

# Greens Norton Church of England Primary School

Calvert Road, Greens Norton, Towcester, NN12 8DD

**Inspection dates** 16–17 January 2014

<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

- Pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2. In 2013, the Year 6 results in mathematics were below average.
- Not all pupils are confident in using and applying their basic mathematical skills to solve problems, and they are sometimes given work that is too easy for them.
- Too few pupils exceed expected progress in writing; they do not have enough opportunities to write at length in different subjects.
- Teachers do not always keep a close enough check on pupils' progress during lessons to pick up misconceptions promptly.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils are clear about how their learning targets will help them to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants have not been used efficiently across the school.
- Information the school collects about the progress pupils are making is not always accurate.
- Governors have not held leaders and managers sufficiently to account to drive improvements in teaching and achievement; they have not been fully clear about their roles.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has united the school community around her vision for improvement, and has quickly identified what needs to be done to move the school forward.
- Pupils achieve well in Reception and Key Stage 1. Standards in Year 2 have risen for the last two years.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- A new Chair of Governors has started to improve the effectiveness of the governing body in forming its own view on how well the school is doing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, including some jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked closely at samples 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.
- A meetings was held with Year 6 pupils. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered 31 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and spoke with several parents and carers outside the school.
- The inspector considered the staff questionnaires that were completed.

## Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Reception children are taught with Year 1 pupils. There are also three other mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very low. In this school the funding only applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is very low. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- The school meets the current government 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?

- Make teaching consistently good or better by making sure that:
  - teachers keep a watchful eye on pupils' progress in lessons, to pick up any misconceptions straight away
  - pupils have more opportunities to write at length in different subjects
  - pupils know what their learning targets are to improve their work, and these are revised regularly.
- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
  - giving all pupils work that is challenging but not too difficult
  - making sure that pupils are confident in using and applying basic mathematical skills to solve problems
  - giving pupils clear guidance about the next steps in their learning when marking their books.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - deploying teaching assistants efficiently across the school and briefing them well so that all pupils who need additional help receive it
  - checking that the information collected about pupils' progress is accurate
  - giving governors the training they need to be confident in their roles and hold leaders to account for the school's improvement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. In the 2013 national tests, standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 were below average. While all pupils made expected progress in reading and writing, the proportion making expected progress in mathematics was below average.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English because the work is sometimes too easy for them. They are not shown how to use and apply their basic mathematical skills in solving real-life problems. This means they often make simple errors in their calculations.
- Not enough pupils exceed expected progress in writing in Key Stage 2. This is because they have not been required to extend their work through writing longer pieces of work in subjects other than English, such as history or science.
- Children join Reception with skills that are typical for their age, although these can vary because of the small numbers involved. They make good progress because activities are imaginative and promote their basic skills well.
- The new headteacher identified that while pupils mainly make good progress in Key Stage 1, they did not do as well in phonics (the sounds that letters make) as they should. She has changed the way phonics is taught to focus more on pupils applying their skills in practical situations. This is beginning to have a positive impact and the present Year 1 are on track at least to reach average levels this year in the phonics screening check.
- Standards have been rising by the end of Year 2 as the quality of teaching has improved, and in 2013 they were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress has not been sustained in Key Stage 2, as teaching has been more inconsistent. However, changes introduced by the new headteacher mean that expectations are higher and this is beginning to translate into more rapid progress, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Standards in reading were above average in 2013 by the end of Year 6. Pupils enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about the authors they like. Most pupils read regularly at home and have plenty of opportunities to practise their skills in class.
- Very few pupils are supported by the pupil premium and their attainment cannot be reported without identifying them. In general, the progress of eligible pupils across the school is similar to that of other pupils of their age.
- More-able pupils make good progress in Reception and in Key Stage 1 and are given work that makes them think. In Key Stage 2 work is not always as demanding, and some pupils, along with their peers, do not make such rapid progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. They receive inconsistent support because teaching assistants are not deployed efficiently to meet their needs, and are not always briefed well enough to know what is expected of the pupils they are working with.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because not all pupils make the progress they should in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. At times, teachers do not keep a close enough check how well pupils are doing in lessons and misconceptions are not picked up quickly.
- While the marking of writing in English books is improving, in mathematics teachers are not giving pupils enough guidance about what to do next to improve their work. In some classes the work set is too easy for pupils and this slows their progress.
- Pupils have all been given learning targets in writing and mathematics to help them improve their work, but the effectiveness of these is very uneven across different classes. In some cases they have only had one target all year, and teachers do not refer to their targets when marking their books. Pupils are unsure what their targets are. In many cases they are stuck in the front of their books, but they are not reminded enough about them.
- There are examples of good and outstanding teaching, when all pupils are fully engaged in their work and inspired to do the best they can. For example, Reception children and Year 1 pupils enjoyed finding 'bossy' verbs hidden outside and recording them as part of some work on writing instructions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 plotted on graphs the coordinates of pieces of play equipment in preparation for mapping the playground in the local park.
- The Reception classroom is a stimulating workplace. In particular the role-play 'space station', with its dark recesses and intriguing equipment, is very popular and many children gravitate towards it. The outside spaces are equally as attractive and well organised to interest pupils and stoke up their curiosity.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to discuss their ideas and comment on one another's work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were assessing how well their classmates performed poems they had written. They offered constructive but honest feedback.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils is good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in class and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly, and confident with their friends and with adults. One pupil commented, 'We have friends in different year groups.'
- Pupils have taken on board the new headteacher's high expectations of behaviour, and this is reflected in the respect they show one another and adults, for example during assembly or in the dining hall. On rare occasions their behaviour does not come up to the mark, for example when work is too easy and they resort to social chatter.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to get down to work and enjoy working together in pairs or groups. They are quick to respond to questions or to contribute to debates.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe, including on the internet. They value the 'worry box' and know that anything they put into it will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. Parents also expressed their confidence in how well the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities, for example as house captains or members of the

