

# Great Gaddesden Church of England Primary School

Church Meadow, Great Gaddesden, Hertfordshire, HP1 3BT

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	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

- Despite recent improvements in mathematics, pupils' rates of progress in writing are still too inconsistent and spelling and handwriting are not as good as they could be.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make enough progress.
- Teachers do not always use modern technology sufficiently well when introducing new learning to pupils.
- Some staff are still developing their skills in leading the aspects of the school's work for which they have responsibility.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate in science.
- In the past, teaching has not been good enough. This has left a history of underachievement which is now being tackled.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular but some pupils, especially those who are less able, do not always understand teachers' written comments.
- Teachers' questioning of pupils sometimes lacks clarity so that the pupils do not fully understand what is being asked.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has worked very effectively since her arrival and gained the respect of staff, parents, pupils and governors. Many improvements have taken place and standards of work are rising quickly.
- The school is tackling past difficulties with vigour. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve the school further.
- Most of the teaching is now good, resulting in significant improvements in pupils' progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they understand how to keep themselves safe.
- This is clearly a rapidly improving school. The vast majority of parents now hold the school in high regard. All parents responding to Parent View would recommend the school to others.

## Information about this inspection

- Eleven lessons or parts of lessons were observed. All teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching. The inspector undertook two joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, members of staff, two advisers from the local authority, a group of pupils and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspector observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read.
- Samples of work were studied and also information about pupils' progress.
- The inspector read the school's self-evaluation form and school development plan.
- He studied the record of behaviour and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector looked at the 19 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The views of staff were sought and nine responded to a written questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Peter Sudworth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average school with four mixed-age classes.
- Pupils come from a wide area.
- Nursery children attend part time and join the Reception class.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or from families with a parent in the armed forces, is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There were only three pupils in Year 6 in 2013, two of whom were at school action plus.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012 following a period of much change in staffing, including several changes in the school's leadership.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual ones has been much greater than normally found.
- The school has its own breakfast club.

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

- Build on the improvements that have already taken place in teaching and improve it still further by:
  - making more effective use of modern technology when introducing learning to pupils
  - building up teachers' skills in teaching investigative science
  - enabling pupils to use computers and other technology more frequently in their learning
  - ensuring that pupils can understand the written comments made in the marking of their work
  - making sure that teachers' questions are always clear to pupils in lessons so they can respond meaningfully.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils make better progress in writing by:
  - building on the very recent initiative to get pupils to write at length to develop both their stamina for writing and to practise their punctuation and grammar in context
  - taking steps to improve pupils' handwriting and spelling further
  - extending the one-to-one tuition already provided for pupils entitled to pupil premium funding to all pupils so that teachers and pupils can engage in a dialogue about progress and future work.
- Develop the role of staff responsible for leading different aspects of the school's work so that all become skilled in analysing strengths and weaknesses and increase their contribution to school improvement.
- Improve the rate of progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs by:
  - analysing their difficulties with greater precision

- making sure that all staff break down tasks for individual pupils into small steps so that these pupils can master their learning more securely.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Past attainment and progress have not been good enough. Currently, progress in writing is inconsistent and spelling and handwriting are not as good as they could be. Until very recently, pupils did not have enough opportunities to write at length. Pupils' handwriting is often slowed by printing instead of joining letters.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not fast enough because learning is not always broken down into small enough steps. Not enough pupils entitled to the pupil premium make good progress. It is not possible to compare the attainment of these pupils in English and mathematics with that of their classmates because they are too few in number to do so without identifying individuals.
- Pupils' skills in investigative science are limited. They do not use computers enough to develop their skills in information and communication technology.
- Attainment on entry varies from year to year. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. Children's attainment by the end of Reception has risen year on year in the past three years. In 2013, it was above local and national averages. There is a quickening pace to improvements in learning through the school.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. In 2013, the percentages of pupils who reached the higher level were greater than those nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The very small numbers in Year 6 in the past two years and the later admission of some of them from other schools makes it difficult to compare performance meaningfully against national data.
- The school's considerable focus on mathematics last year has raised rates of progress very significantly. Pupils do well in this subject. In a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, pupils made good progress when adding two-digit numbers together.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of good guided reading arrangements, careful grading of books, parental and volunteer help and good teaching of reading.
- Current progress data in the school confirm the improvements taking place. Pupils of minority ethnic heritage often make good progress, as do more-able pupils. School data suggest that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 and year groups which follow will be higher than in the recent history of the school.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough. Pupils have not always made the progress that they should. Significant improvements have been made over the past two years and teaching seen in lessons was generally good with a little close to outstanding. The effect of this improvement has yet to be seen in Key Stage 2 results. It is already evident in Key Stage 1 results.
- Despite improvements, weaknesses remain. Teachers do not give enough attention to investigative science. They are not always demanding enough in the quality of handwriting and

in ensuring that spelling improves further. The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not yet good enough.

