

Gomeldon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126195
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	340938
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Tanner
Headteacher	Mrs P Bassindale
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and spoke to parents in the playground. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's development plan, assessment and monitoring documentation. They also scrutinised 63 questionnaires returned by parents as well as pupil and staff questionnaires.

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

- The success of actions to reverse the fall in standards in the 2008 national tests and whether actions taken to improve have been sufficiently robust.
- The progress made by pupils in writing.
- The impact of the curriculum on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils especially those with special educational needs.
- How effective the headteacher and governors monitor the work of the school particularly in addressing the perceived weaknesses in writing and progress of pupils with special educational needs.

Information about the school

Gomeldon is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Almost all the pupils are White British and none speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in a mixed age group class with Year 1 pupils. The school has recently had its Healthy School status re-validated and been awarded the Activemark for a second time.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Gomeldon provides its pupils with a good standard of education. Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. Parents are supportive of their school. As one wrote, "Our children are all extremely happy, and we are pleased with the education they are receiving."

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive an excellent start to their education and the provision for them is exciting and imaginative enabling them to make outstanding progress. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well and reach standards in their work that are above average. The school has successfully addressed the dip that occurred in standards in 2008. Both mathematics and science have improved significantly because of a much greater emphasis on pupils being encouraged to apply their skills and knowledge in investigative and problem-solving situations. Although pupils are making good progress, there are still some weaknesses in writing. Careful analysis by inspectors of pupils' work and the school's own assessment information confirm that the school has identified appropriate areas for improvement. Spelling throughout the school is not good enough and older pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had too few opportunities to practise their skills through extended writing. The school has put appropriate strategies in place, but it is too soon yet for them to have had any major impact.

Pupils make good progress during lessons. Questioning techniques are skilfully used to extend pupils' thinking and to assess the level of the pupils' understanding. All groups of pupils are usually set challenging tasks that meet their particular needs. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for, but sometimes the targets set in their individual education plans are not sufficiently focused. In addition, parents are not always given guidance as to how they can help their children make progress towards these at home. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from the challenges provided both in class and through good links with the local secondary school and other providers.

Pupils enjoy their learning because the curriculum is vibrant and exciting and is further enriched through themed days or weeks. Pupils behave well and willingly take on responsibilities and make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. They care for each other in a practical and sympathetic manner and older pupils are pleased that younger pupils frequently turn to them when they have problems.

The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. There is clear direction for the school and a strong emphasis on continuous improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the analysis of the school's performance by the headteacher and governors is perceptive and realistic. Monitoring is rigorous and

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focused and has rightly identified where improvements need to be made in teaching and learning as well as in the curriculum offered. Actions taken have resulted in good progress being made in mathematics and science, indicating that there is a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise standards in writing by: - continuing to work on improving spelling across the school - ensuring that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have sufficient opportunities to write at length.
- In order to maximise the progress made by pupils with special educational needs: - ensure that targets in individual education plans for pupils are consistently focused and precise - identify how parents can be encouraged to help pupils work towards their targets at home.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils achieve well in lessons. They are eager to learn and rightly say that teachers do all they can to make learning fun for them. As a result they work hard and really enjoy what they are doing. In a mathematics lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoyed tackling a challenging problem-solving task involving factors. This practical problem-solving approach has worked well to raise standards in both science and mathematics and progress in both subjects has improved significantly in the last year. As a result, pupils are making good progress and standards are improving. They are now above average.

There are still some issues to be addressed in writing but the school is using appropriate methods to make improvements. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 were eagerly learning how to use a dictionary and a thesaurus and could confidently explain the difference between the two and when you would use them. Pupils across the school enthusiastically maintain their spelling journals. In one lesson a pupil explained that it's really useful because it's personal to us individually. Pupils have more extensive opportunities to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. In addition, care has been taken to ensure that topics appeal to all pupils, particularly boys, who have done less well in writing in the past. Writing is improving as a result but it is too soon to measure the full impact of these strategies.

All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is because they are well supported both in class and when they are taught individually or in small groups.

Pupils feel very safe in school. The work associated with the national awards help to ensure that pupils are very aware of the importance of a healthy diet and the need for plenty of exercise, but also show an excellent awareness of the need for emotional well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They explore the faiths and traditions of other cultures and willingly organise fundraising events in order to raise the money necessary to support

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the child they sponsor in India. The school council provides a good forum for pupils' ideas and this ensures that the pupils' views contribute to the school's development. Pupils' good basic skills and their attitudes and maturity all help to prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are effective because the teachers show imagination in planning in order to make learning enjoyable. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use interactive whiteboards confidently, which means that learning is varied and interesting. They ensure that tasks are relevant for boys and girls alike, with the result that pupils tackle them with enthusiasm. Relationships are strong and pupils are not afraid to ask questions. Questioning techniques are good and pupils are encouraged to explain the reasoning behind their answers. In a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, a pupil gave the right answer and said it was a guess. The teacher didn't accept this and through skilful and sympathetic prompting enabled the pupil to explain the reasoning leading to the answer. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long which means that

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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pupils' time to complete a task is reduced.

