

# Greenvale Infant School

Symons Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 5UP

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Over time, pupils have made inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils, including those supported by pupil premium funding, have a lot of ground to make up.
- Pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties make inadequate progress in their basic skills because of weak teaching.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, play activities are not always stimulating enough. Adults do not join in children's activities well enough to guide their learning.
- Teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop their speaking skills. Consequently, pupils do not speak and write in sentences as well as they should.
- Pupils' spelling and punctuation skills are not good enough.
- Teaching is not addressing the gaps in some pupils' mathematical calculation skills quickly enough.
- Lower-ability pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their phonics skills (knowledge of letters and their sounds) before reading their books.
- Pupils do not always concentrate well enough because teachers do not make the work interesting enough.
- Middle leaders are not effective in raising achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- The school improvement plan does not show well enough how governors will check the impact of the school's work. Some new governors still need training. This means that governors are not holding the school to account.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching has begun to improve and, as a result, pupils are achieving better.
- School leaders and staff are committed to improving the quality of teaching. Teachers are expected to teach well and helped to improve.
- The school is calm. Pupils behave well around the school and take good care of resources.

## Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education brought forward the inspection of this school because of concerns about the school’s performance.
- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, nine of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They listened to a sample of pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school’s information on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teachers and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered the 16 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke informally to parents and carers and took their views into account
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders’ observations of teaching.

## Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional inspector

Clementina Olufunke Aina

Additional inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.*

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average infant school with a Nursery. The number on roll has risen since the previous inspection. The Early Years department consists of a 120-place Nursery and four Reception classes. There are three classes in Year 1 and two classes in Year 2.
- A small number of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties from Years 1 and 2 are taught in a separate class for most of the time but join their classes for one day each week.
- The majority of pupils are White British. One third come from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language, at one quarter, is above the national average. The largest minority groups are Eastern European and Black African, although many other minority ethnic groups are represented in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The majority of these pupils have speech and language difficulties or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- Half of the pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children of service families), which is well above the national average.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2012 and several other senior leaders have been appointed recently. The deputy headteacher who managed the school in a temporary capacity for two years prior to the headteacher's arrival left the school at the end of autumn term 2013.
- The school is currently undergoing extensive building work to provide for the increase in pupil numbers.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for the pupils.

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

- Improve teaching and raise achievement for pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties so that they are at least good by:
  - providing pupils with consistently interesting learning opportunities which fully engage them in their learning
  - ensuring staff plan and teach reading, writing and mathematics at the right level of difficulty
  - ensuring leaders review the quality of provision for these pupils effectively.
- Ensure teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is consistently at least good by:
  - ensuring learning tasks in the Early Years Foundation Stage are always stimulating and give children in Reception more reading and writing opportunities
  - ensuring teachers question pupils more skilfully to help them learn
  - ensuring teachers fully implement the new mathematical calculation policy, address gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding and give more-able pupils harder work
  - ensuring support staff intervene more effectively to extend pupils' learning, including in Nursery and Reception.
- Raise achievement and accelerate progress, including for pupils eligible for pupil premium, by:
  - improving pupils' speaking and listening skills
  - improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and ability to write in sentences, ensuring teachers consistently help pupils to apply phonics skills when writing
  - improving lower-attaining pupils' progress in reading by ensuring pupils practise phonics skills before reading and that teachers' reading records show phonics skills.
- Improve the leadership and management, including governance, of the school by:
  - developing the role of middle leaders so they have a greater impact on improving pupils' progress and the quality of teaching
  - ensuring the school improvement plan shows more precisely how governors will monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives on improving achievement
  - ensuring new governors quickly receive training.

