

Greengates Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131061
Local Authority	Knowsley
Inspection number	360197
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Fitzgibbon
Headteacher	Mr Neil Dixon
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by seven different teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and pupils, observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 19 returned inspection questionnaires, and those of staff and pupils were analysed.

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

- Whether all groups of pupils and, especially those in Key Stage 1 and the more-able, make at least satisfactory progress in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning and how well teachers use assessment to enable all groups of pupils to achieve their full potential.
- The quality of curricular provision and the impact it has on pupils' achievement and enjoyment.
- Whether leaders and managers have ensured that issues from the last inspection have been effectively dealt with and the extent to which they have the capacity to improve further.

Information about the school

This school is a smaller than others of its type. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.

Most of the senior leadership team have been seconded to the school in executive roles during the past two years. A substantive headteacher will take up role in January 2011 and work alongside the present executive headteacher for two terms. The school is due to move to a new site and building in September 2011. Pre-school child care is situated within the school building. This provision was subject to a separate inspection and a report about its quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Since the last inspection, staffing turbulence has slowed the pace of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. However, senior leaders, in close partnership with the local authority, have successfully halted the underachievement, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. They have sensitively, and with clear direction, improved the quality of teaching, restored the enthusiasm of staff and pupils and set the school on a clear road to recovery.

As a consequence of the underachievement, attainment in English and mathematics, by the time pupils leave in Year 6, has generally been low since the last inspection. However, rapid and secure improvement is now evident as pupils' work and the school's own data show that progress for all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is at least satisfactory and, in some year groups, good. Furthermore, outcomes and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are now good and strong links have been forged with parents and carers.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory rather than good. This is because assessment data is not consistently used to best effect to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning; activities in lessons do not always challenge individual pupils, and particularly the more-able, to achieve their full potential. The curriculum, although satisfactory overall, is enriched well. Pupils say they especially enjoy the exciting 'wow' moments which start off the topic being studied, as these often involve a trip to a place of interest. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities within the other subjects they study to apply the literacy and numeracy skills learnt. New and revisited initiatives, for instance, involving pupils more fully in decision making, or in health and safety projects, are re-emerging and are satisfactory overall. Through the concerted efforts of all staff, attendance and punctuality rates, though low, are rapidly improving, and the number of persistent absences is falling. However, a significant minority of pupils take holidays during term-time.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and there is a strong determination to bring about improvement. Despite this and the recent improvements to pupils' achievement and attendance, subject leaders are, for the most part, relatively new to role and not fully involved in evaluating pupils' achievement. Consequently, the school's capacity to sustain continuous improvement is satisfactory rather than good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and further accelerate their progress in English and mathematics by ensuring that:

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- assessment information is consistently used to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning
- teachers consistently provide appropriate tasks in lessons which challenge all learners and, especially the more able, to achieve their full potential
- provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills within all subjects of the curriculum
- the leadership roles of subject leaders are fully developed.
- Raise attendance levels by:
 - working with pupils, parents and carers to improve attendance and punctuality
 - reducing the number of persistent absences and holidays taken in term time.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils generally enjoy their learning and display positive attitudes to school. In lessons where learning is active and lively, they are eager to think for themselves and answer challenging, open-ended questions. Most children begin school with skills that are well below those expected for their age, especially in social and communication skills. Pupils' achievement from Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, although progress is good in some year groups. Over three years, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been low overall. Current progress information, supported by inspection evidence, points to current Year 6 pupils making faster progress, to reach standards that are below average, although coming closer to the national average in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their work in small groups with teaching assistant support is improving and has a positive impact on their learning. Action to raise achievement and accelerate progress is meeting with success. For example, following the introduction of new writing initiatives, the quality and quantity of pupils' written work is improving, but the pattern remains uneven as not all activities are well enough tailored to meet or extend pupils' individual needs.

Most pupils say they feel safe in school. They know that adults are there to help and support them. They say the occasional incident of bullying is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils have a satisfactory, though limited, knowledge of how to keep safe, for example, when crossing roads. While pupils' generally good behaviour in classes contributes to the calm, purposeful atmosphere in lessons, a few pupils demonstrate behaviour which is immature when outside direct adult supervision. Pupils participate in a suitable range of activities that contribute to the development of healthy lifestyles. They know what constitutes being healthy and have an adequate understanding of the consequences of the decisions they make. Pupils say they value the responsibilities they have to contribute to the school, such as being members of the school council. However, a significant minority miss out on these opportunities because of their low attendance and poor punctuality or because they take holidays in term time. Consequently, their preparation for the future is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is satisfactory overall. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong actions,

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though they have too few opportunities to develop tolerance for others by meeting pupils from different religions and cultures to their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In all lessons, relationships with pupils are caring and supportive. When the quality of teaching and learning is good, activities are carefully shaped to match pupils' individual abilities and needs well and they make good progress. Pupils become engrossed as their thinking is systematically challenged, using thought provoking, probing questions. In the small minority of lessons which are satisfactory, activities lack challenge, especially for the more able, or teachers spend too long explaining the task. Furthermore, assessment information does not consistently inform lesson planning, nor is it always used to give pupils clear, helpful suggestions for improving their work. The quality of intervention and support is variable, although specialist support for more vulnerable pupils is effectively personalised to meet the often testing needs of individuals.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with an adequate emphasis on basic skills. However, pupils have too few opportunities to apply these skills within the other subjects they study. Recent action has led to more creative approaches by using the local environment to make the curriculum more relevant and enjoyable. The impact of this on raising pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall.

