

Glebe Infant and Nursery School with Enhanced Provision for the Hearing Impaired

Creswick Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 9HG

Inspection dates

31 January –1 February 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

- Teaching across the school is inconsistent and not enough of it is good.
- Lesson introductions are too long and do not cater for pupils' differing abilities, especially the more able.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing because they are not given enough time to write at length.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not always given the guidance they need to correct any misconceptions.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics. There are too few practical, 'hands on' mathematical activities to help them understand basic concepts such as addition and subtraction.
- Senior and middle leaders are either new to the school or new to their role. Consequently, they are not yet having sufficient impact on helping the headteacher bring about further improvements at a good rate.

The school has the following strengths

- In a short time, the headteacher has brought about good improvements. These have halted the decline in pupils' attainment and progress. Progress in reading is now good.
- The headteacher and governing body have high aspirations for pupils' success. They know exactly what needs to be improved and demonstrate a resolute determination to see these improvements through.
- Pupils with hearing impairment make good progress and have excellent self-esteem. The specialist teaching and support for these pupils is consistently good.
- Relationships within the school are good. It is a happy and friendly community. All pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- All parents and carers who voiced their views would recommend this school to others.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons and groups of pupils or individuals working with learning support assistants or teachers. They looked in on pupils during lunchtime and mid-morning break times.
- Inspectors, accompanied by a British Sign Language interpreter, observed hearing-impaired pupils working either individually or in very small groups in the specialist provision and also in their year group classes.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work in all year groups and heard some pupils from Years 1 and 2 reading.
- They held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, groups of pupils from Year 2 and from the enhanced provision for the hearing impaired. They spoke informally with many pupils during lessons and at break times.
- Inspectors looked carefully at safeguarding documentation, information about pupils' progress, self-evaluation documents and development plans.
- The views of 48 parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into consideration, as were the views of parents and carers who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below-average-sized primary school with eight classes, including a part-time Nursery class.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This consists of specialist provision for 12 hearing-impaired pupils aged 3-7. The main school serves the local community. The specialist provision serves a much wider area, including Southend.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- No pupils are currently educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This extra funding is for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The headteacher has been in post for two terms. The deputy headteacher is on maternity leave. A school improvement leader has recently been appointed to cover this leave.
- The school shares a site with Glebe Junior school, which also has specialist provision for hearing-impaired pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to a consistently good level by making sure that:
 - teachers check how well pupils are getting on in lessons with their work and adjust their teaching in the light of their progress
 - teachers do not keep pupils sitting on the carpet for too long in lesson introductions
 - teachers make sure that more-able pupils always have work to make them think hard and make good progress
 - teaching assistants are given training on how to teach the sounds that letters make and how to help pupils with special educational needs to improve their understanding
 - the best teaching methods for pupils with hearing impairment are shared with all staff.
- Increase pupils' progress and raise standards in writing and mathematics by:
 - giving pupils more time to write and relevant and exciting ideas to write about, sometimes linked to their topic work
 - training teachers and teaching assistants in how to use practical activities more effectively to underpin basic mathematical concepts
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - equipping all senior and middle leaders with the skills they need to check rigorously on the quality of teaching and learning
 - making sure the headteacher and governing body hold senior and middle leaders to account for the rate of improvements in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Results of national teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicate broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, given their starting points, not enough pupils are attaining better than the expected levels. School performance information indicates underachievement among pupils in the past.
- Progress in writing requires further improvement. The main reason that progress is not good is that pupils are not given enough time to write at length. Pupils' progress in mathematics also requires further improvement. Their depth of understanding of basic concepts such as addition and subtraction is insecure. Therefore, they have difficulties when it comes to solving mathematical problems. Teachers are not giving pupils enough chance to use mathematical apparatus or software programs to build on their basic skills.
- The headteacher's insistence that the sounds that letters make (phonics) are taught systematically through the school is having a good impact on pupils' ability to spell. They have imaginative ideas and are very keen to write, especially if it is about their topic.
- Almost all children enter the school with skills which are broadly as expected for their age. In some years there are higher proportions of more-able children. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children make steady progress, with recent good progress evident in developing their communication, language and literacy skills.
- Pupils who attend the enhanced provision for the hearing impaired make good progress from their starting points. They make rapid progress in developing skills such as signing and speaking. They demonstrate great confidence in using these skills to help them learn and communicate.
- When in their classes, rather than their special classroom, they also make good progress. The specialist teacher assistants provide just the right support to make sure pupils can do their work on their own. Consequently, these pupils have excellent self-esteem and confidence to 'have a go' at work that can appear quite difficult.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. Their progress is carefully checked by the special educational needs coordinator and changes made to their special work plans if needed. However, their progress falters when teaching assistants do not pick up their misconceptions.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to their classmates. Within the school, the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others is closing at a steady rate and is narrower than that found nationally.