The school should undertake an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium funding, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate. Standards in Year 2 have been consistently low for many years in reading, writing and mathematics. Inadequate progress throughout the school means it is still addressing a legacy of underachievement. Inspection evidence shows there are many gaps in current pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The progress of pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties is inadequate in reading, writing and mathematics. Activities do not build their basic skills enough. Progress slows when pupils unnecessarily repeat too much earlier learning.
- The progress of other pupils in the school is improving in lessons but standards are not rising quickly enough.
- Most children start Nursery with skills and experiences at much lower levels than typical for their age, especially in early communication and personal development. Their progress requires improvement because activities are not always stimulating and their speaking and listening skills do not develop quickly enough.
- In Reception, children do not have enough opportunities to learn reading and writing skills. Children's consistently low attainment at the end of Reception has led to pupils entering Year 1 with low standards in reading, writing and mathematical development. There was a small improvement in children's attainment at the end of Reception last year, including in speaking and listening and phonics.
- Standards for Year 2 also showed a small improvement last year. Inspection indicates this is continuing for the current Year 2, but their attainment remains below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Phonics screening checks for Year 1 pupils last year showed considerable improvement compared with the previous year, but pupils' attainment was still too low. Inspection shows pupils' grasp of phonics is improving but too slowly. There is now a very systematic approach to teaching phonics throughout Reception and Key Stage 1, and pupils were seen to make good progress in about half of the phonics lessons observed.
- However, pupils do not consistently use their phonics skills when reading and spelling. Lower-attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their sounds before tackling new words, which prevents them reading as well as they should. Weaknesses in spelling and punctuation and the ability to write in sentences impair writing standards for some pupils at all levels.
- Handwriting is improving. It is usually neat and pupils usually form their letters correctly.
- In mathematics weaknesses in calculation skills prevent standards rising more quickly. More-able pupils' progress slows when they are not given hard enough work.
- Pupils' speaking skills are not developing quickly enough. Some lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs and those at early stages of speaking English as an additional language, do not learn to speak in sentences as well as they should. In Reception, there are memorable real experiences for pupils to talk about but there is less emphasis on providing rich speaking opportunities elsewhere in the school.
- Disabled pupils, most pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, do not make enough progress. Support for these groups speeds up their progress, for example in reading. However, as with other pupils, their attainment is limited by a legacy of inadequate progress earlier in their school career.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium, including those eligible for free school meals, make too slow progress. The latest end-of-Year 2 assessment data shows their attainment was similar to their peers and low compared with national averages. Their current attainment, is about six months behind that of their peers.

**The quality of teaching is inadequate**

- Teaching of most groups is inadequate over time but is now improving.
- However, the overall quality of teaching is inadequate because of the weak teaching for pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. Planning for these pupils is inadequate and activities do not systematically build upon their previous learning in reading, writing and mathematics...
- Although lessons are better planned than in previous years, occasionally work is too hard for some or too easy for more-able pupils. For example, this happens in mathematics when teachers do not quickly adjust their planned activities to close any gaps in pupils' calculation skills or to provide the more able with challenging tasks. Not all teachers consistently apply the new calculation policy well.
- At times, teachers do not question pupils sufficiently well to ensure that they understand and are learning well.
- Sometimes, teachers do not clarify how work is to be carried out by giving pupils clear examples of what is required of them before they start their work. This occasionally happens in literacy lessons where, for example, teachers do not give pupils enough explanation of how to apply phonics when reading and writing new words.
- In the Nursery and in Key Stage 1, pupils do not learn well enough because teachers do not engage their interest well enough to help promote children's interest and understanding..
- The activities provided in Nursery are not always inspiring; for example, there are not enough resources for the children during role play. In Reception, there are insufficient opportunities for children to develop their literacy skills and apply their phonics.
- In both Nursery and Reception, support staff do not always extend children's learning by joining in with their play at the right time and guiding them or asking questions. In Key Stage 1, support staff are not sufficiently well directed.
- In Reception and Key Stage 1, there is strong consistency in discrete phonics lessons in the methods teachers use to promote good learning. For example, teachers and support have been trained to implement effective systems for teaching phonics in every class. In good phonics sessions in Reception and Key Stage 1, the tasks provided ensured pupils' skills developed well over time and within lessons and that all pupils spent maximum time developing their reading skills.
- Teachers keep a careful track of pupils' phonics skills but individual reading records do not include enough information about the sounds and letters pupils should know, so staff are limited in helping pupils to practise specific phonics skills before reading their books. The quality of marking of pupils' work is too variable and does not always give pupils clear guidance on how to improve.
- Pupils' slowly improving attainment at the end of Reception and Key Stage 1 reflects some positive impact of the school's efforts in the last year to improve the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Strong support for improving the quality of teaching, including professional development, has eliminated most of the weak teaching.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement**

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because their attitudes to learning are not as well developed as their social behaviour. Pupils' social behaviour is mostly good; for example, they behave well towards staff, and pupils from widely diverse backgrounds get on well together.
- A few pupils find it difficult to behave well for a sustained period of time. Their concentration is sometimes limited because activities are too easy or uninteresting. However, when pupils are interested, such as in physical education, they do concentrate and enjoy learning. At other

times pupils' concentration wanes when they are not chosen to answer teachers' questions.

