

Great Wood Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124138
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380813
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2012
Lead inspector	Krishan Sharma

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Buckley
Headteacher	Pauline Robins
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Krishan Sharma

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by three teachers and supported by teaching assistants. Two groups of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were heard reading. Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and a group of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding records, the school's improvement plan, a summary of the school's self-evaluation, a range of pupils' written work and tracking records of pupils' progress in basic skills. Forty-four questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed as were those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Great Wood Community Primary is much smaller than the average primary school. It has small cohorts in each year group, ranging from nine to 15 pupils, who are taught in three mixed-age classes. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased but remains below average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school holds Healthy Schools status, Activemark and FA Charter Standard in recognition of its promotion of physical fitness and sport, and it has been recognised as a Dyslexia Friendly school.

The unvalidated national results for Year 6 pupils published on the final day of the inspection indicate that the school meets the government's current standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and 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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because leaders' monitoring and evaluation procedures are not rigorous enough to ensure that teaching is consistently good and that teaching supports good overall achievement. There are some noticeable weaknesses in teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils start school in Reception with broadly typical skills and knowledge for their age and, by the time they leave in Year 6, their attainment remains broadly average. This represents satisfactory progress and achievement. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve in line with their peers.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. When it is effective, teachers have high expectations, give clear instructions and monitor pupils' progress closely. When teaching is weaker, the level of work given to pupils is insufficiently challenging. The monitoring of pupils' progress during lessons and through their written work lacks precision.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. In lessons, pupils work well with each other and disruption is rare. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour at the school. Regular attendance remains a strong feature in the life of the school. Pupils feel safe at school.
- The school's self-evaluation of its plans and outcomes for pupils accurately informs its key priorities for improvement, including the development of teaching. Even so, monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not always robust or detailed enough to demonstrate an impact on provision. This is because the monitoring skills of all leaders and governors are insufficiently sharp. However, regular use is made of data about pupils' progress to set targets to raise standards for year groups and for the management of teachers' performance.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics, especially in Reception and Key Stage 1 by:
 - improving pupils' oral skills so that pupils are confident in explaining both what and how well they are doing
 - strengthening pupils' calculation skills in solving practical mathematical problems
 - consolidating and extending the phonic skills (linking letters and sounds) of the few pupils who find reading difficult to enable them to read with greater fluency.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that by September 2013 all lessons are at least good by:
 - increasing the level of challenge for groups of pupils of all abilities, especially the more able so that it builds on their prior knowledge and understanding
 - encouraging teachers to give precise feedback, on pupils' performance orally in lessons and through marking of their written work, that clearly indicates the next steps in their learning.
 - closely monitoring pupils' on-going work to ensure that pupils do not repeat mistakes previously corrected.
- Sharpen the school's monitoring and evaluation by:
 - ensuring that all leaders and governors are sufficiently skilled in undertaking their monitoring and evaluation roles
 - focusing explicitly on evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in lessons and in their written work
 - maintaining manageable and clear records of evidence of key monitoring and evaluation activities.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children usually enter Reception with skills and understanding that are in line with those expected for their age. From these starting points, children make steady progress. As a result, standards of attainment are normally broadly average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Unusually, the school's results in the 2011 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were low. This has been rapidly rectified; the unvalidated results of the tests this year, received during the inspection, were considerably higher. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is broadly average. Almost all parents and carers feel that their children make good progress at school. The inspection evidence does not support this view as the majority of pupils made no better than satisfactory progress over time, although it is now getting better during Key Stage 2.

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Disabled pupils and those with special educational need achieve as well as other groups. Planned interventions cater for their specific learning needs and assist pupils in catching up with others. There is no difference in the progress of different ability groups. Occasionally, the more able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because the work consolidates rather than advances what they already know and can do.

In lessons, pupils practise their reading and writing skills for a range of purposes. Their written work shows that they are able to read non-fiction text and locate information relevant to their projects. In a guided reading session, Key Stage 2 pupils independently read different types of texts showing good levels of comprehension. Occasionally, some showed a lack of fluency in their reading and inability to deduce the meaning of some unfamiliar words within the context of the text. Pupils enjoy writing from personal experiences. Written work in mathematics shows examples of pupils using calculation skills in solving problems, but opportunities are insufficiently frequent. In lessons, pupils demonstrated variable oral skills. Many are articulate, but a few demonstrated a lack of confidence in explaining what they were doing and why their work was good.

Quality of teaching

Most parents, carers and pupils think highly of the quality of teaching. The wide range of evidence on teaching collected during the inspection and on its impact on pupils' achievement over time, does not support this view of teaching. Typically, teaching is satisfactory. It is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 and Reception. Phonic skills are systematically taught in Reception and Key Stage 1 and this teaching is now being extended to the rest of the school. Variable teaching means that overall, this is making a positive, although inconsistent, contribution to pupils' achievement in reading across the school. A small number of pupils find it difficult to tackle unfamiliar words and their reading lacks fluency, as a result. Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the purposeful interventions they receive.

