

# Inspection of Gorseland Primary School

Deben Avenue, Martlesham Heath, Gorseland, Ipswich, Suffolk IP5 3QR

---

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected nearly six years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

At Gorseland, pupils say that 'the people make the school special.' The way pupils play together reflects this. At lunchtime, the multi-use games area is a hive of activity, where pupils join in with a range of games and sports. Pupils of all ages interact well together during the morning breakfast club and enjoy the range of activities on offer to them. Bullying is rare. Should it happen, staff are quick to deal with it. Pupils are happy and safe.

Pupils enjoy learning and work hard in their lessons to try to reach the high expectations staff have of them. They like the subjects they learn in school and especially enjoy experiments in science. Many areas of the curriculum are new. While pupils enjoy the activities they complete in class, they do not currently have a secure understanding of the new knowledge leaders want them to remember.

Trips, such as the residential at the beginning of Year 6, are events pupils look forward to. They are excited about these new experiences. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer to them, such as the choir, which gives them the chance to attend Young Voices at the O2 Arena. Weekly 'class meetings' provide pupils with opportunities to mix with a range of age groups. Pupils appreciate these sessions and like being together.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The new leadership team has recently redesigned the curriculum in most subjects, including phonics. The curriculum now sets out what leaders want pupils to know and remember. This content is in a logical order. Pupils have opportunities to build on what they have already learned. Where the curriculum is more established, such as in mathematics, pupils have a secure understanding of what they have learned.

Where leaders' curriculum design is new, assessment practices are underdeveloped. Some leaders and teachers do not have a secure understanding of how well pupils have learned the content in these subjects. This means teachers do not consistently adapt their teaching to address gaps in pupils' knowledge or to revisit important concepts well enough. As a result, pupils often remember more about the activity they have done, rather than the important knowledge leaders want them to retain.

Staff in the early years teach children the sounds that letters make as soon as they start school. In Reception, children move quickly onto blending these sounds together to read unfamiliar words. Books and stories immerse children in a love of reading. Leaders identify any pupil who is finding reading hard. These pupils receive support to develop their confidence. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the phonics subject knowledge of staff. Some staff have not had the training they need to understand the strategies pupils learn in phonics lessons. There are occasions

when staff do not fully support pupils to develop their reading fluency in other areas of the curriculum, or when they hear them read.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is inconsistent. In the specialist support units, teachers carefully adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils well. Here, teachers have the guidance they need to know how to plan the right support for these pupils. For example, well-chosen books and carefully planned activities support these pupils to develop their fluency, comprehension, and love of reading. However, across the school, there are occasions where some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. This is because staff do not always receive useful information from leaders as to how best to support these pupils. Furthermore, leaders do not routinely provide the support and training that staff need, to improve their knowledge of SEND. There are also instances where there is a lack of rigour to leaders' monitoring of the effectiveness of SEND provision.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff care passionately about children making a positive start to school and experiencing a range of learning activities in the early years. Warm, caring and kind relationships between adults and children runs through the early years. Pupils display kindness towards each other. They behave well in lessons and on the playground. Pupils learn about differences. They understand diversity and the importance of treating people who are different to them with respect.

There has been a significant amount of turbulence to staffing recently. Most leaders are new to their roles. They have not consistently had the opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the quality of education in their areas of responsibility. Governors have systems in place to check how well the school is performing. They are mindful of the balance between supporting staff to manage their own workload and well-being and in checking how well the school is working towards identified priorities.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete all required pre-employment checks on adults in the school. Staff receive regular training and updates and have a secure understanding of how to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report concerns about pupils quickly, following the agreed school procedures.

Leaders keep precise and accurate records of concerns raised, and all associated actions. Leaders act in a timely manner, which includes seeking additional support from external agencies. Governors hold leaders to account for safeguarding practices in the school. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe. This includes when they are online.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is some inconsistency in the subject knowledge of staff in relation to the teaching of phonics. This means there are occasions where staff do not know or use the strategies that pupils learn in phonics lessons to support them to develop their fluency. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the support and training they need to develop their knowledge of how to teach phonics. This is so they can help pupils use the strategies they learn in phonics in other lessons and when they hear them read.
- In many subjects, there are inconsistencies in how teachers and leaders check what pupils know and remember. Some teachers and leaders do not have a clear understanding of how well pupils are learning the planned curriculum in these subjects. This means they are not able to consistently adapt teaching to address gaps in knowledge or revisit important concepts. As a result, pupils do not always commit learning to their long-term memory. Leaders must ensure there is a consistent approach to checking what pupils have learned. They must then ensure that teachers and subject leaders use this information to adapt teaching so that pupils secure their understanding of the knowledge leaders expect them to remember.
- Staff do not always receive the support and guidance they need to best help pupils with SEND. This means there are occasions where pupils with SEND do not receive the specific support they need. Leaders must ensure they provide all staff with the guidance and training they need to support all pupils with SEND. They must then rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of this provision.
- Many leaders are new to their roles. Leaders are developing their expertise to monitor their areas of responsibility but have not all had the opportunity to do this. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that all leaders have the knowledge, time and support they need to monitor the quality of education from Nursery to Year 6 in their area of responsibility.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124625
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268411
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	505
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Neil Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Darron Jackson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gorseland.net">www.gorseland.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 and 13 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was not present for the duration of this inspection.
- There have been significant changes to staff and leaders recently. A significant proportion of teachers are new to the school.
- A deputy headteacher left the school in April 2022, with another leaving in December 2022.
- An acting headteacher, who was previously a deputy headteacher at the school, took up post in April 2023. The assistant headteacher joined the school in September 2022. A teacher joined the school in September 2022 who subsequently took up responsibility for early years and key stage 1 in January 2023.
- An executive headteacher from another school provided part-time leadership support during the autumn and spring term.
- The school nursery expanded in September 2022 to increase the number of spaces they provide each day from 26 to 52.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school care for pupils.

- The school has two specialist units commissioned by the local authority. One is a Reception and key stage 1 specialist unit, and one is a key stage 2 cognition and learning unit.
- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, physical education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff. Inspectors met with the computing and design technology subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans and pupils work and met with pupils to discuss these subjects. An inspector also met with the curriculum lead for personal, social, health and economic education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks of adults at the school, and a sample of child protection files. Inspectors also spoke with governors, the designated safeguarding lead and a deputy designated safeguarding lead, the safeguarding governor and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher, assistant headteacher, the early years and key stage 1 leader, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, governors, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, pupil records, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority monitoring reports, school development plans and school policies.
- There were 149 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside written correspondence received. Inspectors spoke with parents as they arrived at school.
- There were 176 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. Inspectors also spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- There were 57 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. Inspectors met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

## Inspection team

Michael Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carol Dallas

Ofsted Inspector

Sebastian Gasse

Ofsted Inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023