

Greenfields Primary School

Ellesborough Close, Watford, WD19 6QH

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils make good progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are well above national averages in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective support, and make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils attain similar standards to their classmates.
- Leaders, including the governors, have high aspirations for their pupils and set demanding targets for staff. They ensure that teaching is good, so that pupils achieve well. Over time, they have ensured that the school is improving.
- The way subjects are taught ensures that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in class and around school is good. Very positive attitudes to learning help them to achieve well.
- Relationships are good. Pupils show respect towards adults and each other.
- The school has taken effective steps to improve attendance.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have confidence that adults will look after them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Children who enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with limited skills do not catch up quickly enough. This part of the school requires improvement, as staff do not always ensure these children develop the skills to concentrate well on learning.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to fully develop their literacy skills by writing longer pieces of work.
- The school's relationship with some parents is not effective enough in promoting its values and the high aspirations it has for the pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons or parts of lessons, including one seen jointly with the headteacher. One inspector also observed assemblies.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also met with pupils formally and informally around the school.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading habits. They also scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documents including development plans, the school's evaluation of its performance, and documentation related to behaviour, child protection and safeguarding. The inspectors took account of 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by parents as they arrived at school to pick up their children. They also considered the school's own survey of parental views and the 20 responses to staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

William Alexander

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium, at 23%, is slightly below average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, at about 9%, is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, closer to 10%, is above average.
- The school has a nursery which children attend on a part-time basis. Children in the Reception class attend on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all groups of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make at least good progress by:
 - developing effective ways to check on their progress in all areas of their learning
 - giving children who do not have good concentration skills the support they need to focus on their learning.
- Give pupils more frequent opportunities to develop their extended writing skills.
- Develop strategies to engage parents more in their children's learning, and to share with parents the high aspirations the school has for their children.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders insist on pupils having high aspirations, and set demanding targets for teachers. As a result, pupils have a 'can do' approach to challenging tasks and achieve well. Leaders keep close checks on the work of the school. They check that pupils are making good progress, and promptly raise concerns when reviewing the performance of individual teachers.
- Teachers collect comprehensive information on pupils' attainment and progress, and use it well to plan lessons which are challenging for the more-able pupils, but also to provide support to pupils who need it. This ensures that all groups of pupils make good overall progress.
- Leaders responsible for overseeing different age groups check frequently on the progress of pupils and the performance of staff within their team. This means that all staff, including teaching assistants, feel that their contribution to pupils' achievement is important. Consequently, any underperformance or other issues are quickly corrected.
- Subject leaders develop other teachers' skills by observing them in lessons, offering them advice and organising additional support from outside the school, such as from local authority advisors. As a result, teachers' skills continue to improve, which helps the pupils to make even better progress.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The funds are used to support their emotional as well as their academic needs. As a result, the achievement of these pupils is similar to that of other pupils.
- The curriculum is good. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. For example, there has been a geography field trip for older pupils, as well as visits to the Houses of Parliament and the Natural History Museum. The school is preparing well for the new National Curriculum, and is developing a suitable assessment system by which to measure the skills and knowledge that the pupils acquire.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills well. It promotes qualities such as kindness, care and respect for others. As a result, pupils are considerate towards each other and relate well to adults. They show a good understanding of different religions and how to be a good member of the school community. The school promotes in pupils an understanding that discrimination is not acceptable, and that there should be equal opportunities for all. Through assemblies and lessons they have opportunities for reflection, and to gain a better understanding of themselves, their community, and the wider world. They are well prepared for life in modern British society.
- The school has used the national primary school sports funding well. It has been used to develop the skills of teachers, particularly in dance and gymnastics, and to broaden pupils' experiences by organising a sports week, in which pupils could try a range of activities including a climbing wall. Older pupils now lead lunchtime play activities for younger pupils in order to promote more active, healthier lifestyles.
- The local authority has provided helpful support and robust challenge to the school to ensure that leaders are properly equipped to improve the quality of teaching and the pupils' achievement.
- The newly appointed early years coordinator has introduced new systems for monitoring the progress of children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and is reviewing the range of learning activities. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these changes.
- A minority of parents expressed concern through Parent View about the effectiveness of the school's leadership in helping pupils to achieve as well as they could. The school has carried out its own survey of parents' views. The results were more positive, with many parents recognising that their children are making good progress. However, some still lack confidence in the effectiveness of the school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has strengthened recently through support from the local authority. Governors now have a clear focus on improving pupils' achievement. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, and are now more effective in carrying out their role in challenging and supporting the school.
- Governors visit the school regularly and have specific areas of responsibility, on which they report to other governors.
- Governors analyse data on how well the pupils are doing. They receive information about which teachers are doing well, and how they are being rewarded. They are also told about how leaders are rectifying any weaknesses in teaching. Consequently, all governors are well informed about all aspects of the school's performance.
- They have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet national requirements, and pupils are well cared for.
- Governors are aware of how the school uses additional funding for the pupil premium and primary sports, and know about its impact.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have good attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn, can speak confidently about their work, and try hard to do their best. They enjoy and appreciate the range of opportunities that the school provides for them.
- Relationships between pupils and the adults who teach them are very good. Teachers and teaching assistants successfully encourage pupils to work cooperatively, share ideas and value the opinions of others. As a result, pupils work well together, and develop their confidence to take on challenging tasks.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well. They understand the systems of rewards and sanctions, and regard them as fair. The school maintains accurate records of any incidents, and how they were dealt with. This includes the very few instances of derogatory language. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- The school uses robust and effective systems for improving attendance. As a result, previously low rates have improved and attendance is now at the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. It helps pupils to understand how to stay safe in different situations. In particular, pupils learn how to protect themselves when using the internet.
- Most of the parents who completed the Parent View survey agreed that behaviour was good. The majority also felt that the school deals effectively with bullying. However, some parents felt that this was not the case. In discussions, pupils told inspectors that behaviour in school was good, and that any rare cases of bullying were dealt with well by teachers. Inspectors observed no disruptive or inappropriate behaviour in classes or around the school during the inspection.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers effectively instill in pupils high aspirations for their learning and behaviour, and the pupils respond well. As a result, nearly all pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good overall progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' books show that teachers use marking effectively not only to celebrate their achievements, but also to point out clearly the ways in which they can improve their work. Pupils respond well to this guidance; they learn that even by making mistakes they can learn, and are therefore encouraged to attempt challenging tasks.

