

# Great Wood Community Primary School

Vicarage Road, Upper Tean, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 4LE

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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 and achievement have improved recently after a period of significant staff disruption, but there is still not enough good teaching to ensure pupils achieve well as they move through the school.
- The pace of learning in some lessons slows considerably, often after a brisk start.
- Standards in English and mathematics are broadly average, but not enough more-able pupils reach the higher levels they are capable of in reading and writing.
- Children in the Reception class do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills in the outdoor learning environment.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their literacy skills in subjects like science, geography or history.
- The role of subject leaders in checking the quality and impact of teaching on pupils' achievement is not yet fully developed.

### The school has the following strengths

- There has been a strong focus on improving teaching, especially of writing, since the last inspection.
- The system of assessing and tracking pupils' progress has been made more rigorous and is used well to plan lessons and to identify pupils who need additional support.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils work well together and treat each other with kindness and courtesy. They say they feel safe in school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for well.
- Systems designed to safeguard pupils are rigorous and secure.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, of which four were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with members of the governing body, staff, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View). A number of parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection and their comments were taken into account.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most other primary schools. It has one Reception class and three mixed-age classes for older pupils.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, government funding which in this school is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average. The small size of the school means that this applies to very few pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently good or better to improve achievement, particularly for more-able pupils in reading and writing, by ensuring that:
  - all lessons proceed at a good pace with challenging activities
  - teachers give clear guidance in each lesson about what pupils should be aiming to achieve in the time available
  - pupils have good, regular opportunities to practise their literacy skills in different subjects
  - sharper planning for the use of the outdoor space in the Reception class, and better resources, help children to develop their independent learning skills from an early age.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders so they have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils are making some progress but it is not fast enough to bring about rapid improvement in standards. Although improvements have been made in reading, writing and mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in these subjects remains below average.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make steady progress in all areas of learning, but could be doing better. Opportunities for 'free choice' activities in the secure outdoor area are currently restricted and this limits the development of their independent learning skills.
- In recent years the school's results in the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests have fluctuated widely because of the small number of pupils in each year group, but overall they have been broadly average.
- The school's data and the work seen in the lesson observations show clearly that attainment and progress are beginning to improve. However, these recent improvements have yet to work their way through to standards at the end of Key Stage 2. School expectations for pupils in the current Year 6, confirmed by observations of pupils' work, are that they are on target to achieve above-average results in 2014.
- Pupils make steady and sometimes good progress in reading, helped by regular work on phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and guided reading activities.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the good support provided by class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies. Their classroom support plans are child-friendly and appropriate. This good support helps these pupils to learn successfully.
- Those supported through the pupil premium generally make similar progress to their classmates. The small numbers in each year group mean that it is not possible to give meaningful comments about gaps in performance.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Recent improvements to teaching have yet to have a full impact, and the better teaching has not been in place for long enough to ensure that pupils make faster progress. The teaching of literacy has improved, but too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading or writing. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and practise the skills they learn in literacy sessions across other subjects.
- A number of initiatives have been introduced to improve the quality of teaching in reading, including daily ERIC (Every Child Reads In Class) activities across the school and daily 'Read, Write Inc.' activities in Key Stage 1 to improve pupils' phonic and reading skills. There are indications that these are effective, but they have not yet raised standards.
- In some lessons, often after a brisk start which motivates pupils well, the pace of learning slows considerably and pupils are often left to proceed at their own pace. Without reminders from teachers of what they are expected to achieve, or how long they have to complete their work,

pupils' confidence and enthusiasm begin to wane and their progress slows.

- Staff have received good training and support and there has been a whole-school focus on improving pupils' progress in writing. As a result, the teaching of writing has been improved and is now good.
- In one outstandingly well taught Year 5/6 literacy lesson, pupils were reading Greek myths and predicting what would happen next. The teacher set and maintained a brisk pace throughout the lesson, changed activities frequently to maintain pupils' interest, made good links to previous learning and other subject areas, and ensured that pupils had a good understanding of what they needed to do to improve. As a result, behaviour and response were excellent throughout and pupils of all abilities were challenged to make outstanding progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs take a full part in lessons, enjoy their learning and make good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants provide personalised support in class for these pupils.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly and thoroughly. In the best cases, the marking system gives them good guidance on how well they have achieved and what they can do to make their work better. Older pupils are beginning to respond to their teachers' comments on their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Behaviour is typically good, both in lessons and around the school. At times it is outstanding, as observed in a whole-school assembly.
- The school has an effective system of sanctions and rewards, well understood and supported by the pupils. This system ensures that any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and say that there is no bullying in the school.
- Pupils say that learning is enjoyable and are enthusiastic about their education. They talk about how their teachers make lessons 'fun' and greatly appreciate the wide range of after-school activities and educational visits provided. They have positive attitudes to learning and increasingly good skills for improving their own work. Occasionally, pupils' attention wanders when the pace of learning slows in some lessons.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, although their attendance remains broadly average. Pupils in Year 6 said that they will be sorry to leave the school in the summer.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The school has been through a significant period of staff disruption since the last inspection. There has been an almost complete change in teaching staff, with newly appointed teachers in three of the four classes. The initiatives leaders have used to tackle this have not yet overcome the legacy of weaker and inconsistent teaching – pupils in the current Year 1 had three different teachers in their Reception Year, for example – or had a full impact on pupils' achievement.
- The school has received strong support from the local authority during this period of instability and uncertainty. The new staff have quickly become a well-motivated team, demonstrating a

shared sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the school.

- The headteacher, with the support of the governing body and local authority, has identified the school's weaknesses and has implemented a number of new systems to strengthen its effectiveness. Teachers' performance is now closely checked and supported. Leaders' responsibilities have been redistributed and strengthened, and the rigour of assessment and tracking systems has improved. However, these new systems have not yet become routine in the school or had a sustained effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is now checked rigorously. Regular, half-termly meetings are held between the headteacher and individual class teachers about pupils' progress to discuss the information gained. These meetings ensure that teachers have a good understanding of how well pupils in their charge are doing, and the action they should take to support them and help them to reach their challenging targets.
- The school provides a broad range of subjects for pupils to study. Some improvements have been made in planning for the use of key skills across subjects. However, not enough has yet been done to ensure pupils are provided with enough opportunities to use and develop their literacy skills across the curriculum, and the outdoor resources for the youngest children are restricted.
- The headteacher works well with the other schools in the locality in sharing ideas on leadership, undertaking joint training activities and widening the range of extra activities provided for the pupils.
- Fully supported and monitored by the governing body, the school makes effective use of the money derived from the pupil premium to employ additional support staff to provide small group and one-to-one work. This helps to ensure that eligible pupils make at least the same progress as their friends.
- At the time of inspection, the school had yet to receive the additional government funding to improve physical education in primary schools. However, it had already employed additional coaching staff and has made suitable plans to evaluate the impact of the enhanced provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is supportive, but until very recently it has not challenged the school's leaders strongly enough, particularly in relation to pupils' achievement. However, since the last inspection, governors have had effective training and support and now have a much better understanding of the quality of teaching. Governors rigorously challenge leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve and move forward. They understand what is being done to tackle any underperformance, and to recognise and reward good teachers. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet current national requirements. It has overseen the arrangements for the effective use of the pupil premium funding and ensures teachers only receive pay increases if their performance is at least good.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124138
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	429542

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	84
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Buckley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Robins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01538 722370
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