



Goodleigh Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113376
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279155
Inspection dates 23 June 2006 to 23 June 2006
Reporting inspector Anna Sketchley AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Goodleigh
School category	Voluntary controlled		Barnstaple
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX32 7LU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01271 342977
Number on roll	39	Fax number	01271 342977
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	13 September 1999	Headteacher	Mr T J Nias

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Goodleigh is a very small rural school within a few miles of Barnstaple. Most of the pupils come from the village and surrounding hamlets, although some travel to school from Barnstaple. Following a period of considerable disruption caused by staffing difficulties and the consequent decline in the number of pupils on roll, the number of classes reduced from three to two in September 2004. The school is situated on a split site but the buildings are very close, with good communication links. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. An above average proportion of pupils experience learning difficulties. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, and none is in the first stages of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Goodleigh offers its pupils a satisfactory, but improving, standard of education and gives satisfactory value for money. This agrees with the school's own view. A key strength of the school is its exceedingly caring family atmosphere, which both parents and pupils really appreciate. Despite past difficulties, the local community holds the school in high esteem and is extremely supportive, valuing its life and work within the village.

The disruption of recent years has adversely affected pupils' achievement in the junior class. However, the school has acted decisively this year by introducing a number of new initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills and to enable the more able pupils to achieve higher standards in mathematics. Although these initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, these aspects remain priorities for future development as they have not been in place long enough to make up lost ground and thus result in consistently higher standards in all subjects by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although pupils in all parts of the school are now making good progress. Pupils' good personal development and well-being is supporting their improving progress.

The teaching, which is good throughout the school, ensures that most pupils' needs are met successfully despite the wide range of age and ability that has to be catered for in each of the two classes. The impact of this good teaching is being seen in pupils' faster progress although it has not yet resulted in better than satisfactory achievement by Year 6. Getting together with other local schools has enabled teachers to improve their teaching skills and offer a wide curriculum which is enriched by visits and a variety of after-school clubs. Music and art are particular strengths. The quality of provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good, as is the provision for information and communication technology (ICT), where standards are above average.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and governors have steered the school successfully through a very difficult patch in recent times. The improvements they have made this year show that there is capacity for the school to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 and in particular the achievement of more able pupils
- improve the quality of pupils' writing throughout the school

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but recently it has been slightly below average. Pupils make a good

start in Reception, and almost all achieve well and reach the expected standards by the start of Year 1.

Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. With the exception of 2004, this has been the case for the last five years.

This good progress has not been maintained in recent years in Years 3 to 6, and there has been some underachievement. Pupils have been adversely affected by staff changes and this has led to some gaps in their learning. This is particularly evident in the quality of pupils' writing and in the below average standards in mathematics, where more able pupils in particular have made insufficient progress.

The last nine months have been much more settled, and pupils are now making good progress. This is a direct result of good new initiatives, better teaching and careful tracking of pupils' progress. There has not been enough time for these improvements to bring attainment up to an average standard for the very small group of pupils in Year 6, but the gaps in pupils' learning are quickly being eradicated in Years 4 and 5. Improving pupils' writing skills and challenging more able pupils in mathematics still remain as the school's most important priorities for development, but pupils' overall achievement is now satisfactory.