- The headteacher has insisted that teachers assess their pupils' capabilities carefully. As a result, lessons are becoming better planned to build on what pupils already know and need to learn next. Pupils' progress in reading has improved well as a result. It is now good and standards are higher this year.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In too many lessons, teachers expect their pupils to sit for as long as 30 minutes listening to lesson introductions. These introductions are too general to meet the learning needs of a whole class. As a result, for too many pupils, time is wasted. Later in lessons, on occasions, too much time is spent with the whole group doing the same work and not enough time spent working at the level of which they are capable.
- Teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. In some sessions, when these pupils are taught by teaching assistants, they do not always make enough progress. For example, teaching assistants do not always notice pupils' misunderstandings and correct them.
- The headteacher insists on a common method of planning and has helped teachers to improve their knowledge of how to judge how well pupils are learning. However, work planned is not always precisely matched to what pupils need to learn next and teachers do not always notice and make changes in the lesson. Consequently, more-able pupils are not always challenged to think hard and pupils who find learning difficult sometimes struggle.
- Throughout the school, relationships are good and teachers expect the best from pupils' behaviour. Teaching is always good for pupils with hearing impairment. Teachers and teaching assistants are constantly checking on these pupils' understanding so they can quickly provide the next step in learning or, if needed, go back to revise previous learning.
- As a result of good training from the local authority, teachers have developed a secure understanding of how to teach phonics. Where this is taught at a brisk pace and challenging level, pupils make rapid progress, as noted in an outstanding session for more-able Reception children.
- The deputy headteacher's introduction of a scheme for encouraging pupils to talk about and plan what they want to write is having a positive impact. Pupils are very clear about what they want to write and are now making good use of their knowledge of phonics to spell. However, they do not have enough time to write at length and develop their skills further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- All pupils, including those with hearing impairment, are pleased to be part of their school community. All staff, parents and carers have very positive views about behaviour in school.
 - Pupils respond very well to the high expectations set for them to be kind, courteous and respectful. They are keen to work hard in lessons and take care with their work, responding thoughtfully to their teachers' marking or comments about how to improve.
 - A particular feature is the care and concern pupils show for their hearing-impaired friends. Hearing-impaired pupils know that they are respected and take pride in talking about the various aids to help them hear.
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- All parents and carers agree that their child enjoys school and feels safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. For their age, they have a good understanding of what constitutes various forms of bullying. They are confident that there is no bullying in their school and that if they have concerns, any member of staff will help them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy taking on responsibilities throughout the school and do so very conscientiously. They offer thoughtful responses when given the opportunity to reflect on spiritual or moral issues in lessons.
- Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The reason that leadership and management are not good is that senior and middle leaders are very new to their roles. Consequently they have had little time to have an impact on improvement.
 - The headteacher provides good leadership with a strong commitment to making sure that all groups of pupils have an equal chance to do well and there is no discrimination. She is managing the improvements in teaching very well because she has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve pupils' progress. There are clear plans and time scales to bring this about. Indeed, much has already been accomplished in her first two terms.
 - Teachers have had some good training to help them make more precise assessment of how well pupils are learning. In turn, this has led to better lesson planning. The local authority has provided good support, particularly in helping teachers improve their knowledge of how to teach phonics. Pupils' progress in reading is now good.
 - Leadership and management of the enhanced provision for hearing impaired pupils is well-established and good. Key strengths are the highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants, very strong links with parents and carers, pre-schools and the junior school. These strengths make sure pupils are familiar with the school and staff before they start. Parents and carers are kept well informed on a daily basis about how well their children are doing.
 - The way subjects are planned and taught meets the needs of pupils reasonably well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their topic work. Teachers do not make enough links with topic work to offer more interesting ideas for writing. The good range of trips and visitors widens pupils' horizons and makes their learning exciting and relevant.
 - At the request of the headteacher, the local authority has provided good support for the school. The local authority has validated the accuracy of the school's view of itself and provided good training for governors and staff.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are diligent in making sure they perform their legal duties, including the safe recruiting and vetting of staff. They know the school well and make good use of their individual professional expertise in supporting and challenging the school. This expertise has been particularly beneficial in supporting the headteacher in managing considerable changes
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in a measured way. Governors visit frequently and have a good understanding of what performance information tells them about pupils' progress compared with schools nationally and are well aware that further improvements are needed. They are very well aware of the quality of teaching and the strategies used for helping teachers make further improvement, such as linking pay closely to pupils' achievement. They also track spending decisions carefully, including the use and impact of pupil premium funding.

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	114889
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	405547

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Hammond
Headteacher	Samantha Warner
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2011
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