

Great Creaton Primary School

Welford Road, Creaton, Northampton, NN6 8NH

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 achieve as well in mathematics as they do in reading and writing. In particular, too few more-able pupils reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Over time, some pupils have not made the progress they should have done, mainly due to inconsistent teaching and leadership.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve vary from class to class.
- Teaching is not consistently good because work is not always set at the right level, especially to challenge more-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always make clear to teaching assistants how they can help pupils make rapid progress in their learning.
- Marking is uneven in showing pupils how they can improve their work. Teachers do not give pupils enough time to respond to their written comments.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects.
- Not enough time is spent learning history or geography in Years 5 and 6.
- Subject leaders do not have a strong enough role in supporting the executive headteacher in checking the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and the federated governing body have had a significant impact on raising achievement over the past year.
- Reception children make good progress.
- Pupils achieve well in reading across the school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, behave well, and say they feel safe in school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons or parts of lessons, most of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and, together with the headteacher, looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- The inspector met with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior teacher, members of staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, and also spoke with parents and carers.
- The inspector considered 14 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- No pupils in the school are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, and so the school does not receive any of this additional funding.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is low. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also low.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The executive headteacher joined the school in September 2012. She divides her time between Great Creaton and Clipston Endowed VC Primary School, where she is also headteacher. The two schools have formed a hard federation under a single governing body.
- There have been several changes of teaching and support staff over the past year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that teachers have the same high expectations of all pupils
 - giving clearer direction to teaching assistants so that they have a greater impact on pupils' learning
 - giving specific written feedback to pupils and time to act upon it so that they can improve their work
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects.
- Raise achievement in mathematics so that more pupils attain the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by:
 - making sure that more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged throughout each lesson
 - making the best use of resources to support pupils' learning in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of subject leaders to support the executive headteacher in checking the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress
 - making sure that enough curriculum time is devoted to studying history and geography in Years 5 and 6.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- In the period running up to the federation, the school faced some uncertainty in staffing and leadership, which affected pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics. This meant some pupils developed gaps in their knowledge and understanding and did not make the expected progress.
- Very small cohorts of pupils mean there are differences in attainment from year to year. Pupils join the school with skills and abilities that vary, but often are a little above what is expected. Children in Reception benefit from the nurturing environment and working together with older pupils in their mixed-age class. They make good progress over the Reception year and are prepared well for entering Year 1.
- Children do particularly well in reading and quickly gain knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- Pupils continue to do well in reading and writing in Key Stage 1, but their progress is not so strong in mathematics. This is because some more-able pupils are not challenged enough to reach the higher levels of attainment. In 2013, pupils in Year 2 reached above-average standards in reading and writing, but average standards in mathematics.
- Over time, pupils' performance in Key Stage 2 has been mixed. Since the executive headteacher joined the school, progress has picked up considerably. She has introduced weekly assessments for mathematics to highlight any gaps in pupils' understanding so that they can be tackled straight away. As a result, most pupils in Key Stage 2 made good progress last year and standards are rising to above average.
- It was too soon for the impact of these changes to be seen in the 2013 Year 6 test results for mathematics. This year group had experienced uncertainty in previous years, with pupils joining and leaving right up to their final year, which affected the results. While pupils did well in reading and writing, standards in mathematics dropped to below average.
- Pupils build well on their reading skills throughout the school. Daily reading sessions are well organised and careful records are kept of pupils' progress. Pupils develop a love of reading and talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors. In 2013, almost four fifths of pupils reached the required standard in the Year 1 reading check, which was a considerable improvement on the previous year, even though pupils' performance then was above average.
- In writing, pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 because they have plenty of opportunities to write at length. In Key Stage 2, while pupils make expected progress they do not have enough chance to practise their skills across different subjects.
- The executive headteacher has introduced a new writing policy, and this has had a very positive impact on the presentation of pupils' work.
- In recent years, there have been no pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium or with special educational needs in Year 6. There are a small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in other year groups, and data show that they make expected progress. The quality of the support they receive varies. While there is evidence of good tailored assistance for their needs, at times teachers do not make sufficiently clear to teaching assistants

