

Gorsley Goffs Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116814
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	326454
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Graeme Bassett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Ruth Bailey
Headteacher	Mr Richard Humphrey
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 January 2006
School address	Gorsley Ross-on-Wye Herefordshire HR9 7SE
Telephone number	01989 720321
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate neighbourhood including Ross-on-Wye and Newent. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There is one class for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The children's skills on entry have dropped over the past few years and are currently above expected levels in their personal development but below expected levels in communication, language and literacy (especially writing). Their skills in all other areas of learning are broadly in line with expected levels. There are six classes in the school; the three youngest classes contain pupils of more than one year group.

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 improvements since the last inspection are excellent and there are now many outstanding features because of the excellent leadership and management of the school. The staff have clearly defined roles and develop their subjects with skill and enthusiasm. The governors are knowledgeable, well organised and have an outstanding understanding of their responsibilities. The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding and he provides very clear direction to the development of the school. Under his guidance, the organisational and decision-making skills of staff and governors are exceptionally good. Whole-school initiatives ensure that the school continues to raise standards and achievement. For example, the recently improved assessment procedures used to track each pupil's development are excellent. As a result, the school's capacity to improve in the future is excellent.

Teaching is good overall. In the upper juniors it is often excellent. Because of this quality of teaching, pupils approach their learning with great enthusiasm and they make good progress. Many who join the school in later year groups make outstanding progress. Pupils take pride in their work and care about what they do. They are all fully involved in all that the school does. Children enter the EYFS with skills being broadly as expected, with the exception of writing which is below expectations. Provision in the EYFS is good overall but there are too few opportunities to enable children to plan activities for themselves and to pursue their own interests both indoors and out.

Because of the excellent teaching in Year 5 and 6, pupils' progress accelerates rapidly during their last two years in the school. They gain a wide range of high-level and mature skills by the end of Year 6. Consequently their preparation for their next school and for later life is outstanding. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average and have been consistently so for the past three years but still continue to improve. The proportion reaching the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in English, mathematics and science is much higher than the national average and improves on the school's performance last year. Even though the school provides extremely well for the full range of abilities, there are times when writing tasks, particularly in the younger classes, are not demanding enough for the more able pupils. Pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are a strength and the quality of work within the arts, particularly in music, is well above average.

The curriculum is excellent and inspires pupils, who become engrossed in their learning. Consequently, they speak very enthusiastically about their work and are especially eager to describe their visits, workshops and their residential experiences. The use of ICT is exceptionally good, enhancing the meaningful and purposeful links between different subjects. Pupils show a great deal of joy and enthusiasm within their lessons and the vast majority of parents reflect this eagerness with praise for the improvements made recently. Many parents say this is a wonderful school.

Because of the exceptional academic and pastoral care and support given to all pupils, their personal development and well-being are excellent. Pupils readily demonstrate exceptional caring attitudes towards each other. They willingly help

each other and the whole school has a strong feeling of being one family. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 2**

Children start school in the EYFS with skills broadly as expected for their age, except in communication, language and literacy where writing skills are below expectations. The EYFS is well led and managed and all staff work well as a knowledgeable and enthusiastic team. With the effective care, support and guidance, children settle quickly to the routines of school. As a result, their personal development and well-being are good.

Good provision and effective teaching throughout the EYFS have beneficial impact on the way all children learn and develop. Because of good teaching, children make good progress in all areas of learning. The classroom is stimulating and children develop their skills in all areas of learning through the good use of a wide variety of resources. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1 their skills are broadly as expected for their age in writing and above expectations in the other areas of learning. Although teacher-directed tasks are good and planned carefully, the school correctly identifies the need to improve the outdoor classroom still further, in order that it is easily accessible to allow children more opportunities when planning an activity of their own choice.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the more able pupils in the younger classes are given more demanding writing tasks.
- Ensure that there are more opportunities to enable children in the EYFS to plan activities for themselves and to easily pursue their tasks both indoors and out.

Achievement and standards **Grade: 2**

Pupils currently enter Year 1 with skills above expected levels in mathematics and broadly as expected in writing. Last year, the school's performance in writing at the end of Year 2 dropped because no pupil was judged to have reached Level 3. However, many of these pupils are now working competently within the higher elements of Level 3 and the school realises that its assessment was too harsh. Currently standards in Year 2 are above average but nevertheless, some of the more able pupils still do not do as well as they should in writing.

