

Great Berry Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	137226
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	386015
Inspection dates	30–31 January 2012
Lead inspector	Graham Preston

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rula Merrell
Headteacher	Susanne Pipe
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2006
School address	Forest Glade Langdon Hills Basildon SS16 6SG
Telephone number	01268 544709
Fax number	01268 492670
Email address	admin@greatberry.essex.sch.uk

Age group	4-11
Inspection date(s)	30–31 January 2012
Inspection number	386015



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Graham Preston

Additional inspector

Joanna Jones

Additional inspector

Barry George Wood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 16 teachers in 25 lessons as well as carrying out a number of 'learning walks' to listen to pupils read, evaluate the quality of pupils' writing and observe the teaching of phonics. Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding practices, its self-evaluation and development planning. Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers in 173 returned questionnaires.

Information about the school

Great Berry is a larger than average primary school that recently gained Academy status. The academy meets the government's current floor standards. The great majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds with fifteen per cent from other ethnic heritages. A few pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The academy has a below average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the proportion of those known to be eligible for free school meals is low. It has several awards including the Gold Activemark for sport, Sustran Bronze award, International Schools award and Healthy Schools status.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Great Berry Primary is an outstanding school that has consistently enabled its pupils to achieve exceptionally well. Pupils make outstanding progress throughout their time in the academy to reach very high standards in mathematics and reading by the time they leave. These high standards are increasingly reflected in pupils' writing across all years.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and are fully engaged in their learning, reflected in the high levels of attendance and excellent behaviour in lessons. The positive school ethos ensures pupils feel safe and very well supported.
- Parents are very happy with the academy and appreciate the reflective leadership and dedicated staff that have enriched pupils' experience, successfully promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enabled pupils to raise their achievement.
- This drive to identify and implement better ways of helping pupils learn has resulted in a highly effective mathematics programme of study and strategies that have substantially improved the complexity and accuracy of pupils' creative writing.
- Teachers are very effective in the way they set clear and achievable learning outcomes in lessons that enable pupils to evaluate their progress. Marking to show pupils how they can improve is exemplary in Years 5 and 6 where pupils work with the teacher to continuously review and improve their work. It is still developing in other years.
- Delegation of leadership and management is well advanced throughout the academy, enabling staff to be fully involved in the process of school improvement. Staff morale is high and there is a readiness to rigorously monitor and review all practice. Excellent data collection is very well used to monitor pupils' progress and evaluate the impact of improvement strategies.
- The governing body is well informed and very active in the management of the academy.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend to other years the exemplary 'marking for improvement' practice seen in Years 5 and 6 by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to further improve their work in response to teachers' development points
 - where appropriate, showing pupils how their improvement targets relate to their national curriculum levels.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils come to the academy with broadly average abilities and in Reception make rapid progress in their all-round development including reading, writing and numeracy. This is helped greatly by the effective use of frequent phonics sessions in Reception and Year 1 which help pupils develop their reading by learning the sounds letters make. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to make good and often outstanding progress in all subsequent years. At the end of Year 6 attainment is high. All pupils have met, and many considerably exceeded, the national expectation for progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and the small number at an early stage of learning English. Consequently, almost all attain level 4 (the expected level) in mathematics and English, which far exceeds the government floor standards and demonstrates that lower attainers are narrowing the gap on pupils nationally. In mathematics two thirds of pupils achieve level 5 (and in some cases level 6), which in 2011 placed the academy in the top two per cent of primary schools nationally. Much of this has been the result of the academy's drive to establish strong mental and written calculation skills in pupils at an early stage.

Standards in reading are also high by the end of Key Stage 2, and the academy has successfully introduced learning schemes that have substantially improved pupils' writing, with over half of Year 6 pupils now on target to achieve at least level 5 (higher than the national expectation) in English. This has been made possible by developing pupils' creativity and providing them with a range of different sentence types and structures. As a result, many pupils are able to express their ideas at length and in complex sentences. For example, in a piece of persuasive text, a pupil was able to answer the question "Is Macbeth evil?" by taking the persona of Macduff; to be able to write from different viewpoints is a high level skill. Importantly, pupils have opportunities to develop literacy across other curriculum areas. This was evident in an extended and mature piece of writing in history where a pupil related the need for rationing in World War Two to the disruption of supplies caused by German submarines. Almost all parents and carers rightly believe their children are well taught and making good progress, including pupils with particular learning needs. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language quickly acquire English and go on to make exceptional progress.

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

Quality of teaching

Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding in a school that has developed and refined effective learning strategies that are shared by teachers and support staff. Planning always identifies a clear learning purpose to be achieved in each lesson with appropriately varied challenge to meet different pupils' needs. Teachers' high expectations and strong subject knowledge are used well to provide challenging work and develop pupils' capacity to work independently. These qualities were seen in an outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson on estimating and measuring volume where pupils were actively learning through well planned practical activities, considerable opportunities for discussion and clear guidance as to how they could improve their work. A similar level of challenge and rigour was just as evident in a Reception class where the teacher was successfully developing children's concentration and listening skills and enabling them to make considerable progress in recognising and pronouncing four and five letter words. Teaching assistants are strongly focused on helping those pupils requiring support to learn and make excellent progress through interventions that are well taught and assessed.