In all lessons, teachers expect pupils to work hard and promote their social skills by providing regular opportunities to work with others. When teaching is most effective, teachers' expectations are high and clearly communicated. Planned activities take account of pupils' prior learning and set a suitable challenge. In such a lesson for a class of Year 4 to 6 pupils, the teacher presented a puzzle which required pupils to work out the numerical values of shapes from an incomplete equation. From this simple start, the subsequent puzzles were increasingly more demanding and needed multi-step calculations and reasoning. When necessary, tasks are reshaped to maintain pupils' interest at a high level. Teachers' feedback on pupils' progress, oral as well as written, is precise and conveys clearly what they have achieved and what they have to do next to improve their work. These features, common to effective teaching, are less well represented in lessons where teaching is no more than satisfactory, or, on occasion, inadequate. In such lessons, the level of challenge does

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not always take into account pupils' prior knowledge and understanding and tasks lead to unnecessary consolidation. Consequently, some of the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Teachers monitor pupils' progress but do not always notice that some pupils continue to make mistakes they have already been made aware of.

The teaching of personal, social and health education promotes well pupils' skills in reflecting on their personal experiences and those of others. It enables pupils to draw lessons for their personal development as well as learning to respect different points of view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In lessons, most pupils engage with their work and their behaviour contributes to an orderly learning environment. Across the school, pupils are considerate and care for each other. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns in their responses to the questionnaire about behaviour and bullying. A few pupils voiced some concerns about the behaviour of a small number of pupils away from classrooms. However, they willingly explained that unacceptable behaviour normally refers to disagreements and falling out among pupils. They also confirmed that disruption in lessons is uncommon and bullying in any form, including that which is prejudice-based, is rare and dealt with well when it occurs. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in a range of contexts and agreed with pupils' conclusions. Although most parents and carers, and pupils are very positive about behaviour at school, behaviour and safety are judged satisfactory because some concerns have been raised, both through questionnaires and during discussion with the inspector.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and their parents and carers are in full agreement with them. The school's systems promoting good behaviour are well established. Suitable training in behaviour management has been provided for all adults who deal with pupils. Pupils are aware of risks, including those posed by cyber bullying. They are confident that if they have concerns, they will be listened to.

Leadership and management

All leaders and managers, including the governing body, are working to an agreed set of priorities for future school development. These are suitably focused on improving pupils' learning and raising attainment. The school's broadly accurate self-evaluation informs the key plans for development and underpins its clear capacity for improvement. Staff have tackled substantially the areas of improvement identified at the previous inspection. Leaders contribute to their colleagues' professional development, which is beginning to make a positive impact on performance, particularly in improving accuracy in assessment and clarity in planning.

The tracking of pupils' progress in basic skills is well established. It is effectively used in monitoring pupils' performance and setting targets for individual pupils and year groups. The information provides an agenda for discussion with teachers at meetings

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regarding pupils' progress and also contributes to the setting of performance management targets for teachers. The detailed analysis of the performance of different groups assists the school in ensuring that all pupils are treated equally and that no pupil is discriminated against. Other monitoring activities include lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' written work and interviews with pupils about their learning. The effectiveness of these activities is minimised because the monitoring and evaluation skills of all leaders are not sufficiently robust. Leaders do not always evaluate pupils' learning and progress when they observe teaching and scrutinize pupils' written work. This means findings arising from monitoring do not always capture the full picture of what was seen and examined. The school's current records of monitoring activities are insufficiently clear in showing the impact on outcomes for pupils of action taken to improve teaching.

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and it meets the needs and interests of most groups of pupils. Occasionally, the most able pupils do not benefit from the planned curriculum as much as they should, because they are insufficiently challenged. Assemblies, exposure to different cultures through visits and by visitors to school and enrichment activities, including music, art, drama and sport contribute to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.

11 July 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Great Wood Community Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 4LE

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your school. Special thanks are due to those of you who completed questionnaires or came to talk to me and willingly shared your views about the school. It was good to talk to some of you during lessons and observe you all at work. I judged your school to be satisfactory, which means it is doing many things right but could improve in some others.

Here are some of the positive things I found out about your school.

- Most of you are beginning to make better progress as you move up through the school.
- Standards in English and mathematics are beginning to rise by the time you leave school at the age of 11.
- You concentrate on your work in lessons and get on well with each other.
- You enjoy taking part in sports.

To improve your school further, I have asked those in charge to make sure that:

- you learn to discuss your work clearly, get more opportunities to work with numbers, particularly in working out mathematical problems, and that those of you who find reading a little difficult are given further help in linking letters with the sounds that they make
- your teachers give all of you challenging work, tell you clearly how well you are doing in lessons and in your written work, and how you can improve your work
- all leaders in the school check how well you and the whole school are doing, and that they regularly refine their checking skills and keep a clear record of what they find.

I am sure you can also help by always paying more attention to teachers' comments on your work in lessons and in your books and by not repeating your mistakes!

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma
Lead inspector

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