

# Great Steeping Primary School

Great Steeping, Spilsby, PE23 5PT

## Inspection dates

4–5 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils across the school achieve well. All pupils, regardless of their backgrounds, make good progress from well-below average starting points.
- Teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding, which provides a solid foundation for learning and ensures that lessons are enjoyable and interesting.
- Strong links with the local authority and partnership schools are used effectively to help improve the school. School links both in the United Kingdom and abroad provide strong support for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They are courteous, polite and supportive with each other and towards adults.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that there is no bullying in school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. E-safety is a strength of the school.
- The headteacher has overcome a number of significant barriers to learning in the school. The restructured leadership team provides strong support for future improvements.
- Governors and leaders have an accurate picture of the school, playing an active role in making sure that teaching and pupils' achievement are good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as rapid as it is in other subjects because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills and write at length in all subjects.
- The other adults who support learning are not always used to full effect in helping pupils to make progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, four of which were shared with the headteacher, observed an assembly and pupils' interaction at lunchtimes.
- The inspector held discussions with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, a group of pupils, staff members and the headteacher.
- The responses from 35 replies to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed alongside the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of information was scrutinised relating to pupils' progress, attendance, attainment, school improvement and self-evaluation, safeguarding and records of teaching over time. School policy documents and procedures were also scrutinised during the inspection.
- The inspector heard a number of pupils read and observed lessons on the teaching of phonics, which is the reading of letters and the sounds they make.
- The inspector also reviewed pupils' work in their books across the school.

## Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Great Steeping Primary School is a much smaller than average.
- The school is organised into four mixed-aged classes.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium (which provides extra funding to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from other groups, such as those from service families) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well-above average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- There are increasing numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school at times other than those normally expected.
- The school has links with several local schools through a partnership arrangement.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - teachers make full use of the other adults who support learning in classrooms to help pupils progress further in their learning.
- Raise achievement further by making sure that all teachers extend the good practice in developing writing skills in English across other subjects and give pupils more opportunities to write longer pieces of work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their ages. This is particularly so in their language and communication skills. They make good progress and by the end of Year 6 their attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress from their very low starting points due to the wide range of practical and stimulating activities they experience in school. Teaching is good and children enjoy learning. They leave Reception with skills and knowledge closer to those typical for their age group.
- Over the past three years, many pupils entering and leaving the school both in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have had skills and knowledge well below those typical for their ages. As class and year groups are small, the effect of these new entrants on school results considerably influences achievement overall. Due to the good care and support provided for them, these pupils quickly settle into the school. However, they often have too little time to make up the ground lost elsewhere and, sometimes, attain lower standards than those of other pupils, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Attainment in Key Stage 1 has struggled to reach the national average in some years due to a mixture of previously poor teaching, lower attainment on entry to the school and pupils entering the school immediately prior to assessment in Year 2. However, school information, carefully validated by the local authority and school partnership group, shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress from their low starting points on entry to the school. Observations of what pupils could do in lessons and analysis of their work confirmed the school's data on progress and attainment.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making progress at least in line with that of their peers. The few eligible pupils in some year groups make comparison between them and other pupils unreliable. However, by the end of Key Stage 1, eligible pupils are usually about two terms behind their peers in school but this gap closes to within half a term by Year 6. The more-able members of this group are making accelerated progress and current school information shows these pupils are about a term ahead of their peers in both English and mathematics.
- More-able pupils make increasingly rapid progress across the school due to the challenge and high expectations that teachers provide. In Year 6, school information shows these pupils are on track to attain above-average results in the current academic year.
- Parents, pupils and teachers all rightly think that achievement in the school is good. Parents say children make good progress through the Reception class and are well placed for their future learning.
- The few entrants for the phonic screen check result in variations in outcomes year by year. Although the number of pupils passing the phonics screening check first time round in 2013 was below the national figure, pupils taking the re-test all overtook the previous national average. The pupils' early reading skills equip them well for future learning. Reading skills are good and pupils thoroughly enjoy reading both for pleasure and information. They were seen to use their phonic skills effectively during the inspection and less-able readers used expression in their reading and had a good understanding of the text.

