

# Green Lea First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	124105
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380804
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Clive Lewis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	38
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Eunice Finney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Richardson (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Mill Lane Milwich Stafford ST18 0EU
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<b>Email address</b>	office@greenlea.staffs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–9
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	1–2 March 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Lewis

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice by an additional inspector, who observed nine lessons. All teachers and support staff were seen working with children. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff. Questionnaires from 32 parents and carers were analysed. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, looked at documentation including teachers' planning documents, and examined tracking and assessment data.

## Information about the school

Green Lea is a very small first school serving a widespread rural community. Pupils come from several small villages nearby. No pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. All pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below the national average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The previous headteacher left in July 2011 and a teacher from the school has been acting headteacher since September last. Governors have advertised and shortlisted for a new headteacher. The school consists of two mixed-age classes – a Reception/Year 1 class with 21 children and a Year 2/3/4 class with 17 children. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Activemark.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Green Lea is a good school. It has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. The school plays a central part within the community and is greatly valued by parents and carers, the overwhelming majority of whom are, rightly, very happy with their children's experience at the school. The school is not outstanding because pupils' progress in writing is not as rapid as in reading and pupils do not receive enough opportunities to use their writing skills across a range of subjects. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in science and subjects other than English and mathematics are underdeveloped.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress in developing their skills and knowledge across a wide range of areas. Attainment at the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, is above average. Standards in reading are exceptional, and above average in mathematics.
- Teaching across the school is well led and consistently good. The high quality and consistency of the teaching of reading and phonics (the sounds letters make) are demonstrated in the high standards achieved at all ages.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are exemplary. Pupils have extremely well-developed personal skills and a good understanding of how to keep safe. Attendance levels are consistently above the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment has improved significantly and the acting headteacher is maintaining the good rate of progress and managing school performance well. She is supported exceptionally well by a very strong and experienced team of teachers and practitioners. This high level of curricular enrichment makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has well-developed and accurate systems for assessing and tracking individual pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in writing, so that they match those achieved in reading, by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across a range of subjects.
- Improve and develop the assessment and tracking systems used for English and mathematics to science and other subjects to measure more precisely pupils' progress across the whole curriculum.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good and sustained progress over time. All adults pay close attention to children's individual needs and quickly identify those who may show any delay in learning. Where necessary, they provide effective support through the good links they have with external health agencies. These links ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to that of their classmates.

Although there are year-on-year variations due to the very small year groups, most children typically start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and capabilities that are more advanced than those expected for their ages, particularly in their communication, number and social skills. They make good progress in the Reception class so that by the middle of their Reception Year, a number of children begin to access the Year 1 curriculum.

This good progress continues as they move through the school. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average and school progress data and lesson observations confirm that this good progress is being maintained. Standards in Year 4, when pupils leave the school to move to middle school, are above-average, overall.

There is a whole-school focus on the enjoyment of books and World Book Day was celebrated during the inspection with all pupils arriving enthusiastically at school in the costume of their favourite character from literature. The good quality of learning seen across the school is demonstrated in pupils' high levels of motivation, independence and curiosity. The focus on literacy, in conjunction with daily lessons in phonics and regular guided reading activities, ensure the impact of the teaching of reading is exceptional and consistent across the school. As a result, attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school is above average. All the current Year 4 pupils are on track to achieve Level 4 in reading by the end of the school year, two years ahead of national expectations. Standards in

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writing are not yet as strong as standards in reading because, although pupils apply a wide range of written skills to good effect, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across the curriculum, such as in extended writing in history, geography or science. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children are making good progress and inspection findings support their views.

## Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, and this is reflected in the good progress seen. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers and their children think teaching is good and this was confirmed by inspection findings. Teachers ensure classroom routines are made clear and are regularly reinforced. Relationships between teachers and pupils are extremely good and pupils demonstrate positive behaviour and excellent attitudes to work in lessons. Consequently, pupils learn well across the curriculum. Learning is structured carefully and all pupils contribute to lessons. Teachers generate high levels of enthusiasm for learning among pupils and this contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding through skilled questioning, anticipating when they need to intervene to support or challenge. In a good Year 2/3/4 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge, skilled class management and very high expectations of work and behaviour. A brisk pace was set and maintained throughout the lesson. Pupils responded very well to the teacher's questions, confidently offering answers and solutions. It was made clear to them precisely what they were expected to learn and, as a result, they were well motivated and made good progress in their understanding of adverbs and adverbial clauses. Teachers make good use of the planned opportunities for learning, but a scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrated limited opportunities for extended writing in science, geography and history.

