

Gorefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110634
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	337535
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Bullard
Headteacher	Mrs Katharine Bultitude
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons and saw five teachers. Over 50% of the inspectors' time was given to looking at learning. Inspectors met with parents informally on the first morning of the inspection, and held meetings with the acting headteacher, subject leaders, teaching staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work; this included scrutinising samples of pupils' work, school data, management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and systems for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and 23 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- the steps taken to improve achievement, especially in Key Stage 2
- the analysis carried out by the school and what measures are in place to improve attainment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils of higher ability
- how well assessment is used to identify underachievement, structure work for different groups of pupils and involve them in assessing their progress so that achievement is improved
- how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the school and work effectively to improve attainment and drive the school forward.

Information about the school

Gorefield Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally but a high proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have autistic spectrum disorders or moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at different times of the year affects all year groups and is higher than average. There are four mixed-age classes in the school and there is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class which is shared with a few pupils from Year 1. The school has gained the Health Promoting School and Active Mark awards. During the inspection, the school was led by the acting headteacher, in the absence of the substantive headteacher, who was on maternity leave.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should and the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.

Leaders and managers have been slow to react to the issues identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection, especially in improving pupils' writing skills and increasing challenge for pupils of higher ability. Self-evaluation is not accurate because the monitoring of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress has not been sufficiently rigorous. As a result, groups of pupils are underachieving. Gorefield provides a caring, supportive environment for pupils and the overwhelming majority of parents say that their children like their school. Governors are improving their skills but have offered too little challenge to the school and have not, therefore, worked in an effective partnership with the school's leaders and managers to drive forward urgent improvements in its work. Measures to improve attainment in mathematics are showing signs of gradual success but strategies to improve attainment in English are very new and their impact is not yet clear.

Most children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are as expected for their age. They mix well together, learn to share and to be independent. In Key Stage 1, progress slows and, in the most recent national assessment tests, the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This decline in standards has been sustained over a period of time and accelerates in Key Stage 2. The results of the most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds show that in English and science pupils' attainment is very low, and is below average in mathematics. Pupils do not reach their full potential, especially those of high ability, because they are not challenged by work which stretches them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory and sometimes good progress from their individual starting points because their needs are assessed carefully and they are provided with a satisfactory range of support. Pupils are well behaved in lessons but older pupils in particular can be distracted because the work they are given does not engage them. One Year 6 pupil said, 'Some lessons are better than others. Sometimes you're staring at the board for ages, bored.'

The monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress are developing but insufficient use is made of what teachers know about pupils' progress. This means that teachers do not

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consistently plan tasks that are adapted to meet the needs of different ability groups. Targets are too general and relate to learning aspirations such as willingness to tackle new things rather than providing a precise indication of what pupils need to know and understand to make better progress. The curriculum is satisfactory and extended by a satisfactory range of visits and after-school clubs which add another dimension to the learning experiences of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop and implement robust procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. Use the information to identify what needs to be done to bring about improvement in pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Use assessment systems to greater effect to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring lessons include work which challenges all groups of pupils, especially the more able
 - identifying sharp targets for pupils that make clear the next steps in their learning.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels to ensure that all areas of the school's work, especially pupils' achievement, are monitored carefully to provide an accurate assessment of the school's effectiveness and make this central to strategic planning for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

The progress made by pupils in lessons is too often inadequate and is therefore not good enough to raise pupils' attainment. Attainment is below average in Key Stage 1 and has been declining for the past three years. Attainment is lower in Key Stage 2 where standards have been falling for four years in English and science. Attainment in mathematics is beginning to show signs of slow improvement as a result of the extra support for pupils in Years 4 and 5 who were identified as not making sufficient progress. This support is now being extended to Year 3. Pupils are taught in year group sets for Mathematics in Key Stage 2 to give smaller teaching groups with more individual attention for pupils.

Pupils settle quickly in lessons and show a willingness to work hard and do their best. However, the pace of lessons is often slow so pupils quickly lose interest and motivation. Pupils are able to work well in pairs and groups and respect what each other has to say. They do not make the progress they should because the work they are given does not consistently extend them. This is especially so for able pupils. They are often given work that is too easy, so it is completed quickly and their attention wanders because there is no stimulation for them. Pupils distracted in this way do not disturb lessons but learning opportunities are lost for them. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and they show affection and loyalty to their school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress at whatever stage they join the school. Their needs are assessed quickly and carefully and a satisfactory range of support is provided

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both in class and in out of class sessions for individuals or small groups.

Pupils feel safe and secure in their school and have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. Their behaviour around the school, in lessons and at play, is good because they have a clear appreciation of the needs of others. Pupils carry out responsibilities and duties, such as school councillor, and show pride in what they do. Links with the local village and nearby Wisbech are good. The school is at the heart of its village community and participates in local events such as the Rose Fair where pupils perform country dancing. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and show respect and tolerance for their classmates, especially those with special educational needs and/or difficulties or new arrivals to the school. The school's leaders know that pupils' awareness of other cultures and their understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern society are relatively weak.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The progress that pupils make is tracked carefully but this information is not used

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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effectively by teachers when planning lessons. Tasks in lessons are not structured to match the abilities of different groups of pupils and provide them with work that is neither too easy nor too difficult. Lessons generally begin with a clear objective but introductions are often too long and dominated by the teacher. As a result, opportunities are lost for pupils to be actively involved in reviewing their previous learning or discussing what they are to learn next. Questions posed by teachers too often do not provide pupils with good opportunities to discuss and explore their ideas or share with their classmates what they have learnt.