school council. They raise large sums of money for charity, and are actively involved with the local church and with the community.

- Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils are punctual to lessons.

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

- The school has been through a period of transition, culminating in the appointment of the new headteacher. It has not improved sufficiently since the previous inspection and teaching is not yet consistently good. Achievement in mathematics, in particular, is not strong enough.
- The whole school community has welcomed the approach the new headteacher has taken, which fully involves them and clearly shows them where improvement is needed. In the short time she has been at the school, the new headteacher has accurately identified key areas to develop and brought in the right changes, which are already beginning to improve teaching and raise standards.
- Her very high expectations have been embraced by staff, governors, pupils and parents alike, and there is a real sense of optimism in the school to have turned a corner and to be now going places.
- Assessments of pupils' progress have not always been accurate, and have sometimes been too optimistic. The headteacher has introduced new ways of measuring how well pupils are doing that are giving more accurate results, so the staff are increasingly confident that they are making the right judgements.
- Staff receive clear feedback about their teaching and the headteacher follows up points for improvement to make sure they are being put into practice. Teachers are being held more accountable for the progress that pupils make and understand how their contribution is helping to move the school forward.
- Subject leaders and other staff with extra responsibilities are becoming more confident in their roles. They appreciate the support they are receiving from the headteacher to have a greater impact on pupils' progress. The inclusion manager, who is responsible for the way disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are catered for, feels the headteacher's input has had a positive impact on the way she manages her role.
- Teaching assistants have not always been used efficiently to ensure pupils get as much additional support as they should. The headteacher is working hard to resolve this situation so that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- The quality of the curriculum is uneven across classes. While Reception children have an exciting menu of interesting and enjoyable things to learn, some pupils in Key Stage 2 have lukewarm experiences, for example being given a worksheet to complete. There is a wide range of clubs and visits for pupils to go on. These make a reasonable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school promotes social and moral development well.
- The primary school sport funding is being spent on coaching for pupils and staff, outdoor equipment and participation in a dance festival. It is too soon to judge the impact of this work.
- The local authority is providing good support for the new headteacher, and putting her in touch

with other schools that have outstanding practice in teaching and leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have not always held leaders and managers to account in the past, or been sufficiently confident in their roles to take action to drive improvement forward. With a new Chair this is changing, and while several are inexperienced, governors are becoming better informed and visiting the school more often to see for themselves what is going on. The new headteacher has established an open and positive relationship with governors, which is promoting honest discussion about the school's areas for improvement. Governors have a better understanding of data on pupils' performance and the quality of teaching, and are more involved in managing the performance of staff. They make sure that staff pay rises and promotion are warranted, and that underperformance is not tolerated. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet national 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>	121974
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	430719

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barbara Parfitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 350648
<b>Fax number</b>	01327 350648
<b>Email address</b>	office@greensnorton.northants-ecl.gov.uk

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