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Care, support and guidance for all pupils are satisfactory. The school works adequately with outside agencies, whilst using the on-site 'quiet place' facility and pastoral work of the learning mentor well to provide effective support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or for those from challenging circumstances. The school has increasingly effective strategies to improve attendance, including giving pupils who are persistently absent individual support on their return to enable them to begin to make up what they have missed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The management of the quality of teaching and learning and the drive for improvement are good, under the current leadership, as reflected in pupils' satisfactory and rapidly improving achievement. Although action to improve outcomes has been effective, improvements to provision are not firmly embedded. Subject leaders' roles in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress are underdeveloped and the school is currently without a substantive headteacher. For these reasons, the school's capacity to improve is judged to be satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. Members of the governing body are supportive and keen to play their part in promoting improvement. For instance, they have ensured that strong appointments have been made to carry the school forward when the executive leadership role ceases. Furthermore, they ensure that all safeguarding requirements are adequately met and that procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils are thorough. Harassment of any form is not tolerated and the ethos established in the school is one of promoting equality for all. This is evident in the increasing availability of curricular enrichment for different groups of pupils. However, not all pupils achieve as well as they can in English and mathematics. Partnerships with others are satisfactory in promoting pupils' well-being. Good links have been established with parents and carers, enabling them to know how they can help their children with learning at home. The quality of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school works hard to develop community links and raise the profile of the school in the local area. However, there is a limited range of opportunities for pupils to learn about people from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds to their own.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of improvements within the quality of provision, children now get off to a good start to their learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have good opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, to learn through an exciting range of activities they have chosen for themselves and those that they are directed to by adults. This develops their physical and creative skills well. The children follow routines well and, as they begin to invent their own games, are rapidly developing into independent learners. Planning is based around children's interests and focuses on enriching their life experiences. For instance, adults provide them with opportunities to learn about famous artists and to transfer learnt skills to their own play as they confidently chat about the Rangoli patterns and the Diwali lamps they make. Good relationships with parents and carers underpin the school's good induction and care procedures. Staff know children well and make sure learning is fun whilst meeting welfare requirements effectively. As a result, children now make good progress from their low starting points and a small minority now finish reception achieving the goals expected. Leadership is good. All adults work together and are beginning to use assessments of children's learning to identify and remedy gaps in provision.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About 12 per cent of parents and carers completed the questionnaires. Of these, the vast majority are highly positive in their responses. They are particularly pleased with how the school keeps their children safe and feel that teaching is good, that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that leadership and management are good. A tiny number feel that the school does not meet their child's particular needs, take account of their views, inform them of how well children are progressing in their learning or prepare children well enough for the future. Inspectors followed these issues up and found that the needs of all pupils are managed adequately. The learning needs of each child are considered and reported to parents and carers termly. However, in a few lessons, tasks are not always planned well enough to allow all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greengates Community Primary School 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	58	7	37	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	42	11	58	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	6	32	10	53	3	16	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	37	11	58	1	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	42	10	53	0	0	1	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	37	12	63	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	42	9	47	1	5	1	5
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)	6	32	11	58	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	42	10	53	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	32	9	47	0	0	2	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	32	11	58	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	37	11	58	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	47	8	42	1	5	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greengates Community Primary School, Knowsley, L26 1XQ

I would like to thank you for the help you gave the team when we inspected your school. We especially enjoyed chatting to some of you at lunchtime. I would like to share with you what the inspection found out about your school.

It is a satisfactory school. These are some of the best things about it.

- Nursery and reception children have lots of fun, enjoy learning and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teachers make good links with your parents and carers to let them know how they can help with your learning at home.
- Senior leaders successfully help your school to run smoothly.
- You make satisfactory progress and your attainment in English and mathematics, though low, is beginning to improve.
- You say you enjoy the exciting 'wow' moments which start off topics being studied in the curriculum.

To make the school better, I have asked the staff and governing body to see that your work in lessons always enables you to achieve as well as you can. Secondly, I have asked them to make sure that teachers always plan activities in lessons which match your needs and that they provide more opportunities for you to apply your literacy and numeracy skills. Finally, I have asked them to work with you and your parents and carers to improve your attendance and punctuality and reduce the number of you who take holidays in term-time.

I hope you will play your part by attending regularly, working hard and doing your best to help Greengates become a better school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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