Marking is variable across the school because the marking policy is not followed consistently. Marking is better in English where, as well as praising pupils, there are some comments to help pupils see clearly how and where a piece of work can be improved. Pupils' targets encourage them to develop a positive approach to learning such as, 'I could challenge myself to try new things outside my comfort zone.' However, these targets seldom relate to the subject matter of the lesson. The end result is that pupils are unsure about exactly how well they are doing or what the next steps should be in their learning. This lack of involvement, especially for older pupils, inhibits progress. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide sound support to pupils with identified learning needs. The school's leaders know that teaching assistants require additional training to extend the range of support they provide for pupils.

Recent initiatives to help raise attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 are showing signs of success. Similar efforts in English are recent and it is too early to determine their impact on improving pupils' achievement. Some limited opportunities are provided in mathematics to extend and challenge more able pupils beyond the classroom, for example by participation in local 'maths challenges'. Links are made between subjects, such as in a science lesson where drama was used to emphasise the concepts of direction of light and translucence. Visits to museums and sites of cultural or historic interest extend learning satisfactorily. Clubs, especially sporting clubs, are much enjoyed by the pupils and this has contributed to the school gaining the Active Mark and Health Promoting School award. A high priority is given to caring for pupils. As a result, pupils feel that they can share their worries with staff and will be helped and supported through their difficulties. This care extends to families and supports the strong community ethos of the school. At the time of the inspection. The school has been without resources for information and communication technology for some weeks for reasons beyond its control.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and managers have had too little impact on improving outcomes for The partnership with parents is a strong one, developed and extended recently. Pupils' welfare is promoted well and successful partnerships have been forged with agencies to help extend the good care provided by the school. Senior leaders and governors have worked successfully to ensure safeguarding arrangements are good. Pupils are helped to develop an appreciation of their future role as citizens, particularly in their local community. Senior leaders and managers are aware that not enough work has been done to enhance pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of the wider national community and beyond.

Governors, many new to the governing body, recognise the need to improve their

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception class includes some Year 1 pupils and this mixed age range provides challenges which are well met by staff. The learning environment is stimulating and resources are attractive and well deployed. Planning covers all the required areas of learning both inside and in the outdoor learning area. Adult-led learning for Early Years Foundation Stage children and Year 1 pupils is carefully organised to allow good opportunities for independent play and exploration. Adults are skilled in encouraging children to develop their speaking skills and to explain what they are doing and share their ideas. Learning through play activities is also well developed. Although most

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children join Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age, good planning and teaching ensure they make good progress in all areas of their learning. Their development is carefully and regularly monitored and parents are kept well informed of their progress.

Children settle quickly and enjoy all they do because they are provided with a good range of interesting learning experiences. For example, three boys were pretending to be builders as part of their outside play theme of the construction site. They were deeply and gleefully involved in using the tricycles to load and unload blocks on the building site and get away as fast as they could from the loading area, making sure they made repairs on the way. Staff work as a team and leadership and management are good. The partnership between home and school is good and, in addition to informal and formal meetings with parents and carers, good information is provided to help keep them fully in touch with what their children are learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Of the 21% of parents who returned questionnaires, the overwhelming majority were pleased with the school. A very few parents did not feel their child was well prepared for the future. The inspection found that the school helps foster good personal skills for pupils. The transfer between classes in the school is well managed and supportive. However, pupils' achievement is inadequate and this has a negative impact on their preparation for the next stage of their education.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gorefield Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 109 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	57	10	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	52	11	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	48	12	52	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	74	6	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	70	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	10	43	11	48	0	0	2	9
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	57	9	41	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	43	12	52	0	0	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	43	12	52	0	0	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	13	57	10	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Wednesday 27 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gorefield Primary School, Wisbech, PE13 4NB

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing how you work in lessons and talking to you. We worked very closely with your acting headteacher and also spent some time talking to your teachers and the school governors. As a result of our inspection we have judged that, although there are some things about your school which are good, there is much that needs to be improved.

We know that you get on well together and you told us that you like your school. You have a good understanding of what you need to do to be safe and healthy and have interesting clubs and visits out of school which you said you enjoyed. However, there are groups of you who do not make as much progress in your learning as you should so we have placed your school in special measures to help it to improve quickly. This means that inspectors will visit again to check that this is happening. We have talked about this with the acting headteacher and we have asked the staff and governors to do three things to make your school better. The headteacher and senior staff should:

- look carefully at your lessons to be sure they are helping you to learn as much as possible, especially in classes for older pupils
- make sure your teachers help you to make better progress, particularly those of you who find learning easier. This includes improving the use of what they know about how well you are doing to plan work that stretches you and setting targets that will help you know what you need to learn next.
- with the help of the governors, keep a really close watch on all that the school does, especially how well you are learning, so they can plan ahead and make sure your school improves.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and doing your best at school. It was a great pleasure to visit Gorefield and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead inspector

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