The school tracks pupils' progress carefully. Pupils' work is carefully marked with clear indications as to how the pupils can improve. Teachers' assessments are recorded regularly and form the basis of focused meetings between the headteacher and class teachers about the progress of individual and groups of pupils. The data is used to set challenging targets reflecting the high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

The curriculum is relevant and effectively designed to meet the needs of all pupils well. The current whole-school focus on improving pupils' writing is well conceived and effective. There are opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English, although these are not yet planned systematically across the school. The pupils appreciate the wide range of visits and visitors that support their work well and enthusiastically recalled the science and art weeks held during the last year. The good variety of extra-curricular activities is supported very well by the pupils.

The school aims to develop the confidence, independence and enthusiasm of the pupils and this is reflected well in the day-to-day life of the school. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are effective. Pupils receive good support for their personal development and are very well cared for. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and appropriate support is provided. Most teachers draw up plans which are carefully matched to individual needs of the pupils, but occasionally some targets are insufficiently precise.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been in post a little over two years, but has effectively shared vision and ambition for the school. The headteacher has initiated changes to which the staff have responded enthusiastically. They are successfully improving the quality of the curriculum so that teachers are able to give their pupils exciting and challenging learning experiences. The school effectively promotes equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve as well as they can by monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils and ensuring their needs are met. Boys and pupils with special educational needs, in particular, responded well to the Early Birds club which provides mathematics and English in a fun way using educational computer programmes. However, the monitoring of the individual education plans for pupils who have special educational needs is not rigorous enough.

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The actions taken by the headteacher and senior leaders to raise standards in mathematics and science have been successful. The procedures for monitoring the work of the school are robust and consequently senior staff have a very good overview of how well the school is doing. They have taken appropriate additional action to raise standards in writing as this was not improving as fast as mathematics and science. The school is working towards challenging, but realistic, targets and the school development plan identifies an appropriate programme for further improvement in the school's work. The governors are fully involved in the strategic development of the school. An annual development day ensures whole-school agreement on priorities for further school improvement. Governors promote community cohesion well and monitor the effectiveness of the school's many links with local, national and international communities very well. The school meets all the statutory regulations for safeguarding. Rigorous checks are made on all adults who work in the school. Health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out conscientiously.

The school's relationship with parents and carers is good. Parents and pupils particularly like the fact that the headteacher knows every child by name and takes time to encourage all pupils, thus raising their self-esteem. Their views are sought through questionnaires and parents are provided with good information about the school through regular newsletters. Details from class teachers at the start of every term outlining the term's topic details are particularly useful. The school has a wide range of links with outside agencies and organisations which effectively promote opportunities for pupils' academic and personal development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join Reception with a wide range of attainment including a significant percentage who are below the levels expected for their age. They make excellent progress and join Year 1 having reached standards which are well in line with expected levels and sometimes above. Children are eager to learn because teaching is vibrant and lively. There is an excellent balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. At this early stage of the year great emphasis is placed on establishing routines and ensuring that children settle happily in school. Particular attention is paid to developing early social skills. Children learn to share and take turns and develop independence and the ability to choose for themselves. They relish the opportunity to share ideas in inspiring role play areas, such as a huge silver space capsule. Their curiosity is developing as the children try and understand early concepts of electricity. Parents are very pleased with the school's induction procedures and feel that everything is being done to enable their children to settle happily. Interesting themes, and the excellent utilisation of the exciting outside area, make the curriculum and learning relevant and exciting. The care and attention given to children's welfare are outstanding. Leadership and management are excellent. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the needs of young children. On-going monitoring of the progress children are making ensures that activities are carefully matched to their needs.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Sixty three questionnaires were returned which represents nearly half of the families attending the school. Parents and carers are very confident that their children are safe and well cared for. They also express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. The great majority are happy overall with the experiences their children are receiving. There are some reservations, particularly over whether their children are making sufficient progress and whether their individual needs are being met, which are unsurprising given the fall in standards in 2008. Inspectors are confident that pupils are once again making good progress. Parents spoken to during the inspection were particularly pleased with Early Years Foundation Stage and the high quality of the induction process.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gomeldon 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 145 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	59	21	33	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	59	26	41	1	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	33	33	52	8	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	48	21	33	8	12	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	28	44	23	37	6	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	41	24	38	6	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	52	26	41	2	3	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)	30	48	25	40	3	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	46	22	35	8	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	37	29	46	8	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	37	31	49	8	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	48	26	41	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	48	25	40	4	6	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.



18 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gomeldon Primary School, Salisbury SP4 6JZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. You showed us how much you enjoy your school and are pleased with how well you are doing. You are right to be, because it is a good school!

What we found out about your school.

- You really enjoy school and make good progress, reaching higher standards than those found in most schools in mathematics and science.
- You behave well, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on well with the other pupils and always look after each other. We were particularly pleased that the younger pupils turn to the older ones for help.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe and live healthy lives.
- The headteacher and governors are good at running the school and understand well how they could make it even better.
- Your teachers are doing a good job. They work hard to plan interesting lessons and always mark your work carefully.
- All staff take good care of you and keep you safe.
- Reception class children get an excellent start to their school life.

What we would like the school to do now.

- Ensure that you improve your spelling and have more opportunities to write at length across all the subjects. You can help yourselves by completing your spelling journals regularly.
- Ensure that the education plans for those of you who find learning more difficult have targets that are really clear, and that your parents are told how they can help you work towards them at home.

Good luck for the future. We hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now.

Yours faithfully

Christine Huard

Lead Inspector

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