- Teachers make good use of the assessments that they have made about pupils' differing abilities to plan work at the right level of difficulty, so that they make good progress. During lessons, teachers and teaching assistants check pupils' work, and use questions effectively to probe pupils' understanding and correct any misconceptions. They adapt learning as necessary to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they can.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics through effective teaching, in which pupils are given opportunities to use and apply their mathematical understanding to solve problems. As a result all pupils, including the most able, make good progress.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, and have developed a range of skills so that they can support learning well, both in lessons and in small group work. In particular, they give good support to pupils who are at risk of falling behind with their work.
- Pupils have opportunities to practise writing for different purposes and in different subjects, but do not have enough opportunities to write longer passages in order to develop these skills fully. As a result, while their achievement in writing is good, it is not so strong as in reading or mathematics.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as effective as elsewhere in the school in ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve well.

The achievement of pupils is good

- By the time they leave school, nearly all pupils have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge for the next stage of their education. The proportion who reach high overall standards in reading and mathematics is well above the national average. In writing is lower, but still above the national average.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their use and understanding of phonics. In the 2014 screening check nearly all Year 1 pupils achieved the standard. All Year 2 pupils who had not previously achieved the standard in 2013 did so in 2014.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, so that by the end of it they have attained overall standards which are higher than the national average. The standards they attain in writing are not as high as those in mathematics or reading.
- Most pupils develop a love of reading, and read often. Less-able readers are well supported with regular opportunities to practise their reading with an adult. Consequently, pupils make good progress and attain high standards.
- The most able pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The progress they make in Key Stage 2 is above average, and all those who left Key Stage 1 with above-average levels maintained those standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014. In mathematics, some reached very high standards and made excellent progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants carefully plan programmes of work which meet their specific needs, and provide any additional support they require.
- Disadvantaged pupils also achieve well. The small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium in 2014 means that it is not appropriate to comment on their Key Stage 2 results without risk of identifying individuals.
- Not enough children who enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those typical for their age achieve the expected learning goals in reading, writing and number by the end of this stage.

The early years provision requires improvement

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, some children make good progress. However, a significant number, who start with skills and knowledge which are lower than those seen typically in children of this age, do not make the rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics needed to achieve a good level of development by the end of this stage. As a result these children are not fully prepared for work in Key Stage 1.
- While adults plan a wide range of activities to help children develop across all areas of learning, they do not check on all children effectively enough to ensure that the less mature children focus well on their learning. As a result, these children do not always make as much progress as they could.
- The new coordinator of the Early Years Foundation Stage is already making necessary improvements. For example, a better system has been introduced for identifying and recording children's achievements to help in planning activities, although the impact on children's attainment and progress is yet to be seen.
- Activities often engage children well. There are good working relationships between adults and children. Adults use opportunities as they arise to develop children's language skills. For instance, following the reading of a story called *The Rainbow Fish*, and under the guidance of an adult, a group worked together to make a 'boat' from plastic boxes, and 'waves' from sheets, and made up a short play about a storm at sea.
- Children behave well. They understand what is expected of them because routines are soon established, and they gain confidence to try new activities. However, a number of children lack the maturity to focus on a task for a sustained period, and do not always get enough support to develop attitudes such as perseverance and concentration when facing new challenges.
- The new coordinator is ensuring that adults provide a good level of care, guidance and support. Good procedures to keep children safe at all times mean that they feel secure and are ready to learn.

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

Unique reference number	117193
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	452966

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Cooper
Headteacher	Helen Cook
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2013
Telephone number	020 8428 1166
Fax number	020 8421 6485
Email address	admin@greenfields.herts.sch.uk

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