The school has set challenging targets in the past. Pupils met these targets in English in 2005, but did not achieve them in mathematics. Targets for the current Year 6 are much lower than in previous years but are realistic, given the difficulties experienced by these pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The Christian ethos of the school and the excellent relationships which abound play a significant part in this successful development. Keeping healthy is important to pupils and they proudly explain that their delicious school meals are nutritious and healthy. They demonstrate how to keep safe, for example climbing safely up to the bell tower in the church to ring the bells for assembly. If they are troubled, they know that they can use the 'worry box' to communicate their concerns to staff and that these will be dealt with effectively. Pupils are lively but well behaved, have good attitudes and enjoy their work. Attendance is good. Pupils come to school very regularly and say of it, 'this is a fun school'. They are very appreciative of the extra-curricular activities, especially the 'garden army' and opportunities for music, art and sports. The strong links they have with the churches in the village and the enthusiasm with which they raise money for national appeals and join in the local horticultural society's events demonstrate their commitment to the local and wider community. Although pupils have good computer skills, their writing and numeracy skills are still not always good enough to help them prepare for the future. They enjoy serving on the school council and making decisions about school life, but the council does not currently meet regularly enough for pupils to be able to make a full contribution to the life of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Although there have been weaknesses in the teaching of pupils in Years 3 and 4 in the past, the current quality of the teaching in the school's two classes is good. The needs of children in Reception are appropriately planned for across all areas of learning, and the skilful questioning by adults ensures that they learn well from the practical activities provided. New initiatives in teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, particularly in Year 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from individual targets and are beginning to apply these to their tasks. For example, in a writing task, certain pupils recalled that they must remember to use full stops to improve their work. Thorough planning so that pupils use their writing skills across the curriculum, and changes to the organisation of mathematics teaching in the junior class, have improved the level of challenge for all pupils, although more remains to be done. Tasks are planned to meet the needs of all ages and abilities, although these are not always challenging enough for the most able pupils in mathematics. Good use is made of computers to practise numeracy skills in small groups. Interactive whiteboard technology plays an important part in motivating the pupils, and teachers constantly check on pupils' understanding by asking them to explain their mathematical answers. Behaviour and attitudes are usually good in lessons. Potentially challenging situations are handled well. In speaking about their recent visit to Bristol Zoo, pupils were articulate and presented a persuasive argument against keeping animals in zoos. Pupils' project books demonstrate a very real pride in the presentation of their work. Marking consistently directs pupils in the ways in which they can improve, and they are aware of their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the school's curriculum is good. The gaps in pupils' learning arising from past difficulties have been identified and are being eradicated. Mixed-age classes are carefully planned for. Extensive links exist with neighbouring schools and well-chosen visits and visitors enable the school to provide a broad and interesting range of activities. Music and art are particularly strong, enhancing pupils' skills and enriching their learning by participation in various festivals. Annual residential visits serve to strengthen personal and social education, helping pupils to grow in confidence as well as offering them an opportunity to compare and contrast environments very different from their own. Although the school provides some sporting activities, it is aware that these are still insufficient. A good range of after-school activities complements the curriculum. ICT provision is extensive and has greatly improved since the last inspection. This has had a positive impact upon standards in ICT, which are now above average. There are very good examples of pupils using ICT in other subjects to improve the presentation of their work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. The headteacher and staff know each pupil really well and there is a strong emphasis on their individual needs. This judgement is supported by comments from parents, for example 'my child is cared for and treated as an individual' and 'the importance placed on social and personal development is a credit to the school'. The school is a place where everyone is respected and valued, inducing a feeling of calm and happiness. All arrangements for child protection, health and safety, drug awareness and sex and relationships education are securely in place.

A number of new initiatives are playing a key part in helping to raise pupils' achievement, although they have yet to become fully embedded. Pupils' personal and academic progress is now closely monitored. Good use is now made of data and the progress of each pupil is carefully tracked. Throughout the last year, pupils have become much clearer about what they need to do next to improve. Targets are regularly shared with parents through the homework books. This communication is exemplary and valued by parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The school's ability to carry out improvements over the last few years has been adversely affected by the need to manage the considerable disruption caused by staff absence and reorganisation. However, despite these challenges, the headteacher and governors have maintained satisfactory achievement and are now steering the school towards greater improvement. There is a real commitment to succeed. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and based on well-embedded monitoring procedures. Governors are very supportive of the school, knowledgeable about its strengths and weaknesses and fully involved in monitoring its improvement. They are not afraid to ask critical questions. The school improvement plan identifies the correct priorities, for which there are clear targets and actions. New initiatives in the organisation of teaching and an emphasis on explaining answers in mathematics and using writing skills across the curriculum are already proving to be effective in raising achievement throughout the junior years. However, the school needs to continue to focus on these issues in order to raise standards and progress still further, particularly for the more able pupils in mathematics. Improvement in provision for both the Reception pupils and ICT has been good since the last inspection.

Effective communication exists with parents particularly through the introduction of homework books containing regularly updated targets for improvement in pupils' work. Both they and the local community are fully involved in the life and work of the school and very supportive of its aims.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for being so polite and helpful. I thought you would like to know what I found out and what I have suggested the school does to make things even better.

What I liked about your school:

•you enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about learning •you behave well and get on very well together •teachers plan your lessons very carefully and try to make learning fun and interesting for you •you are very well cared for at school and teachers are very thorough about helping you to know what to do next to improve your work •you take very good advantage of all the extra activities that the school offers and this is helping you to grow into healthy and interesting people.

What I have asked your school to do now:

•help you to improve your standards and progress in numeracy, especially those of you who are more able •help you to improve the quality of your writing.