

Greenfields Primary School

Ellesborough Close, Watford WD19 6QH

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make as much progress as they could because in too many lessons teaching is not good enough.
- Teachers do not consistently make clear what they expect pupils of different levels of ability to achieve.
- More and harder work could reasonably be expected of most pupils, but particularly the more able.
- Pupils do not make fast enough progress in mathematics.
- Pupils are not always given clear enough guidance about how to improve their work.
- In the past, the governing body has not held the leadership team enough to account.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are tackling its shortcomings.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching on which the school can build.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills.
- Standards in writing have risen steadily and are predicted to improve further.
- Pupils' behave well and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is improving.
- The recently appointed Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body bring expertise and experience to their roles.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other shorter visits to lessons. They heard some pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and the local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in making their judgements.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michele Messaoudi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is broadly similar in size to the average primary school.
- The large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language, and no pupil is currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or whose families are in the armed forces) is average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision off site.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body were appointed during the autumn term 2012.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - giving more-able pupils hard enough work
 - making certain that pupils of different abilities know exactly what they are expected to achieve in every lesson
 - making sure that teachers ask questions more effectively to probe and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Raise standards and quicken pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - giving pupils more practical work to do, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1
 - making more use of group work to help pupils solve mathematical problems
 - making sure that teachers refer back to earlier marking and consistently provide pupils with clear written guidance on how to improve their work.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but in mathematics are slightly below those in reading and writing. Too few pupils are working at the higher levels in mathematics in Year 6. This is because they do not have sufficiently well-developed skills in problem solving.
- Pupils do not have enough time to undertake practical activities to develop their understanding of basic mathematical concepts, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. For some this creates gaps in their understanding which the school has found difficult to close later on.
- The school's recent focus on raising standards in writing is proving effective. The emphasis placed on developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills has helped them to use more interesting words and to form sentences correctly. However, teachers do not expect enough of the more able pupils in their writing, for example, through the regular use of adjectives, alliteration, similes and metaphors.
- Pupils enjoy reading as many of them are making good progress. Older pupils can name their favourite author but are not able to explain why they like that author's style of writing or why they prefer one author to another. The school's approach of pairing older with younger pupils for a fifteen-minute reading session each week has helped them to gain self-confidence and to develop their reading skills. Younger pupils have a good understanding of the sounds that letters make when tackling new words.
- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age. Most attend the school's part-time nursery where they get on well together and enjoy school. Children's progress requires improvement because most do not make rapid progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. By the end of the Reception class standards are average.
- Recent assessment information shows that pupils' progress in most classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 is beginning to quicken. However, their progress over time is not yet fast enough for them to reach above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is accelerating. The headteacher and assistant headteacher check how well they are doing every half term and make sure that additional support is provided if necessary. As a result, the gap in performance between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils nationally is closing. Performance information shows that pupils known to be entitled to free school meals reached slightly higher standards than other pupils last year.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is slightly better than their peers. This is because their needs are identified early and they are given the right level of support.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils do not make good enough progress over time. In most lessons, teachers do not make it clear what they expect pupils of different abilities to learn.

As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, do not do as well as they could.

- The majority of teachers do not ask sufficiently probing questions to check pupils' understanding or to extend their learning.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved but pupils are not consistently being told what they need to do to reach their targets in mathematics. There are very few examples of the teachers revisiting earlier marking to satisfy themselves that pupils have responded to the advice. Marking in English books provides pupils with good guidance to improve their work.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching on which the school can build. Where teaching is good, the content of lessons captures the interests of pupils and the work is set at the right level for their needs. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the challenges and take an active part in their learning. Lessons are conducted at a quick pace.
- All teachers have a good relationship with their pupils and use a number of ways to encourage good behaviour. They are helping pupils to develop their reading skills through the systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make and encouraging them to read in school and at home.
- Support staff help to make sure that all pupils are included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are fully aware of the potential dangers when using the internet and of the importance of not letting strangers into the building.
 - Most pupils are courteous and polite to visitors and show respect and tolerance for each other. They behave well in most lessons and around the school. In the occasional lesson, pupils' behaviour and attitude to work are exemplary.
 - Pupils' improving behaviour is reflected in their growing eagerness to learn and their willingness to take on responsibilities around the school. For example, as members of the school council, house captains, play leaders and the older pupils helping younger ones to develop their reading skills.
 - Pupils know about different types of bullying, including physical abuse, name-calling and cyber-bullying. They say that should an incident occur it will be dealt with quickly and fairly by the staff.
 - Pupils say behaviour has improved over the last 18 months. This is reflected in the drop in the number of recorded incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Records show that any incident of a possible racist nature is investigated in depth and dealt with well. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
 - Pupils' attendance continues to improve and is broadly average. The school is working closely with external agencies to improve the attendance of the few persistent absentees.
 - Pupils enjoy going to the breakfast and after-school (stay and play) clubs where they play with
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others and enjoy healthy snacks. The clubs help the pupils develop their social skills and foster a positive attitude to school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because there are weaknesses in the governance of the school.
 - The senior leadership team has moved the school forward since the last inspection. Effective action has been taken to tackle the areas identified in the last inspection report, for example in raising standards in writing and in developing the role of subject leaders. There is a clear plan for its continued development. This is based on a secure evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development.
 - Teachers have attended courses, whole-staff training and have worked with the local authority to improve what they offer in English and mathematics and to develop the role of subject leaders. Staff are working together well to agree how pupils are doing. In some classes there is more group work in mathematics to help pupils solve problems, but this is not consistent throughout the school.
 - The half-termly checks on pupils' attainment and progress are recorded and analysed systematically by the headteacher and assistant headteacher. The headteacher observes lessons and discusses each pupil's progress with their class teachers. Teachers are asked to explain if any pupil is underachieving. The headteacher uses this performance information to advise the governing body whether individual teachers should be paid more.
 - Displays throughout the school show that pupils study a wide range of subjects and topics. In all classes, there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Opportunities for pupils to work together promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
 - Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils are made welcome and staff make sure that they are included in the different activities. Any suspected incident of discrimination is investigated carefully and if, necessary, action is taken.
 - The local authority has provided good support to the school over the last few years and helped recruit an experienced Chair of the Governing Body. Effective advice has been given on raising attainment in writing and in supporting the development of subject co-ordinators.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing body bring considerable experience and expertise and have a clear vision for its development. They are already beginning to get to know the school well and hold the leadership team to account. Governors have not undertaken enough training and do not have a sufficiently deep understanding of how well the school is doing. Scrutiny of the governing body minutes suggest that, in the past, governors have not asked difficult questions of the leadership team. Nevertheless, the governing body makes sure the school meets requirements for safeguarding pupils and that all policies are updated in line with changes in statutory requirements. Following the recent review of the School's Appraisal Policy, governors have a reasonable understanding of how targets are set for teachers to improve their teaching and the process for rewarding good teaching. The school's finances are monitored appropriately. The governing body makes sure that pupil premium funding is being
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spent appropriately on additional support staff for one-to-one and small-group tuition and in supporting a number of initiatives, for example, the breakfast and after-school clubs. Systems for reporting to the governing body what difference this spending makes are not firmly established.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	117193
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405692

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	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Cooper
Headteacher	Helen Cook
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2011
Telephone number	020 8428 1166
Fax number	020 8421 6485
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