

Goodleigh Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113376
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325804
Inspection date	4 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Grahame Sherfield HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	37
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Fielding
Headteacher	Claire Grant
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Goodleigh Barnstaple EX32 7LU
Telephone number	01271 342977
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This very small school serves the village of Goodleigh and the surrounding area. It also draws some pupils from the nearby town. In the past year, numbers joining the school other than in Reception have been high and the number on roll has increased significantly. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportions with a statement of special educational needs and with learning difficulties are above average. Most pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. Two thirds of current pupils are boys. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age class with the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The Governors manage a breakfast club and a private provider runs pre-school provision on the school site.

The headteacher took up her post in November 2007 and there have been other major staff changes. One teacher left the school in November 2008 while another departed at the end of the spring term 2009.

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 where there has been significant and rapid improvement. Pupils flourish in a caring environment where there is a deep commitment to raising standards. Parents are very strongly supportive of the school. One noted her son's 'new thirst for learning' while another reported that 'the school has gone from strength to strength' in the last 18 months or so. Inspection evidence shows that the parents' positive views are entirely justified. The headteacher has made an outstanding contribution to the rapid improvement of the school. She has a clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement from rigorous monitoring and provides a very clear direction for the school's further development through a sharply-focused plan.

Numbers are very small in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the skills which children have when they start in Reception vary considerably from year to year. Current children joined the school in January with skills below expected levels, particularly in communication, language and literacy. As a result of the good provision, achievement is good. For several years, standards reached by pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been broadly average and the progress made by pupils was satisfactory. The school correctly identified that there had been low expectations of what pupils could achieve and some gaps in their learning as a result. Rigorous efforts to improve teaching and careful tracking of pupils' progress have resulted in significant improvements. Progress has clearly accelerated rapidly and is now good throughout the school. Pupils are achieving well and standards are above average.

Pupils are very positive about the friendliness of their school and one noted that, 'We are all friends in the school'. The curriculum meets their needs well and thematic topics involve good links between subjects, engaging pupils' interest. Their attendance is above average. Pupils value the wide range of interesting activities provided for them, including the residential and other visits and the visitors to school. They say they feel safe in school and are confident that bullying is very rare and that if an incident did take place, it would be swiftly resolved by the staff. Pupils are very well aware of the importance of a healthy diet and fully understand the importance of taking plenty of exercise both during and after school. However, their understanding of Britain as a multicultural society is limited.

Good teaching involves well-planned lessons which meet the wide range of needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Teachers have established good relationships in the classrooms so that pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils work well together, are enthusiastic and participate with interest. A particularly striking feature is their willingness to contribute their ideas in discussion and to listen carefully to those of others. This is an inclusive and very caring school which devotes great energy to meeting the differing needs of all. Pupils are very well known by staff and their progress in their work and in their personal development is monitored well.

Staffing changes have meant that the headteacher has had to lead and manage at various levels in the school. This is beginning to change as new appointments have been made. It is recognised, however, that more remains to be done to distribute leadership more effectively in the school in order to guide and sustain further improvement. The strong emphasis on raising standards and on the careful monitoring of pupils' progress towards challenging targets has borne fruit in accelerated progress throughout the school. Taking into account the new appointments, the vigour of the headteacher's leadership and the support and challenge of the governing body, the capacity to improve further is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From their starting points, children currently in Reception are making good progress and the school's assessments indicate that attainment is likely to be in line with levels expected by the end of the Reception Year. Children are well cared for and their personal, social and emotional development is good. They get on well together and enjoy school. Behaviour is good and children are keen to learn.

Staff changes have meant that the headteacher has been teaching the class with the reception children for a significant proportion of the week. She has ensured that the Early Years Foundation Stage has been led and managed well and has been working effectively with the local authority adviser to improve provision. Children enjoy a stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outside, and curriculum planning ensures that the needs of reception children are met well. There is an appropriate emphasis on ensuring that they benefit from a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children's progress is carefully tracked through a range of their work which includes photographic records and staff notes, although parents' contributions to this are not yet systematically recorded. Identifying what children need to do next to advance their learning is effective because the very experienced headteacher is working with a very small number of children. The school rightly acknowledges that a more systematic approach is needed to support this process when the new teacher starts in September.

