

Greenways Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124025
Local authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	380777
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Alan Lemon

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Hackney
Headteacher	Christine Dean
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Alan Lemon
Jean Tarry

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 lessons involving eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at important school policies, data on pupils' performance and the school's self evaluation. Inspectors scrutinised 151 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is below average. The school meets the current floor standard for pupils' performance in English and mathematics (minimum expectation for pupils' progress and attainment).

Staffing has been unsettled for the past two years. Two key post holders left to take up promoted posts and four teachers took extended leave. Four newly-qualified teachers were appointed over this time. In 2011 the headteacher was seconded for three months on the Leaders in International Development Programme.

The school has Healthy School status, the Active Mark and a silver ECO School award. There is a children's centre on site providing a breakfast and after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and which is subject to a separate inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has an ethos and atmosphere that make pupils, and children in the Nursery and Reception years, feel valued and supported. Parents and carers have positive views of the school and are pleased with their children’s experience of school.
- Teaching is satisfactory and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics. The attainment of many pupils in writing is above average.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good and the extent to which they feel safe is good. Pupils’ positive attitudes support their learning. They enjoy lessons, are enthusiastic and develop self-confidence.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The staff are a cohesive team following the headteacher’s clear direction and this is beginning to raise expectations. Teaching is being closely monitored and is improving, particularly as a result of intensive professional development and well-focused performance management.
- The school is not yet a good school because pupils’ progress over time has been uneven. Over a number of years attainment has not been high enough, although this is improving rapidly. Until recently tracking of pupils’ progress had not been used sharply enough to check on progress. The targets set for pupils are not challenging enough to result in pupils’ good progress. Leaders have recognised this and, although they are raising expectations, more challenging targets are not yet fully established. Their monitoring and evaluation of the school’s work are comprehensive but not robust enough. As a result, inconsistencies in practice still exist in teachers’ planning, particularly around the clarity of learning objectives for lessons and some Early Years Foundation Stage activities. The quality of teachers’ marking and advice on how to improve pupils’ work also varies widely.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce unevenness in pupils' progress over time and ensure that attainment continues to rise by:
 - ensuring pupils are set challenging targets
 - using the information from tracking each pupil's progress continuously to confirm teaching is enabling good progress.
- Improve teaching further so that it is at least good by:
 - ensuring that teachers always plan lessons with clear and achievable learning objectives that set high expectations of pupils
 - providing challenging activities for more-able pupils in all lessons
 - improving the clarity and detail of the planned learning of children's play activities in the Nursery and Reception years so that every opportunity is taken to develop children's language and knowledge
 - building consistency and greater effectiveness into the ways teachers assess pupils and guide them on how they can improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing a more systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation in order to eliminate inconsistencies in teaching and pupils' progress.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. Currently, pupils' learning and performance in the classroom, while satisfactory, are becoming stronger because of the impact of recent improvements in the quality of teaching. The vast majority of parents and carers are of the view that their children make good progress but, while the rate of progress across the school is beginning to increase, overall, it is satisfactory. This is because, over a longer period of time, teaching has not been consistent in setting the high expectations of progress that enable all pupils to reach their full potential. This is evident from the work in pupils' exercise books and the data on pupils' performance. The rate of progress in Key Stage 2 has been uneven and, while attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, attainment at the end of Year 2 is not as strong and indicates progress should be better overall.

Teachers are getting to grips with what pupils can achieve but they have not always stretched pupils enough for achievement to be good. The targets set for all pupils enable them to make an average amount of progress even though a significant minority are capable of more. However, these targets help pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and attain in line with similar pupils nationally. The recent improvement in teaching has meant the gaps in girls' and boys' performance seen in 2011 have been closed. Boys in particular have improved the standard of their writing, which was low in 2011.

Throughout the school, in lessons observed by inspectors, good attitudes to learning help promote progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress.

They are confident learners, using a good level of interest and curiosity to develop knowledge and skills. Many write their own names, name and read the days of the week and have a good vocabulary, for example saying if objects are under, over or at the side of the table. Opportunities are sometimes missed when children are at play to continue the development of their language and knowledge. In the Reception year children recognise seeds and know they grow into plants and that different seeds make different plants. They improve the vocabulary to describe seeds by quickly learning words such as curved, smooth, shiny and long.

Pupils' interest and curiosity continue to develop in Key Stages 1 and 2. They enjoy learning, showing good self-confidence and enthusiasm in making lively and thoughtful contributions to lessons. In Year 1 pupils link sounds and letters effectively and in accordance with their abilities read appropriate texts with confidence. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Year 2. Reading is enjoyed throughout the school and pupils value how their skills are improving, enabling them to tackle higher level books. In Year 2 pupils set about solving mathematics problems with energy and enthusiasm, enjoying the opportunity to work together on these, with boys delighting in demonstrating their calculation skills. However, the more able pupils who are left to work independently do not sustain concentration and effort and their pace of learning slows by the end of the lesson. Currently, in Years 5 and 6, pupils learn effectively in the lessons seen, for example in mathematics by managing percentage calculations and measuring angles. However, the challenge is modest for some more-able pupils. By the end of Year 6 reading skills have developed satisfactorily and attainment in reading is average. Pupils are taught effectively to write and, together with the good opportunities to write in different subjects, writing is above average by the end of Year 6.