Teachers mark regularly and, in English and mathematics in particular, assessment activities always enable pupils to self-assess the extent to which they have met the 'success criteria' for the task. Teachers' marking always includes development points though the detail and quality varies. The best marking practice, mostly evident in Years 5 and 6, gives informed advice and time for pupils to further improve their efforts. Pupils say this works well. It also shows them how they can improve against their national curriculum level targets. Teaching has a strong impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers have commented very positively on the contribution the academy makes. In the words of one parent, "teachers instil a value of self-worth in every child and children are encouraged to respect themselves and their peers". They appreciate how teachers have successfully captured their children's interest and fully engaged them in their learning. Cultural development is supported by staff successfully developing the international dimension in lessons including activities developed through links with India and New Zealand.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All pupils like coming to school and feel very safe and well supported when there. Attendance rates are consistently high and punctuality is excellent. While one or two parents and carers expressed concern about bullying in the questionnaire, most believed the academy dealt with it well or felt that bullying of any type was not an issue in the academy. Pupils interviewed agreed with this view, wanting to stress instead the work done by older pupils to support younger ones through the school council or as mathematics and reading buddies. There was a high response to the parents and carers questionnaire and almost everybody agreed there was good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Inspectors judged behaviour outstanding because pupils not only behave very well but come to lessons with an eagerness to learn.

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

Leadership and management

“Well run, well managed and extremely well led!” was a questionnaire response that reflects the view of most parents and carers. The outstanding capacity to improve of the academy is reflected in its track record: its outcomes have never been less than good over many years. Leaders and managers demonstrate readiness to reflect on current practice and successfully implement strategies that have engaged pupils and raised their attainment and rates of progress to the current high levels. For example, raising achievement in mathematics involved a very wide range of events and activities that included identifying and sharing the most effective learning scheme, relevant and effective staff training, parent and carer workshops, mathematics ‘buddies’ supporting younger pupils, targeted gifted and talented groups and various fun challenges such as tables Olympics and mathematics medals. All these things were followed through with rigorous monitoring of lesson planning and pupils’ work. When faced with the challenge of driving up standards in writing, the academy has successfully followed a similar strategy of staff training, rigorous implementation and monitoring and improvement of practice. The promotion of creative writing allied to the whole school use of ‘sentence types’, now used routinely by pupils, has greatly increased the range and accuracy of sentence construction.

The establishment of strong middle leadership with full involvement in monitoring and evaluation of teaching, including performance management, has been central to the success of the academy’s developments. So too has its highly developed systems of tracking and data analysis that enable it to promote equality by responding to any emerging differences in pupils’ progress. This data shows no significant gender difference, achievement by pupils with special needs to be well above their peers nationally and rapidly improving progress for those pupils learning English as they acquire their language skills.

The development of numeracy and literacy skills both discretely and across the curriculum is outstanding in itself. However, the academy is equally well regarded for the richness of the wider curriculum, which promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Strengths include its international dimension, through which all pupils learn French, and its strong personal, social and health education that underpins its popularity as a caring school. Music is outstanding: the academy has a successful seventy strong choir. Learning schemes promote regular outside visits, business links and visitors from the local church and other religious groups.

The outstanding governing body is very well informed and actively involved in establishing the school as an academy. Representatives work very closely with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff in rigorously evaluating school performance and deciding future priorities. They bring a wide range of expertise, including financial management, necessary for the future development of the academy. The academy safeguarding arrangements are very secure with rigorous checks of the 170 adults who work in the academy or are active in school. Parents greatly appreciate the excellent leadership of the headteacher including her

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

responsiveness to their concerns.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Berry Primary School, Basildon, SS16 6SG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Inspectors were very impressed with many aspects of your school so have judged it to be outstanding. A large number of you love coming to school and this shows in your high attendance. You all agree that the academy is a very safe place to be. One of you said in the pupils' questionnaire 'This is the safest school I have been to. The teachers help me a lot and are interested in my views'. You appreciate the help of Mrs Pipe and Mr Denchfield whenever there are any problems. Many of you say you like your teachers because they are kind and make lessons fun. A few of you are pleased that school dinners have improved and are now good! Most of you realise that the academy has helped you make excellent progress and is enabling you to achieve very well in your subjects.

Inspectors found that you are right. Your teachers in all the years work hard to make lessons interesting and ensure you all do as well as you should. The staff have spent much time organising visits and visitors, making learning more interesting, and broadening your understanding of the world through studying the culture and lifestyles in India and New Zealand. Most of you make exceptional progress in your mathematics and English, reaching standards well above those in most other primary schools. Much of this is because the teachers and teaching assistants teach you well and show you how you can improve your work. You help too, by behaving sensibly and working hard in lessons. We were very pleased with the way many of you are ready to contribute in class and work together when you need to. Many of you older pupils help the younger ones as mathematics and reading buddies. The school council is very active and has recently had a say in improving the play areas.

The academy is very well organised and does most things very well. We like the way older pupils are given the opportunity to continue to improve work after it has been marked and have asked the academy to do more of this in other years. Our message to you is to keep working hard so that you fulfil your potential and help the academy maintain its high standards.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**