- Progress in mathematics has accelerated rapidly and achievement has improved due to improved teaching, better resources and a more practical approach to the subject. This was clearly seen during a Years 1 and 2 lesson where pupils explored numbers, and judged how much they were more or less than each other. A range of resources gave a practical base to their learning. They then quickly moved on to exploring data collection to create graphs. Their discussions with each other and with staff demonstrated they could create a range of methods to use and explain the information they found out.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good because teachers make sure that the work is at the right level of difficulty for them. This good practice results in these pupils making progress at a faster rate than that of their peers in school and so reach levels in English and mathematics, from very low starting points, which are only about a term behind their peers in Year 6.
- Progress in writing is not as good as reading and mathematics. Skills in writing within English lessons are good, which was clearly seen during a Years 5 and 6 lesson on scene setting and characters. Pupils' use of language was excellent and they could construct scenes for stories well. However, pupils do not practise these skills in other subjects by composing longer pieces of writing and, consequently, pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching across the school is good. Poor teaching has been eliminated and, consequently, progress rates are rapidly increasing.
- Teachers effectively use questioning and discussion to deepen and extend pupils' understanding and have high expectations of all pupils. This good practice begins in the Reception class and continues throughout the school. In a Reception/Year 1 lesson, children were encouraged to write sentences about a range of topics and the teacher constantly encouraged and questioned them so that their sentences became longer and more detailed. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work in subjects other than English.
- Pupils are eager to learn because teachers make lessons enjoyable and engaging. As one pupil stated, 'We enjoy learning because our teachers want us to do well and make learning fun.'
- Teachers use information about the progress pupils make to effectively plan work. Pupils' understanding is constantly checked in lessons so teachers can modify the tasks to make sure all pupils progress well.
- Teachers set challenging targets and pupils know what these are and how to achieve them. Marking in books is informative, but pupils clearly stated they preferred the discussions teachers had with them individually about how to improve their work. Pupils also evaluate their own work and provide comment and constructive criticism on the work of others, which they think helps them to improve further.
- Teachers provide more-able pupils with harder work that is challenging and interesting and, as a result, they learn well.
- Leaders and managers at all levels check on teaching effectively and so can quickly support and develop teachers where needed. A clear example of this is in the improvement of mathematics resulting in achievement rising in the subject. Leaders' close monitoring and evaluation of what

is done in classrooms also make sure that any pupils who are underachieving are picked up quickly and suitable extra help put into place.

- Teachers have broadened the range of subjects taught and the partnerships with local schools have given them every opportunity to use specialist teachers. For example, science lessons have been expanded, and the use of computers and other technology is a real strength in the school. Pupils' musical skills are developed through their involvement in a range of local events.
- Generally, the other adults who support learning are used well by teachers. However, in some situations they are not always given clear enough direction to make sure they help pupils to learn consistently well.

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

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is shown in the currently sharp rise in their attendance rates, which school information shows are high. Behaviour across the school is good and pupils know how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and these support their good progress across the school.
- In lessons and around the school pupils are polite, courteous and considerate of each other and adults. Pupils say there is no bullying or poor behaviour. As one pupil stated, 'There is no bullying because everyone is friends with everyone.' This good behaviour helps the pupils to make good progress as lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.
- New pupils to the school are welcomed and supported. They settle in well, and pupils make friends quickly and easily. In lessons, pupils support each other and use each other's comments to help them improve their work.
- Pupils say that if any minor disagreements happen, teachers deal with them quickly and effectively.
- Parents rightly feel that the school deals with any behavioural concerns effectively. They know their children are safe and behaviour is good.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying and have a good awareness of e-safety. They say teachers and other visitors have given them plenty of helpful advice on how to stay safe.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy physical activities and playtimes are full of games they all play together. The additional sports funding is used to provide a range of additional sports which contribute to pupils' physical fitness and well-being. Pupils were particularly keen on fencing.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has overcome a range of teaching and other staffing issues affecting the school and pupils' progress. Alongside her the strong leadership team has made sure that leadership and management continue to be effective in taking the school forward.
- Better teaching, the rise in achievement in mathematics and reading and the secure leadership below senior level are all marked improvements since the school was last inspected. These improvements have been supported by the valuable training opportunities for those in leadership roles below senior level provided by the senior leadership team itself, as well as the

opportunities provided by the school partnership links. The school's positive track record of improvement shows good capacity for going further forward.

- Leadership and management of Reception are good and enable children to adapt quickly to school life and learning. The combined Reception/Year 1 class experience is helpful to children's development as it gives them aspiration in learning. Consequently, they make good progress and improve their attainment.
- The close monitoring and evaluation of teaching by all leaders and managers have raised its quality and, with it, the rates of progress for pupils across the whole school. Senior leaders use the helpful links and support from the local authority and partnership schools to both moderate and evaluate the quality of their work.
- Leaders have high expectations of the pupils and the teachers. The management of teachers' performance is effective and makes sure that the performance of teachers and the achievement of pupils are at least good. Resulting improvement was clearly demonstrated in the quick response of the leadership team in eliminating poor teaching in the school. All staff within the school are happy and believe leaders and managers are moving the school forward.
- The subjects taught in school have been extended and modified to meet the needs of the pupils and make learning fun and interesting. The close links with their partnership schools provide pupils at all levels with opportunities to work with other pupils and study a wider range of subjects.
- The school has improved the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development through a wide range of visits and visitors, as well as the close links with a school in Africa.
- Pupil premium funding is used to make sure that all pupils can participate in the whole life of the school and this helps to enhance equal opportunities and prevent any form of discrimination. The extra funding for primary school sports provides specialist teaching, extra sporting clubs as well as access to football and rounders tournaments.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors provide good challenge and support to the school. Their positive action contributed to eliminating poor teaching when they acted swiftly alongside the leadership team. They know the school well through a wide range of evidence and personal experience within the school itself. They analyse and understand the data available on pupils' progress and attainment, and hold leaders to account for school performance. They keep careful track of the achievement of those pupils eligible to pupil premium funding and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and check what impact additional funding has. Governors use performance management effectively to monitor the quality of teaching and link performance carefully to pay and professional progression. Safeguarding is a central feature of the school and the governors monitor this well and so safeguarding meets 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120451
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	413098

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>	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lorna Adlington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Ackrill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01754 830251
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