how they can enable pupils to make good progress, and the pace of learning slows.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is not good because there is too much variation across classes. Expectations are not sufficiently high throughout the school, and this results in some pupils not making enough progress.
- While teachers plan for different levels of ability, the planning is not always precise enough to ensure that more-able pupils are challenged in all parts of lessons. Sometimes, they have to sit through explanations of learning they already know before they can begin their own more challenging activities. On other occasions, they do not have demanding enough work to do.
- Relationships are positive in every class, and pupils are keen to learn. The staff know pupils well and take account of their interests when planning work for them to do. They make classrooms attractive and interesting places. For example, in the Reception and Key Stage 1 class a role-play area of the bakery in Pudding Lane enabled pupils to go back in time and explore what life was like just before the Great Fire of London. While the teaching brings history to life in this class, over time older pupils do not learn enough history or geography.
- All work is marked, but pupils are not always told how they can improve. Some comments are too general and do not give specific advice. Where teachers have given clear feedback to pupils, they sometimes do not give them the time to respond to their advice, which limits their learning.
- The teaching of reading is good. Phonics is taught well in Reception and children quickly learn how to tackle unfamiliar words. Pupils have many opportunities to experience good-quality writing and read widely. Most pupils also enjoy reading at home.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They are courteous to one another and respectful to adults. The older pupils support the younger ones.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue and that they have confidence in adults to resolve any problems they may have. They know about different types of bullying such as name-calling and cyber-bullying.
- Teachers manage behaviour well. The executive headteacher has made sure that there is a consistent approach, and that pupils are fully aware of rewards and sanctions. Occasionally, some pupils may lose interest in lessons, especially when they are not challenged enough.
- Parents say that their children are safe at school. They particularly appreciate improvements the executive headteacher has made to the perimeter fencing. They agree that pupils behave well and that the school has a happy family atmosphere.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe at school and when out and about on the roads or near water. They learn about keeping safe on the internet.
- Pupils have close links with an orphanage in India and sell biscuits each week to raise funds to support it. They also keep in contact with a school in Germany and have pen-pals in Brazil. They take their responsibilities seriously, for example on the school council or as playground buddies.

- Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Under the leadership of the executive headteacher, the culture of the school has become focused on pupils' learning, purposeful and reflective. However, leadership and management still require improvement because other staff who have leadership roles do not have enough opportunity to support the executive headteacher in checking the work of the school and have not yet been influential in leading improvements.
- The executive headteacher has won the respect of parents, pupils, staff and governors alike, who value the clear leadership she brings and can see the benefit of the changes she has introduced.
- The executive headteacher has tackled a wide range of difficulties since joining the school, several of a very complex nature, and has introduced rigorous systems to measure pupils' progress and check the quality of teaching. This has resulted in a much clearer picture of how well pupils are doing and where teaching can be improved.
- The executive headteacher has made clear to teachers what good teaching looks like and has supported them very effectively in moving towards it. Staff are held fully to account and, as a result, progress is accelerating, standards are rising and teaching is improving. Together with governors and the local authority, the executive headteacher keeps a very close eye on how the school is improving.
- Special events to enrich the curriculum are well planned and often involve the local community, such as a 'Victory Day' to celebrate the ending of the Second World War. However, pupils do not produce enough work in history and geography in Years 5 and 6, or have the time to study topics in sufficient depth. There is a good range of clubs, and pupils enjoy visits to places of interest, which contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Close links with the other school in the federation give pupils opportunities to join together, for example, in celebrating Chinese New Year. The partnership has also enabled staff to benefit from joint training and coaching.
- The school is spending its sports funding on additional coaching and increasing teachers' subject knowledge. It has plans to measure the impact of these activities. Leaders make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in all school events, and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- There are close links with parents, who value the work of the school, and comment on improvements in homework arrangements under the executive headteacher.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school over a long period, especially in checking the rate of improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of skills and expertise to benefit the school. Under the focused leadership of the Chair, a cycle of activities helps governors understand data about the school's performance and about the quality of teaching. Governors are kept fully abreast of how targets are set for teachers to improve their practice and what the school is doing to

reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance. They ask searching questions of the executive headteacher and keep a close eye on how the finances are spent. They make sure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	121820
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	429583

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	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gail Courtney
Headteacher	Emma Mercer (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2009
Telephone number	01604 505535
Fax number	01604 505439
Email address	bursar@creaton.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

