

# Gorseley Bank Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111013
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310480
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Smith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Stedman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Garrod
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Altrincham Road Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01625 522699
<b>Fax number</b>	01625 539675

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues were investigated. Pupils' achievement, particularly in science, teachers' use of assessment in setting challenging tasks and the extent to which leaders check the work of the school to make further improvements. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, pupils' work, discussions with staff, governors and pupils and a scrutiny of school documents and questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is much bigger than average in size and serves a largely advantaged community. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. A very small number are of Caribbean, mixed or European backgrounds. The senior leadership team has been subject to many changes over the past two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Gorsey Bank is a successful school that provides good value for money. The school has outstanding features such as the care, support and guidance it provides for pupils. All pupils are safeguarded. The school has an excellent partnership with health professionals. Consequently, the most vulnerable pupils, often with complex learning needs, are extremely well supported. First class social and academic guidance makes an invaluable contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils show maturity in working towards their targets for improvement. Attendance is good and behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show exceptionally high levels of responsibility as play leaders, school councillors and independent learners. They acquire an excellent grasp of leading safe and healthy lifestyles and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. A small number of parents have expressed concerns about staff training during the school day. However, the vast majority of parents are highly satisfied with the school. Comments such as, 'The pastoral care is excellent', 'Children are happy and they make good progress', typify the views of most parents.

Pupils' achievement is good. Building on the good start made in Reception, pupils achieve high standards in mathematics and exceptionally high standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 are generally above average. The school is raising the bar further by tracking pupils' progress and using the information to set even more challenging targets. From Year 3 onwards, given their starting points, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and currently attain above average standards in these subjects by the end of Year 6. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who require additional support in their learning achieve equally as well as their classmates. Although standards in science are average, they are not as high as in other subjects because some of the more able pupils do not reach the higher levels of which they are capable. The school has rightly identified that insufficient opportunities for pupils to improve their skills of investigation have held their achievement back. Positive action to remedy this is underway, though too recent to have had time to impact on achievement and standards in science.

Teaching is good overall and some elements are outstanding, such as the excellent atmosphere for learning which encourages pupils on most occasions to give of their best. Pupils find the many first-hand learning experiences provided, such as deep freezing liquids, highly stimulating. Interactive whiteboards and laptop computers are used expertly to enhance pupils' understanding of difficult ideas, such as how muscles, ligaments and tendons control movement. In literacy and numeracy, teachers make good use of assessment to provide tasks at just the right level to enable all pupils to learn successfully. However, this is not the case in science, where groups of pupils receive similar work, irrespective of their different learning needs, which hampers the achievement of the more able ones. Apart from science, in every other respect the school provides an outstanding curriculum. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT), modern foreign languages, extra-curricular activities, creativity in the arts and physical education is exceptionally good. The displays of pupils' work are stunning. Not surprisingly, almost all pupils thoroughly enjoy school. The highly effective programme of personal, social and health education underpins pupils' exemplary personal development.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a clear vision and effective staff training. They have united the staff in making positive changes. The impact is evident in the school's nationally recognized achievements in early learning, basic skills, art, ICT and Healthy School awards. Subject leaders play a vital part in the

process. They know their subjects well and drive them forward effectively. Arrangements for checking the work of the school are good. Lessons are observed, teachers' planning is examined, pupils' views are gathered and assessments are analysed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This has helped the school to maintain good standards in English, mathematics and ICT and improve achievement in art and design, and physical education since the previous inspection. However, checking the work in pupils' science books is not done with the same rigour, making it harder for senior staff to monitor improvements. School self-evaluation is largely accurate, if a little over optimistic in one or two areas. It forms a secure basis for future development and gives the school its good capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Most children enter school with attainment above that expected for their age. They achieve well and by the end of the Reception year the vast majority of children exceed the goals expected in all areas of learning. They are very well prepared for their work in the National Curriculum, in particular, in the basic skills. Teaching is good. There are examples of outstanding teaching in literacy where children using laptop computers create graphics and text to produce high quality booklets. Children were captivated by making Easter cakes. Their spoken language, mathematical understanding and knowledge of how materials change when heated, increased significantly as a result of the teaching assistants' excellent questioning skills. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The classrooms and outdoor areas are well structured and carefully organised. Children's responses to activities are observed and assessed carefully. The information is used effectively to plan the next steps, ensuring that children's different levels of knowledge and understanding are well catered for. In making the nationally required changes to children's Foundation Stage education, staff are in the process of improving opportunities for children to explore and learn for themselves. The use of role play serves as a good example. However, such high quality activities, designed to attract and capitalise on children's natural curiosity, are limited. This is why the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good but not outstanding as the school evaluates it to be.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve pupils' investigation skills and the level of challenge for more able pupils to raise achievement in science.
- Check pupils' science books to ensure that intended changes are reflected in their written work.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Inspection of Gorsey Bank Primary School, Wilmslow, SK9 5NQ

Thank you for your very friendly welcome and for answering my questions so politely. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school.

Your school is a good one, just as you said it was. I can see why you like your teachers. They make your lessons interesting, listen carefully to what you say and help you to understand what you need to do to improve. It is good that your headteacher and deputy headteacher check all the assessments of your learning to make sure that you are making good progress. This is why standards are above average in English and mathematics by Year 6.

The way your teachers and support staff look after you and keep you safe is excellent. They make special efforts to provide an excellent curriculum with lots of extra activities for you to experience, in and out of school. You explained that was why you enjoyed school so much. You show your gratitude in your excellent behaviour, keen interest in learning and the way you help and support each other.

Above all, your headteacher and other members of staff lead your school well. They are constantly trying to improve the school by checking what happens and introducing new methods and ideas. This is why your skills in ICT, art and design, and physical education are so good and getting even better.

I have two suggestions to make your school even better.

- Your progress and the standards you reach in science are not as high as in English and mathematics so I have asked your teachers to concentrate on improving your investigation skills and ensure that the work provides challenges for all of you, including the most able. You can help by achieving your targets.
- I have asked the headteacher and senior staff to check your science books to make sure that these improvements are taking place.