Last year standards in Year 6 were well above the national average and achievement was good. This has been the trend over the past three years. Currently pupils in Year 6, who started school in the EYFS with skills above the expected levels, make good progress and attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion reaching the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in all three subjects continues to be much higher than average. Pupils with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils for whom English is not their first language are progressing well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

There is a marked air of enjoyment in school and pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons, demonstrating a very positive approach to their learning. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is exceptionally good. They have a good understanding of the customs and traditions of other people around the world. Behaviour in and around the school is exemplary and this contributes well to the confident manner in which pupils relate to adults and visitors. Pupils readily demonstrate excellent caring attitudes towards each other and co-operate effectively. Attendance is good but some parents still take holidays during school time and this reduces overall attendance rate.

Pupils' contributions to the school and local communities are excellent and the school council is effective in ensuring pupils' views are heard. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and are proud of the Healthy Lifestyle, Activemark 2008 and the silver Eco-school awards achieved by the school. Pupils are well spoken and can express themselves very clearly. Their work is neatly presented. With well above average standards and the very positive manner with which they tackle new situations, the pupils' preparation for their next school is outstanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall. Teachers know their subjects well and use extremely good questioning techniques to encourage pupils to explain their thinking. Teachers are very skilful and confident in the management of their classrooms. Their use of interactive whiteboards and ICT stimulates learning very effectively. Teachers' marking is well structured. Pupils are encouraged to assess their progress but checks to make sure that they respond to remarks written in their books are infrequent. Tasks match the differing needs of most pupils but some teachers do not always ensure that more able pupils, especially in the younger classes, are set more challenging tasks than the rest of the class. At times, not enough is expected of the small minority of most able pupils in the older classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support particularly from the teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school offers extremely well planned opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in meaningful ways. The curriculum is exciting and planned very effectively, particularly at Key Stage 2, where themes used with cross-subject links inspire the pupils to become fully absorbed in their work. They are enthusiastic and speak excitedly about things they have done recently. For example, the work based on 'The Piano' developed pupils' skills in writing and art through a slide/sound presentation. The extensive range of well attended extra-curricular activities,

including a residential visit and clubs, enhances pupils' personal and social development effectively. As a result, pupils are becoming resilient and resourceful learners who are prepared well for their future. The well organised breakfast club is a good example of how the school builds social harmony, whilst settling children for the day ahead.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school demonstrates outstanding levels of care, support and guidance in all aspects of its work. All staff show care and concern for each pupil's personal development and well-being, resulting in the pastoral care being excellent. All reasonable measures are taken to ensure pupils' safety and protection. The school has recently gained a school travel plan award but the school is located on a busy main road. The school does all that it should to keep children safe. Nevertheless, both parents and governors are concerned by the potential risks presented by the speed of traffic. There are good links with parents who help in school, on trips and with fund-raising events. Community cohesion is good but the school does not have sufficient links with people and children further afield, to enable pupils to forge national or global contacts. The support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is exceptionally good. The assessment records are excellent. They are used very effectively by teachers to set very challenging targets for each pupil, resulting in the continued high level of standards and achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management are outstanding and have brought about excellent improvements to the school since the last inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels of the school willingly undertake responsibilities. They monitor and evaluate their subjects exceptionally well and provide outstanding support and guidance for the development of their areas. All staff and governors are involved in setting targets for the future, resulting in the quality of the self-evaluation being outstanding. The priorities identified in the school plan are the correct ones at this time and there is a very clear direction for the improvements planned. The combination of high quality planning and determined leadership helps to drive the school forward very effectively.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 is 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

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1

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.

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
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	1
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

16 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gorsley Goffs Primary School, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7SE



Thank you for helping us when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. We found that your school provides you with a good education and that some aspects of your school are excellent. Your school has improved exceptionally well since the last inspection. You do some very exciting things and there is a good team spirit in your school, and it is a very happy place. These are the things that are particularly strong in your school.

- The leadership and management of your school are excellent. Your headteacher provides an exceptionally clear direction to the development of the school. The staff also have high expectations and share the very clear vision of how to bring about improvements. As a result, it is a good and improving school.
- The teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. The teachers plan very interesting tasks for you that successfully link subjects together and make your learning more interesting and meaningful. The work in ICT and in art and music is very good.
- You make good progress in all classes. Some of you make excellent progress and your work in reading, writing, mathematics and science is well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The curriculum is excellent and exceptionally well planned. It links subjects together extremely well to make your learning meaningful.
- You are all developing excellent attitudes towards your work and towards each other. You have an outstanding understanding about how to keep safe and how to stay healthy.
- You are very polite and your behaviour is excellent.
- Staff look after and care for you in an excellent way.

There are still some ways in which your school could be better. We have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- ensure that your teachers set more demanding writing tasks for those of you who find work easy, especially in the youngest classes in the school
- ensure that there are more opportunities for children in the Reception class to plan their own activities and make more use of the outdoor area.

You can help by asking your teachers how you can make your work better and really pay attention to the comments your teachers make in your books.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Bassett
Lead inspector