Teachers have a good understanding of the progress that pupils are making in literacy and mathematics due to the regular analysis of assessment and tracking data, and pupil progress meetings, which take place every term. Assessment in science and other subjects is still at an early stage of development. Appropriately challenging and regular homework contributes well to pupils' learning. Marking is of a consistently high quality, leading to high levels of engagement from the pupils.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and provision has improved significantly since the last inspection by the addition of a secure, covered, outdoor area accessible from the classroom, which allows the youngest children free access to outdoor activities. Children make good progress in the Reception class. The teacher plans brisk, animated daily phonics activities for children which interest and motivate them well and contribute effectively to the good progress made in their reading and listening skills. All staff monitor and record children's progress well on a day-to-day basis and observations and achievements are recorded in individual

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children's profiles.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Observations during lessons and around the school confirm that pupils' behaviour is outstanding and a credit to them and to the school. Pupils show very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and cooperation in and out of lessons. Relationships with staff and with each other are excellent. School documents and discussions with pupils confirm that there is no bullying and that this excellent behaviour has been maintained over time. They are aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and realise that 'little arguments at playtime' do not, usually, constitute bullying. Pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They have mature attitudes to learning and develop considerate relationships with peers and adults.

Pupils understand the need for healthy lifestyles and exercise. All groups of pupils say they feel safe at school at all times. They understand what constitutes unsafe situations and are highly aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to contribute to school and local communities through the work of the school council and regular collections for a number of charities. Through the school council, they have some influence on decisions about school life; for example, pupils have recently 'interviewed' potential headteachers. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected in consistently regular attendance. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage clearly enjoy school and have settled into routines well, playing happily together and individually, indoors and out.

Attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils are, invariably, fully engaged and enthusiastic learners. Their writing is not better than good, because the opportunities to advance their written skills in all subjects are not extensive enough.

## **Leadership and management**

In the absence of a substantive headteacher, the acting headteacher, with the strong support of the governing body and a local headteacher, has consistently communicated and maintained her high expectations and ambition for the school. She is fully supported in this by a very strong team of highly committed staff, ensuring that momentum for improvement is maintained. Staff regularly take advantage of helpful professional opportunities to enhance their work, reflected in the good quality of their classroom practice.

Equal opportunities are at the heart of the school's ethos and all staff show a very strong commitment to equality, celebrating the individual qualities of each child and family very well. The school's rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures successfully drive improvement. The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop. Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and are effective in holding it to account.

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The curriculum provides a rich and creative mix of activities which meets pupils' needs and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through regular visits and visitors to school, which give them a thirst for learning. Strong links and excellent relationships with parents and carers ensure the personal needs of the children are addressed well. One parent wrote: 'We decided to send our two children to Green Lea, instead of our local school, because of the excellent environment, the friendly atmosphere and the excellent teachers and teaching assistants who care for our children.' Inspection findings largely endorse these views. Resources are well deployed. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements, policies are comprehensive and procedures ensure children are protected and supported very effectively. There are good links with a range of external agencies which contribute well to children's progress. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Its track record in significantly improving progress and standards, teaching and behaviour since its previous inspection demonstrates it has a good capacity to improve further.

## 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](http://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.**



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Green Lea First School, Stafford, ST18 0EU**

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. I very much enjoyed my visit. I enjoyed watching lessons and talking to as many of you as I could. You attend a good, very happy and friendly school which is led well by the headteacher and the staff. They care for you well and give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you do this very well. You told me that you really like your school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. You prove this by your attendance which is exceptionally good.

Good teaching is a feature of your school and this, combined with exciting curriculum activities and your hard work, results in you making good progress and achieving above-average standards. You make a good contribution to the life of your school through all the responsibilities you take on and through your school council. Your behaviour is exceptionally good and you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do – so well done.

To help you to make even better progress, I have asked your school to:

- give you more opportunities to use your writing skills in all subjects
- develop ways of checking how well you are doing in all the subjects you are learning.

You too can contribute to the further improvement of your school by continuing to attend with the same very positive attitudes and willingness that you show at the moment. I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis  
Lead inspector

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