- School records show that there have been pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties who have had disruptive incidents who have been well supported and their behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved. Pupils rarely interrupt lessons now and most parents who responded to the questionnaire and staff agree with this.
- Most pupils are polite and helpful to adults in the school and behave well when moving around the school. From the earliest days in Nursery, they learn to adapt to school routines and take good care of their environment and the school's property.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe. All parents who responded to the questionnaire, staff and pupils agree with this. Pupils have some understanding of different types of bullying, such as name calling, but do not feel bullying occurs in school. The school's documents indicate there have been very few such incidents and these have been correctly dealt with. Pupils expressed confidence that should any bullying occur they would be listened to and any concerns would be addressed.
- Attendance is improving and broadly average compared with national averages. In particular, there is less persistent absence for the pupils eligible for the pupil premium this year. These pupils are now supported to attend the breakfast club and are attending school more regularly.
- The school is taking effective action to work with all parents of children with low attendance to make them aware of the importance of regular attendance. As a result, most pupils come to school regularly and on time.
- Pupils are extremely well cared for in the breakfast club, which provides pupils with a nourishing and very welcoming start to the school day.

## The leadership and management

## require improvement

- School leaders have taken firm actions to improve the school in the last year. The positive impact leaders have had on improving the quality of teaching and quickening pupils' progress in a relatively short time demonstrates that the school can continue to improve. However, the numerous initiatives taken have not had enough impact on improving provision for pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties and ensuring teaching helps all pupils to achieve well..
- The subjects and topics taught mostly meet pupils' needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 but do not do so for pupils with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- Consequently, the school does not meet its aim to provide equality of opportunity because, overall, pupils with special educational needs are not making sufficient progress.
- Some middle leaders are still developing their roles and, as result, some initiatives have not yet been monitored across the whole school, for example, checks to ensure all teachers apply the new mathematical calculation policy..
- The headteacher provides a clear direction, has raised expectations of pupils' achievement and taken steps to improve teaching and learning. She is well supported by the two assistant headteachers.
- The restructuring of the senior team during this academic year is enabling all senior leaders to take an active part in school evaluation and improvement. Leaders have already had a positive impact on provision for pupils in Reception and for the teaching of phonics, and academic standards are starting to rise.
- The headteacher has lifted staff's expectations of pupils' achievement and the focus has rightly been on improving the quality of teaching. She has introduced new procedures for setting targets that link pay to pupils' achievement. Staff are well supported through staff training and have welcomed the help they are now given to improve their teaching.
- Since the beginning of this term, there are new arrangements for the leadership of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This has very recently led to a review of all

provision for these pupils but this has yet to be implemented.

- Analysis of pupils' progress data has been strengthened considerably and helps leaders and staff to identify where individuals might be slipping back. Improvement plans focus on the right priorities. However, while there are detailed actions for improving achievement, there is not enough information to show how governors will be involved in monitoring and evaluation activities.
- A good range of enrichment activities, including visits, helps to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The primary sports funding is being used to strengthen teachers' and pupils' skills through external coaching and to purchase equipment.
- Until September 2013, the local authority's support was light. At the headteacher's request, the local authority has increased its help, particularly for Key Stage 1. The school is managing this support well, although there remains work to do throughout the school.
- Leaders are not using the additional pupil premium funding effectively to raise achievement although attendance is improving. The money is used to provide additional assistants so that teaching groups are smaller and eligible pupils are given closer attention. The money is also used to fund the breakfast club, school trips and uniform for eligible pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are actively involved and are committed to making it a good school. Until the headteacher arrived, they did not have access to the most incisive and accurate information with which to hold the headteacher to account. Consequently, they did not provide sufficient challenge when the school was underperforming in recent years. They are now gaining the confidence they need to challenge and support the headteacher. However, more work needs to be done to ensure they understand pupils' assessment data and the governing body would benefit from an external review. Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances and can account for the progress pupils are making. They understand how pupil premium money is being spent and know that pupils' achievement is not good enough. They are clear about how the performance of teaching is being managed and where strengths and weaknesses lie. They understand the need to link the quality of teaching to pay and the targets being set by senior leaders to improve teaching. They assess their own training needs and know that some more recently appointed governors require more training, for example in understanding data. Governors ensure that statutory arrangements for safe guarding are met.



## 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>	118317
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	440372

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	338
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kevin Geraghty-Shewan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Allnutt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 409521
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