There is a good partnership with parents. Relations with the pre-school provision are good and pre-school children join pupils for lunch which contributes to smoothing their entry into school. The school is rightly intending to work with pre-school leaders to improve the assessment information received when children start school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop more systematic approaches to using assessment to help to identify what children should learn next in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Share leadership and management roles amongst new staff to guide and sustain further improvement more effectively.
- Improve the opportunities provided for pupils to develop a broader understanding of Britain as a diverse and multicultural society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils in Year 2 are making good progress and the school's assessments and inspection evidence indicate that they are on track to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Reading is a particular strength. The school's data show a marked acceleration in the progress of pupils in Year 6 since the beginning of Year 5. Their progress is now good and the school's assessments indicate that they are set to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science in the national tests this year. A high proportion is on track to achieve the higher Level 5 in all three subjects, with particularly impressive results anticipated in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to that of their peers. Their needs are clearly identified and additional support is provided that is appropriate to their particular difficulties.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of other faiths and of life in other communities. They have fewer opportunities to develop their understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of life in many other parts of Britain. Pupils participate in various local competitions, such as those organised by the local horticultural society, and in sporting tournaments, where just before the inspection there had been notable success in tennis. They raise funds for a variety of charities, locally, nationally and overseas. Older pupils willingly take on a wide range of jobs to help out in the day-to-day running of the school, such as reading with younger children and organising physical education sessions for them. Pupils have the opportunity to contribute their ideas through focus groups and school assemblies. However, the school council rarely meets and pupils thus lack opportunities to consult their peers, take their ideas forward and report back to them after discussions. All pupils are involved in contributing to the school community in various ways, for example through growing potatoes for the kitchen and completing mosaic panels for the playground. Pupils' basic skills and attitudes prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Activities are well organised to help pupils develop ideas to support them in the next step in their learning. For example in the Years 3 to 6 class, pupils explored Mr McNasty through drama to help them write story openings. Questions and small whiteboards, where appropriate, are used effectively to check pupils' understanding. Learning support staff make valuable contributions, for example when supporting groups in shaping their ideas, but in some parts of lessons they can be less involved. Sometimes teachers do not make enough explicit references to the objectives of lessons to help pupils to judge their own progress. Pupils value the guidance from their teacher about how their work could be improved but this is not always underpinned by helpful written comments.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The staff go to great lengths to bring in outside expertise to ensure that pupils in this small school have a wide range of opportunities. This includes some specialist teachers, for example of physical education, as well as securing the services of others, such as an information and communication technology (ICT) consultant who has worked with the older pupils on manipulating digital images. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for such a small school and most are open to all pupils. The annual residential visit for Years 3 to 6 pupils builds their independence and widens their experience. The 'Forest School' is used well to address the individual needs of pupils, such as improving spoken communication skills and enhancing self-esteem. Provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT is good. While opportunities for developing literacy skills across the curriculum are good, the school has rightly identified the need to exploit further the scope for developing numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and there are good links with a range of external agencies which provide additional support when needed. Safeguarding requirements are met. All pupils have targets set for them which they understand well and these are shared with parents and carers. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to talk individually with their teachers about their progress and how they might improve their work further. The school is rightly considering ways of involving pupils more in reflecting on how well they are doing and considering how to improve. Parents are provided with a good range of information to help them support their children in their learning and wider personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is very strongly committed to the welfare and progress of all pupils and is supported by a governing body that fulfils its role well and provides good challenge and support. There have been significant changes in staffing which will be completed when a new teacher takes up his post with the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 in September. These changes have meant that the headteacher has had to take on leadership and management roles at various levels in the school. With a permanent part-time teacher now in post in the class for Years 3 to 6 and an innovative approach to coordinating provision for special needs in place, this is beginning to change.

The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion overall. The sense of community in the school is very strong and there are extensive links with the local community and an established relationship with a school in Ghana. The school recognises that it is less effective in developing pupils' understanding of the multicultural nature of the wider community in Britain. The school has excellent partnerships with external agencies and organisations to extend the opportunities for pupils, both academically and in their personal development. Good examples include links with the church, the local learning community and local authority services.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

Leadership and management

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	1
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Goodleigh Church of England Primary School, Goodleigh, EX32 7LU

Thank you for your involvement in the recent inspection of your school, particularly for the friendly, polite and open way in which you talked to me in discussions and around the school. I enjoyed visiting your school very much.

You go to a good school which has improved rapidly and you are rightly proud of it. It has some important strengths.

- You behave well and enjoy most of your work very much.
- Your personal development is good and you benefit from the good care and support that the school provides for you.
- You make good progress in your work, supported by good teaching and a good curriculum.
- The provision for the children in Reception is good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding and she is well supported by the governors.

I have asked the school to improve three aspects.

- Children in Reception make good progress but setting out the learning they need to do next depends on your very experienced headteacher knowing a small number of children really well. I have asked the school to make this process more systematic to help the new teacher who is starting in September.
- Your headteacher has done so much to improve the school herself and I have asked that some actions be shared among the new staff to help the school to continue to improve.
- Life in some other parts of Britain is very different from Goodleigh and I have asked the school to ensure that you have opportunities to develop your understanding of life in areas where there are people from several different cultures.

Thank you again for your involvement in the inspection and I wish you every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Grahame Sherfield

Her Majesty's Inspector