- Teachers question pupils regularly to engage them in learning, but sometimes the meaning of a question is unclear to them. While marking is undertaken regularly, pupils do not always understand teachers' written comments, especially the less able.
- Teachers' use of modern technology when introducing new learning requires improvement. There are missed opportunities for pupils to use computers in follow-up activities in some lessons, for example to practise word-processing.
- Teachers work hard to meet the demands of different ages and abilities in mixed-age classes. Teaching assistants are clear of their roles, skilfully deployed and support learning well.
- Teachers manage pupils well. They have good relationships with the pupils and these support the pupils' positive attitudes to learning. They make good use of individual pupil whiteboards so that pupils actively engage in learning. Activities are explained well and pupils are clear what is expected. Teachers often do this by asking the pupils what they need to do to be successful.
- When questioning is at its best, teachers follow up the initial answer by asking the pupils to explain what they mean which supports pupils' own clarity of thinking and helps the listening skills of all the pupils.
- Teachers make clear to pupils what they need to do to get to the next level in their work. These statements, written in language that the pupils can understand, are frequently reviewed. Teachers track pupils' progress at regular intervals. The school identifies pupils who need extra support or a greater challenge through this process.

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

- Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and at the breakfast club. Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying and there is no evidence of it in the school. Documentary evidence indicates that behaviour is usually good. Incidents of misbehaviour are quickly resolved. Pupils' interest in work means that lessons flow smoothly without interruptions. Pupils enjoy school and express the enjoyment they get from attending the extra activities after school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to work in all subjects and in all classes when working alone, in groups or as a class. They are very keen to do well. This is seen in their improving rates of progress. They cooperate with their teachers. Attendance last year was average and for the current term, it is good. Pupils indicate that teachers do 'fun lessons'.
- The school's set of moral values is influential in helping pupils' relationships with others, for example through 'tolerance'. This is further helped by good quality assemblies which interest pupils and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils feel that their opinions are listened to. They contributed ideas for new play equipment. They also organised an opinion survey of school dinners and sent off the results to the caterers. They help with duties around the school, such as organising the equipment for worship. The school council keeps pupils' views in mind through a suggestion box.

- Pupils have a good understanding of keeping themselves safe and they report that they feel safe in school. 'There is nothing to make us feel unsafe,' they say. 'Our friends will comfort us.' They know about the potential dangers of the internet and know not to open e-mails from unknown persons.

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- School actions to ensure the good progress of pupils entitled to the pupil premium have had limited success, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make enough progress. Staff are still developing their skills in leading different aspects of the school's work.
- While the curriculum is developing well, with good opportunities for pupils to engage in after-school activities, the attention to scientific investigation is limited and progress in writing and pupils' use of modern technology in lessons remain weaker aspects.
- The headteacher has accomplished much during her time at the school to secure improvements. She leads the school very well, with much sensitivity and with a quiet rigour. Much has been done to improve the quality of teaching. Rates of progress are rising. Parents are now strongly supportive. Staff enjoy their work. As one wrote, 'The head manages and leads the school and staff brilliantly with the needs of the school firm in her heart.'
- The analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils is very thorough and so it is easy for leaders to know how individual pupils are progressing.
- Reviews of all staff's performance are well organised. The targets set are clearly worded together with detail of how success will be measured. Teachers' targets are linked to the Teachers' Standards. Reviews of performance will be linked to pay.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well and there is no discrimination. Pupils have equal access to all school activities and the governors and staff ensure that no pupil is left out.
- The school has just received its primary sport funding. It is still too early to judge its impact on the development of pupils' physical skills, health and well-being. The school has appointed a sports coach to extend the variety of sporting activities and to work alongside staff in order to further their skills in teaching physical education.
- The school development plan is well written. It contains the correct priorities to improve the school even further. It is easy to review its progress because a calendar of actions accompanies each priority.
- The school enjoys good links with other village schools and staff meet together to share experiences and to undertake joint training activities.
- The local authority has been fully involved with the school during its recovery from difficult times. It has provided advice for different aspects of learning and has particularly supported the improvements that have taken place in mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body enjoys good leadership and has increased in its effectiveness since the last inspection. Members have a good understanding of data and good links with staff because

members keep an oversight of different aspects of the school's work. These links enable them to gain an insight into the quality of teaching.

- They have been involved with decisions on the spending of the sports funding and pupil premium money. They are not yet, however, sufficiently aware of the impact of the spending.
- Safeguarding arrangements are well arranged and meet current national requirements.
- The breakfast club is well managed.
- Governors are familiar with the arrangements for the appraisal of staff and the link to pay.



## 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>	117433
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425260

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	72
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Wilkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nikki Worsley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 255734
<b>Fax number</b>	01442 255107
<b>Email address</b>	admin@greatgaddesden.herts.sch.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