Quality of teaching

Over time teaching has a satisfactory impact on raising pupils' achievement and on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While much of the teaching seen during the inspection was of good quality, some inconsistency takes away from good learning and progress. Moreover, the good teaching seen has not been established for long enough to raise achievement beyond satisfactory. Parents and carers believe their children are well taught but this has not always been the case. As teaching has improved more recently, pupils enjoy lessons and are full of anticipation for something interesting and challenging. They are not disappointed, as teaching is often lively and engaging but only sometimes challenging. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils readily become fully engrossed in their work.

The curriculum offers interesting, enjoyable and relevant activities and contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. In the best lessons lesson planning is often effective because clear learning objectives are set, but this is not a consistent feature of all planning. There is also a mixed picture of planning outdoor activities in the Nursery and Reception years, some of which has good detail on engaging children in developing their language and other skills, while other lesson plans do not. Across the school the good variety of approaches to learning used by teachers increases pupils' engagement. Opportunities are prevalent for pupils getting together to discuss points, develop ideas in groups and solve problems. Small groups of Year 1 pupils were well motivated by discussing what words they could use for the noise made by a bear and diligently made lists to help them in writing about the bear.

Teachers use a variety of ways for assessing and guiding pupils on improving their work, although the impact is not strong in raising achievement or deciding on more challenging work. Practice is not consistent. Target sheets in pupils' books are not always used to record attainment and progress as intended. Marking of work by teachers offers praise and encouragement and points out mistakes and omissions, but any advice offered to pupils is not linked to their targets or what they need to do to reach the next level in their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour and the extent to which they feel safe are good. Pupils' attendance is high. They have good attitudes to learning. All of the parents and carers who completed the questionnaire say there is a good standard of behaviour. The large majority of pupils believe behaviour to be good and even more say it is good in lessons. These views confirm inspectors' observations and the school's behaviour logs. Pupils have good social skills enabling them to relate well to each other. They are helpful and considerate in all of their interactions and show concern for each other's well-being. They manage their own behaviour effectively and deal skilfully with conflicts of interests in the classroom and on the playground. Almost all pupils think the school deals with all types of bullying effectively, including name-calling and harassment through social networking, which mirrors nearly all parents' and carers' views. Behaviour is managed effectively by staff, who have developed good approaches to gaining the attention of the class and maintaining high expectations of behaviour.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher gives the school clear direction and a well-articulated vision, creating an ethos and atmosphere in which every pupil is valued and supported. It also ensures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactorily promoted. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Good morale amongst staff leads to cohesive teamwork in pursuing the school's aims and improvement priorities. Staff offer pupils a broad curriculum which has been planned with their interests, gifts and talents in mind, leading to pupils enjoying their experience of school. The provision for literacy and numeracy ensures pupils are prepared satisfactorily for secondary education.

The pace of improvement has been adversely affected by staff absences and changes but these are now resolved. The school has satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement. Self-evaluation provides the headteacher and other school leaders with sufficient insight into the work of the school to decide the key priorities and drive essential improvements. The governing body stays closely informed about the school's performance and, as an able and committed group, challenges leaders and holds them to account. The new system for tracking progress is helping teachers plan more systematically and holds them to account for pupils' progress. As a result, no groups of pupils are falling behind and they are beginning to be challenged more. As a result, the school is increasingly effective in promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The management of teachers' performance has been strengthened by leaders' improved capacity to measure it against pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. This is supported by a substantial programme of professional development, improving teaching. An indication of its impact is that most lessons observed by inspectors were of a good quality.

While self-evaluation provides an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, it is not systematic and rigorous enough in observing teaching and scrutinising pupils' work to highlight inconsistencies in teachers' expectations and marking. There is insufficient cross-referencing of evaluations of teaching, the quality of pupils' work and the school's data on pupils' performance to highlight the inconsistencies that still remain in teaching and in pupils' performance.

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.
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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greenways Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST9 9NY

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. Many thanks also to the pupils who agreed to read to us and the group of pupils who talked about their work and school. Your school is satisfactory in providing you with an education.

- Your behaviour is good. You are helpful, friendly and treat each other well. Your attendance is at a high level and you come to school prepared to work hard. However, your progress is satisfactory and this could be better if you had targets that were more challenging. You are capable of more.
- Teaching is satisfactory and the headteacher is making sure teaching improves. The headteacher and staff know that your progress and teaching need to be better and they are working hard on improvements.

I have asked the headteacher to:

- improve your progress by making sure you have challenging targets and are on track to achieve these
- make sure your lessons have clear objectives and your work is marked so that you have good advice on achieving your targets
- make sure a close check is kept on your progress and teaching continues to improve so that it always helps you to learn well and make good progress.

You can help by keeping up your good attendance and hard work. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Lemon
Lead Inspector

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