



Gosfield Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114727
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290013
Inspection date 30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Godfrey Bancroft

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

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|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | The Street |
| School category | Community | | Gosfield, Gosfield |
| Age range of pupils | 4-11 | | Halstead, Essex CO9 1ST |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01787 472266 |
| Number on roll (school) | 127 | Fax number | 01787 478544 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Rev Geoffrey Bayliss |
| | | Headteacher | Miss Barbara Dean |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are favourable. Attainment on entry varies year on year, but is usually broadly average. The percentages of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are very low. The percentage of pupils who have additional learning needs or disabilities is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The school's mission statement is, 'Building a love of life and learning', and that is exactly what it does. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and one pupil commented, 'This is probably the best school in the county'. Staff work effectively to ensure pupils feel safe and secure and because of this pupils become increasingly confident learners. Their behaviour is outstanding and they work very hard in lessons. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. In recent years standards have been average by the end of Year 6. Currently standards in Year 6 are above average. Given pupils starting points this represents good progress because teaching for this year group is particularly good. Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities achieve well. Because their needs are recognised at an early stage and they are supported well pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make particularly good progress.

The school works effectively to ensure that pupils lead an exceptionally healthy lifestyle and acquire the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) that will serve them well in later life. The curriculum is good and helps pupils to do well in subjects such as art and design, geography, music and physical education. A good range of additional activities, visits and visitors help to enhance pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning are good. The work teachers provide is matched well to pupils' needs and abilities and there is good challenge for higher attaining pupils. The marking of pupils' work is helpful and gives them good advice about how to improve. However, some pupils are not sufficiently aware of the targets that are set for their learning and progress. Where this is the case their understanding of what they need to do to improve is not as secure as it should be.

The last inspection judged the school to be good and did not identify any significant features that were in need of improvement. The effective leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors means that since that time the school has continued to provide a consistently good quality of education. Good financial management contributes well to the school's ability to give good value for money. The school's capacity for continued improvement is also good. Responses to the inspection questionnaire clearly show that parents think the school is good. One parent said, 'As a parent of two children at Gosfield Primary I feel confident of their care, welfare and development'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils, throughout the school, are clear about the targets for their learning and understand fully what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Children's attainment when they start at the school is broadly average, although in most years it covers a wide range of abilities. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, attaining standards that exceed those expected for their age. Standards, at the end of Year 2, in reading, writing and mathematics are currently below average. This is because this year group entered the school with standards that were, unusually for this school, significantly lower than expected. Other than in this year, standards are usually close to the level expected. At the end of Year 6 in recent years standards in English, mathematics and science have sometimes been broadly average. They are now well on course to be above average. Occasionally variations occur. Sometimes standards in English are slightly better than those in mathematics. At other times the reverse is true. Standards in Years 3 to 6 in each year are influenced by a pattern of some higher attaining pupils leave during the academic year. However, there is clear evidence to show that those who remain make good progress. The school sets suitably challenging targets for attainment and these are usually met successfully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils' full enjoyment in coming to school is illustrated by the very high levels of attendance. A downward trend is evident in the personal, social and emotional development of the youngest children as they arrive in school. The school responds well to this and is very successful in helping pupils to become mature and sensible young people, to the extent that behaviour is very good. Older pupils are very good at caring for the younger ones and enjoy listening to them read. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe. School meals are excellent and underpin pupils' thorough understanding of the importance of eating healthy foods. Pupils contribute exceptionally well to their community and frequently raise funds for local and world charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching in Year 6 is proving to be particularly effective in bringing about improvements in standards. Teachers plan work that is matched well to the full range of abilities and ages in each class. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Teachers celebrate pupils' efforts and successes. This helps pupils to become increasingly confident and competent learners. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. This approach is suited very well to the

preferred style of learning of many pupils. Skilful teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers assess the attainment and progress of pupils accurately. They make good use of the information they gain from assessments to plan the next stages of pupils' learning. That said, some pupils are not sufficiently aware of the targets that are set for their learning and progress, whilst others are not entirely clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the learning needs of pupils at each stage of their time in school well. Good use is made of the school grounds to make learning interesting. The youngest pupils have access to a nearby area of woodland for the outdoor aspects of their curriculum. Pupils are delighted with the good range of additional activities that the school provides for them. These activities include chess, gardening, football, netball and recorders, which contribute very well to pupils' creative, physical and social development. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the contribution made by visitors. These have recently included an Indian dancer and a group who taught pupils circus skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements to ensure that pupils are safe are good. These arrangements comply fully with the latest national requirements. The provision to support pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is very good. Pupils' special needs are identified at an early stage and the school does all it can to ensure these pupils are able to progress well. The school has adapted very well to meet the needs of pupils who have physical disabilities. There is also an early morning 'multi skills' group that helps pupils to improve their co-ordination. Arrangements to track, measure and respond to the learning needs and progress of all pupils' are good. There is a school council which works effectively to ensure that the school is well placed to listen to and respond to pupils' views.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's future development and plans for improvement are focused clearly on raising standards. There is a strong sense of teamwork with everyone working together to move the school forward. Arrangements for the headteacher, staff and governors to check on and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and other aspects of provision are good. Governors do a good job. They are very supportive and very knowledgeable about what the school does well and what might be improved. Planned improvements are clearly set out in the school's development plan. Governors are allocated responsibility to check on the progress made towards meeting these

improvements. This provides a focus for their frequent visits, the outcomes of which are recorded and reported to the full governing body. The role of governors is typified by the good work they have undertaken in overseeing significant improvements to the school's accommodation.

The school's partnership with parents and carers and with the community is good. One parent said, 'The headteacher is very good, the children all love her'. Parents and carers are very supportive of their children's learning. Many help in school and they raise substantial amounts of money to support the work of the school each year.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

30th November 2006

Dear Pupils,

Gosfield Primary School, Gosfield, Halstead, Essex CO9 1ST

I very much enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for sharing your thoughts with me. Here are some of the things I think are good about your school:

- Behaviour is outstanding and you work very hard in lessons.
- You are very good at caring for and helping each other.
- Your school is very good at helping those of you who have learning difficulties or disabilities to do well.
- Your school is also very good at working with your parents and carers to help you to learn.
- Your headteacher and governors are good at making sure that you have everything you need to achieve well and make good progress.

To help your school to become even better I have asked your teachers to:

- Make sure that you are all clear about the targets for your learning and understand fully what you need to do to improve.

Well Done. Keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,

Godfrey Bancroft Lead Inspector