school's Christian values and the shared 'learning values' are woven into daily life. They have a demonstrable impact on the culture and ethos of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the promotion of fundamental British values, underpin all aspects of the curriculum and the school's work.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with activities and events that motivate pupils to learn. Rightly, leaders are already reviewing the curriculum to increase learners' engagement and excitement. Leaders are aware that work is needed to ensure that all subjects promote greater depth in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding for all groups of learners.
- Leaders are relentless in ensuring the effective use of pupil premium funding. An external review was carried out and the role of the leader for pupil premium has

strengthened. Pupils' barriers to learning, and the appropriate strategies to overcome them, have been identified. The impact on pupils' achievement of the actions taken is monitored to ensure that the funding is making a difference.

- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Leaders have ensured that PE resources are now sufficient in quantity and quality. Specialist support for PE ensures that the skills of pupils and those of teachers are enhanced.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. There is appropriate and accurate identification of pupils' specific needs. This informs the targeting of suitable strategies, which meet pupils' needs well. Additional funding for these pupils is used effectively.
- Children in the early years, currently there are three with very diverse starting points, are taught in a class with two Year 1 pupils and five Year 2 pupils. Leaders acknowledge the challenge of ensuring that provision meets the needs of such small numbers and three different year groups. They are determined that the curriculum for Reception children provides appropriate experiences for all areas of learning.
- The leadership of the early years is effective because the new teacher is supported well by school leaders and leaders from partner schools, as well as the local authority. This support ensures that teaching is typically good. Leaders are sharply aware of the priorities to further improve this provision.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective. There is a mix of experienced and new governors, and some current vacancies. The new chair of the governing body has a track record of skills and expertise in governance.
- Governors have worked with the local authority to enhance their skills. The governing body's systems and procedures are now rigorous.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know they are accountable, and hold leaders to account effectively for the school's performance. They challenge and support leaders appropriately.
- Governors hold leaders to account for the spending of additional funding to make sure that it is used for the intended purposes and improves outcomes.
- Governors actively promote the school to increase the number of pupils on roll.
- The governing body ensures that its statutory duties are met, including those for safeguarding.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and staff are well trained in safeguarding matters. There is a very strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The care and support for pupils and their families are highly effective aspects of the school's work, and appreciated by parents.
- Staff, including those who are newly appointed, are vigilant. They know the exact

procedures to follow should they have any concerns. There is always a designated safeguarding lead on site if there is a concern. Staff's very effective teamwork ensures that no issues regarding pupils' safety and well-being are missed.

- Staff, pupils and parents all agree that the school keeps pupils safe.
- Leaders ensure that rigorous procedures are in place, including risk assessments, to keep pupils safe at all times; for example, when pupils walk along the road, between the school and the village hall, for lunch.
- Careful records are kept of all concerns raised and actions taken. Leaders work very closely with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure that pupils and their families receive timely and effective help and support.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Leaders have worked hard to ensure, despite three of the four class teachers being new to the school, that teaching is typically good and improving. Teachers at the start of their careers are developing their skills well. This is because of very effective support from senior teachers and leaders in school, and from the federation and partner schools.
- Teachers are mindful of the need to challenge pupils and are often very successful in doing this, as shown in pupils' mathematics books. At times, teachers are less successful in promoting the complexity and depth of knowledge and understanding. As a result, some pupils from all groups, but the most able in particular, don't always make the best progress that they could.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They work closely and successfully with teachers, and are skilled in supporting pupils of all abilities.
- The excellent relationships that exist between adults and pupils mean that pupils are confident learners who are prepared to take risks. Pupils know that their opinions and ideas are valued. They are encouraged to be reflective and use appropriate language to evaluate their own learning. Pupils want to do well and work hard. They have very positive attitudes to activities, working well together and supporting each other with learning. Pupils clearly enjoy what they do and are enthusiastic about learning new things.
- The learning environment for the early years has been improved to better provide for the different areas of learning. The dedicated outdoor space is being developed. However, it is currently being used well to support children's learning and play. Adults provide stimulating and motivating activities, helping children develop their social and learning skills. They are nurturing and attentive to the children's needs.
- Phonics skills are taught using the agreed phonics programme, which is followed closely and the teaching is systematic. Adults are skilled in articulating sounds accurately and checking for pupils' errors. Most pupils use their phonics skills effectively to help read unfamiliar words. There is scope for providing more challenge for some of the most able pupils to increase their pace of learning.
- Teachers promote reading for enjoyment well. High-quality children's literature is often

the starting point for learning across a range of subjects, as well as being used to develop pupils' reading, comprehension and writing skills.

- During the last year, leaders have acted to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. Gaps were identified in pupils' learning. In addition, leaders recognised that there were too few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding to solve problems. Effective strategies have improved teaching and learning in mathematics across the school, ensuring that teaching sequentially builds pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils are increasingly adept at explaining their thinking, which is helping them to make good progress.

