

Giffard Park Primary School

Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK14 5PY

Inspection dates 15–16 October 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:

- The gap in attainment for those pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is not closing fast enough.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' learning. More-able pupils are not always given tasks that make them think or work hard enough.
- Pupils do not make enough progress, particularly in writing, because the work is not always matched closely enough to their needs.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs is not fast enough.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Information about pupils' attainment and progress has not been used to swiftly tackle areas of underachievement.
- Governors do not provide enough challenge and strategic direction to the school leadership.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils enjoy their lessons in the school. They are good at talking to each other about their work, and helping each other learn.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes.
- The vast majority of staff and parents and carers are very supportive of the school and its leaders.
- The new headteacher is committed to accelerating the rate of school improvement and building on the more recent successes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and heard some of them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, a representative from the local authority, and other members of staff with specific responsibilities.
- There were 62 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and inspectors talked to some parents and carers at the beginning of the school day. The lead inspector also considered one letter received from a parent or carer. Inspectors also took account of 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the performance management of teachers.

Inspection team

John Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Buist

Additional Inspector

Christopher Crouch

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- A lower than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage with the others coming from a range of minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is lower than in most schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- About one in three pupils join the school after the normal admission times or leave before the end of Year 6.
- There is a resource base for 12 disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This is for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. These pupils come to the base from across Milton Keynes. It is in a process of phased closure.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The pre-school and after-school club that meet at the school are run by external providers and were not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have equally high expectations for what pupils of different abilities can achieve
 - making more effective use of teaching assistants, by being more specific about the support they are going to provide in lessons
 - using tracking data more effectively to identify and address the inconsistent progress of different groups of pupils, particularly those who may be disabled or have special educational needs and those supported by pupil premium funding.
- Improve attainment and ensure all pupils make good progress by:
 - ensuring the impact of the targeted support is closely monitored and adapted so that it has a greater effect on pupils' progress
 - accurately monitoring the impact of the recently introduced initiative in writing to ensure it is improving standards.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - accurately analysing and using assessment data so that underperformance of any pupils can be swiftly tackled.
 - 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

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage at levels just below age-related expectations. They make better than expected progress due to good teaching. They leave with levels broadly in line with those expected for their age.
- At the end of 2012, pupils left Key Stage 1 with standards broadly in line with national averages in reading and mathematics but well below in writing. The 2013 results show an improvement in reading and mathematics but a decline in writing.
- In the phonics screening check, at the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was in line with the national average. This is an improvement over the previous year due to the good phonics teaching, especially in Year 1.
- In 2012, most groups of pupils left Year 6 with attainment well below the national average. This included those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language and those who joined within the school year. The school's data suggest that in 2013 attainment was greatly improved in reading and mathematics, due to more consistent methods of teaching and assessing pupils' work.
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- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that too few pupils make good progress.
- Older pupils enjoy reading and are appreciative of the variety of activities they do in the reading lessons they have every day. These have accelerated the progress pupils make in reading.
- The proportion of pupils who make expected and above expected progress in Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with the national average, but is inconsistent through the year groups.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is weak, with the notable proportion not making expected progress. The provision for those pupils with moderate learning difficulties enables them to make expected progress.
- In the 2012 national tests, the attainment of the pupils in Year 6 who received support funded by the pupil premium was 12 months behind other pupils in English and mathematics. In 2013, the pupils receiving this funding made slightly less progress than their peers; consequently the gap is not reducing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement in the lessons is not always as good as it could be because teachers' expectations, especially for the higher attaining pupils, are not sufficiently high. The progress of different groups of pupils is not consistent, because the work set is not matched closely enough to the needs of the individual pupils. The work does not always challenge the more able pupils in the class and limits their progress.
- Pupils are eager to learn and engage well in the wide variety of tasks teachers give them. During many lessons, pupils have opportunities to talk together to share their thoughts and ideas to help extend their thinking and learning. They listen to each other well and value other's opinions and views. They respond eagerly to questions.
- The use of teaching assistants is varied. In the better lessons the assistants follow the teachers plan and effectively lead the learning of a group of pupils during part of the lesson. Where less well directed, their effectiveness on the pupils' learning is limited.
- In the best lessons teachers use questioning well to maintain the pupils' engagement and guide their learning. However, teachers do not use questions sufficiently well to assess the pupils' understanding and modify the lessons, to ensure more pupils gain a good understanding of the subject.
- The school has identified areas of weaker teaching and has taken steps to improve these, which are starting to prove effective. The school continues to accurately monitor the quality of teaching.

- Marking is regular and consistent across the school. There is little evidence of teachers clearly telling the pupils how to improve their work. Older pupils are developing skills in assessing each other's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They are polite, kind and enthusiastic learners. There is a calm, respectful atmosphere in school and pupils care for each other.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They are polite and courteous, and willing to help each other. They have good relationships with their teachers and other adults.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate well and listen to staff and each other. They are swift to respond to instructions.
- A clear policy of rewards and sanctions is consistently used by staff and well understood and valued by pupils. Pupils are clear about how good behaviour and work are rewarded, and the sanctions that are used if they misbehave.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of e-safety. Most have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and say the teachers have dealt with any rare cases effectively.
- Staff, parents and carers have a very positive view of behaviour, and only a few concerns were expressed. School records show a reducing, low number of incidents and the actions taken were appropriate.
- Attendance remains in line with the national average and the number of pupils who are persistently absent remains consistently low.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are committed to accelerating the rate of school improvement and building on their more recent successes. However, leaders' work to improve writing has yet to have an impact on achievement. This includes the management of the enhanced resource facility. Rates of progress in reading and mathematics in particular have improved, demonstrating that the school has the capacity to improve further. The vast majority of staff are highly positive about the leadership and management of the school.
- School assessment data are not consistent enough to provide a basis for accurate self-assessment, and so some underachievement has been slow to be tackled. Although this matter is being addressed by the new headteacher and robust systems are being introduced it is too soon for there to have been any impact.
- There is a sound system for managing teachers' performance. Targets for teachers have been linked to improving their teaching and the pupils' learning. Appropriate training is used so teachers develop their teaching skills. There is evidence that underperformance has been tackled and this has resulted in an improvement in the quality of teaching. Leaders are aware of the need to link teachers' performance to their salaries.
- Good systems are in place to support newly qualified teachers. These ensure they quickly become familiar with the school's policies and know how to improve their teaching so they quickly become effective teachers.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced giving opportunities for academic, sporting and technical development. The wider curriculum provides opportunities for many aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be strongly promoted. The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in modern Britain.
- The local authority has provided accurate monitoring and support to the school and correctly identified some of the key issues of concern.
- The school has plans to spend the extra funding for sports and physical education, focusing on

benefits for pupils in the long term. Money is to be spent on coaches working alongside teachers, to enhance staff skills.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know some of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They care about the pupils. In some areas they are beginning to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress and have a system for performance management of the headteacher. Governors have an overview of the quality of teaching across the school and there is some awareness of how teachers' performance must be linked to salary progression. They know how pupil premium money is spent but are not sufficiently aware of its impact on eligible pupils. They do not provide the school leaders with sufficient challenge and strategic direction. As a result, issues of underachievement have not been tackled quickly enough. They have ensured safeguarding standards are met and they closely monitor the school's finances.

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	110381
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	426429

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	377
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Peel
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Samwell-Smith
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 September 2011
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