## 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 great ambassadors for their school. They enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning, which helps them achieve well. Pupils are polite, articulate and friendly. They are encouraged to develop curious, lively and enquiring minds. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about all that they do. They are very positive about the strong friendships they make at school. When asked, pupils were hard pressed to think of anything about the school they would change. A group agreed with one pupil who said that school 'is like a second home'.
- Staff provide a very safe, caring and nurturing environment where pupils learn to respect each other and adults. All pupils are valued and treated equally. Pupils learn without fear of discrimination of any kind and get on together exceptionally well.
- Leaders and staff have a well-developed understanding of the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. There are effective strategies in place to ensure that these pupils thrive and have the same aspirations as others.
- Children in the Reception Year settle happily and quickly into the routines of the day and develop their confidence and independence. The teacher and other adults provide a warm, welcoming and safe environment. As in the rest of the school, relationships between adults and the children are very positive and trusting. Children's well-being is paramount. All necessary actions are taken to support children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They learn how to keep safe in a range of situations, in and out of school, including using the internet safely. They say that there is no bullying in school but are very confident that if any issues should arise, teachers would listen to them and sort things out. All staff know the pupils extremely well.
- Parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those spoken to in the playground, agree that their children are safe, happy and well looked after at school.
- The breakfast club provides a safe, healthy, social and happy start to the day.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- There is a calm, orderly and industrious atmosphere in lessons and around the school. Pupils behave well on the playground and during lunchtimes. Older pupils look out for younger ones, and they play and work together harmoniously.
- Staff manage any specific learning or behaviour need well, with sensitivity and skill. The learning of others is never disrupted and pupils show a great deal of respect for and acceptance of difference.
- Previously, some pupils have not attended school regularly enough. This has resulted in the overall attendance figure being below the national average. As with all published information for this small school, the percentage figures do not always give a reliable picture. The school keeps a very close check on pupils who are persistently absent. If any absence is not justified, for example, other than for a medical need, then leaders will tackle it and involve external agencies when necessary. Leaders promote regular attendance and provide support for specific pupils and their families. So far this year, overall attendance is much improved.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The typically good and improving teaching means that pupils make strong progress from their varied starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This is demonstrated in their books and in the school's records of individual pupils' progress. Their progress, very positive attitudes and well-developed interpersonal skills prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- The achievements and progress of children in the Reception Year are recorded in detail in their learning journey books. These show that children make good progress from their starting points. The learning journeys support the planning of children's next steps, and ensure that learning meets the needs and interests of the children.
- Published information on pupils' attainment and progress needs to be viewed with caution as it does not accurately reflect pupils' achievements. This is because the size of the cohort and of key groups, in each year, are very small, and numbers of pupils fluctuate during the year. In 2018, for example, one pupil represented almost 10% of both the Year 2 and Year 6 cohorts. In Year 1, one pupil represented 12.5%. One child entered the Reception Year in May 2018. The current picture for this year is different again.
- However, in 2018, it was clear that, by the end of Year 6, pupils had made weak progress in mathematics compared to their progress in English, particularly writing. Leaders' actions are strengthening the progress of current pupils currently and addressing the legacy of gaps in pupils' learning in mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers closely monitor how well pupils are learning. Pupils have a wide range of starting points. They are all supported well to develop their knowledge and skills. Teachers fully understand the needs of their pupils and adjust teaching, providing additional support when needed. For example, a group of pupils attend an

additional daily mathematics session to boost their learning. One pupil expressed how helpful she found these sessions and how well they prepared her for mathematics lessons. She said, 'I understand so much better and I can really make progress.'

- Written work in the books of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is of a very high quality. Linked to their study of Vikings, pupils wrote, as a warrior and very effectively inferred what the Vikings would be feeling. Their work was imaginative, well constructed and made excellent use of interesting vocabulary and a variety of sentence structure. The writing task also made pupils think about the spiritual and moral aspects of the Vikings' actions.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are well supported. Their starting points are diverse and their attainment, by the end of key stage 2, is varied. However, overall their progress is good. Leaders are now keeping a closer focus on their rates of progress, with the aim of these groups achieving as well as other pupils nationally.



## School details

Unique reference number	118686
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10045954

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Webster
Headteacher	John Dexter (Interim executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01304 840 329
Website	<a href="http://www.goodnestone.kent.sch.uk/">www.goodnestone.kent.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@goodnestone.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@goodnestone.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–17 September 2014

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has federated with Nonington Church of England Primary School. Both schools share the same governing body.
- Goodnestone is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and the roll has declined since the previous inspection.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been considerable disruption in the leadership of the federated schools. From November 2017, both schools in the federation have been led by an interim executive headteacher, who is also the substantive headteacher of another primary school. The federated schools also share a deputy headteacher.
- Because of the previous turbulence in the leadership of the federated schools, difficulties arising from this situation and the subsequent restructuring, the local

authority took over the powers of the governing body related to finance and personnel. These delegated powers have very recently been returned to the governing body.

- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with SEND is above the national average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- A daily breakfast club is run by the school.
- Goodnestone is a voluntary controlled Church of England school within the Diocese of Canterbury. It was last inspected, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in November 2014 and is due for reinspection in the next academic year.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes and examined work in pupils' books.
- Almost all observations were conducted jointly with the interim executive headteacher, as was the scrutiny of pupils' work.
- The inspector talked to individuals and groups of pupils about their learning and their views of the school. She heard some pupils read. She observed pupils arriving at school, and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with the interim executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior teachers, the special educational needs coordinator and teachers who are at an early stage in their careers. Meetings were held with the local authority's improvement adviser and with governors.
- The inspector examined a range of documents, including: leaders' checks on the school's performance and the quality of teaching and learning; the school development plan; information on pupils' progress; and records relating to safeguarding and pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- There were 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including six free-text comments. The inspector spoke to some parents at the start of the day. She took account of nine responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and six to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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