

Greensted Infant School and Nursery

Kirby Road, , Basildon, SS14 1RX

Inspection dates

6–7 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress. As a result, attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve as well as those from other groups.
- The headteacher is ably supported by a strong leadership team who share her determined ambition to bring about improvements. Together with governors, they have ensured that teaching and achievement are good.
- Leaders closely track the progress of pupils. Pupils who need extra help with their learning are quickly identified and supported. This ensures that those at risk of underachieving make good progress.
- The strong support offered by most adults contributes greatly to pupils' success.
- The school has made a good start on implementing the revised national curriculum. Teachers plan activities which engage pupils well. Pupils are motivated to learn and behave well. The curriculum ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. This is beginning to be reflected in better punctuality and attendance this term. Attendance is now broadly average.
- Pupils are very safe and well cared for in the school. Pupils and their parents and carers agree that this is true.
- Governors know the school well. They regularly visit school to see how well pupils are learning.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes, and achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given demanding tasks to help stretch their learning further. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough of what pupils can achieve.
- Adults in the early years sometimes miss opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills, particularly during activities children choose for themselves.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to respond to teachers' marking and comments to help them deepen their understanding and improve their learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons in depth and made brief visits to several more. Some lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed pupils at breaktimes and in the breakfast club.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other staff. An inspector also met with four members of the governing body. Telephone conversations were held with a representative from the local authority and two other advisors from outside agencies who work with the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils about their experiences in school.
- The inspection team listened to pupils from Year 1 and 2 reading. They also looked at workbooks from past and present pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including: teachers' planning; the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses and resulting development plans; information on pupils' attainment and progress; records of the monitoring of teaching and meetings of the governing body; safeguarding and attendance records.
- Inspectors considered the seven responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View and 25 responses to the staff questionnaire. They also spoke informally to parents and carers as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Margaret Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Keen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greensted Infant and Nursery School is an average-sized primary school. Pupils in the Nursery attend for part time sessions.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is just under a third. This close to the national average.
- The school has one in eight pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs who are supported at school action. This proportion is above average. One in ten such pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. This is slightly above average.
- The school has a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding so that pupils make more rapid progress across the year groups by ensuring that:
 - all pupils are given challenging tasks to enable them to maximise their progress
 - pupils act on advice given in teachers' marking to help them further their understanding and improve their work.
- Improve the early years provision by:
 - ensuring that adults intervene more consistently to question, encourage discussion and move learning forward whilst groups of children are involved in activities they have chosen themselves.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and school leaders are ambitious to bring about continued improvements. They do all they can to ensure the pupils achieve well.
- The school has effective processes in place for self-evaluation. Priorities for improvement are therefore clearly defined and resulting action plans help ensure that all aspects of the school's work continually get better. Governors check regularly on how effectively these plans are being implemented.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, offering pupils a well rounded education. It is enhanced by 'Theme Weeks' such as 'Financial Awareness Week' or 'Shine Week'. It contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them for the responsibilities and opportunities in later life in modern Britain.
- Leaders rigorously check the progress of each pupil so that they can ensure that the school is doing as much as it can to help all of them. The headteacher is particularly effective in trying out new ideas in order to make an impact but not being afraid to move on to another method if the impact starts to become less effective. This is particularly evident in her work to improve pupils' attendance. Attendance is now broadly average.
- Systems of appraisal ensure that all staff are held to account for the quality of their teaching and for pupils' progress. The setting of targets for teachers to improve their work has established a clear link between teachers' pay and their impact in the classroom on pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Termly meetings are held in order to identify pupils who are underachieving and provide early support. These meetings and the assessment information obtained enable teachers to modify and improve their teaching in order to benefit the pupils.
- The majority of the pupil premium funding is spent specifically on one-to-one support. As a result, those pupils who are entitled to benefit receive effective help and are achieving well.
- The primary school sports funding is having a positive impact. There is a link with Chelsea Football Club where trained coaches come in to school to hear readers. They also provide sports coaching. The school has a wide range of sporting activities including gymnastics, football, street dance and cheerleading provided by sports coaches and school staff. This wide variety of opportunities is having a positive impact on increasing pupil participation and on developing healthier lifestyles.
- The provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is managed well with effective systems in place to track their achievement. As a result, they receive effective support and make good progress.
- The topics and subjects studied by the pupils have been revised in accordance with the new national curriculum. They are well planned and engaging. Evidence from past and present pupils' books shows that they apply and develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics well through topic work. Visitors to the school, themed weeks and school trips add enjoyment and interest to the curriculum and help to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- The local authority gives good support to the school, much of this directed through the Basildon Excellence Panel, which provides training and support for local schools. Full use is made of the opportunities provided; for example the school has taken part in a literacy project which has had a positive impact on pupils' writing. This was instigated by the school alongside an external consultant and is now being disseminated to other schools.
- Staff, governors and parents and carers talk very positively about the school. Links with parents and carers are very strong. All of the parents and carers who commented on Parent View said they would recommend the school to others. Workshops are provided for the parents and carers which help them to support their

children's learning more effectively.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors provide good support for the school leaders. They check performance data and question and raise concerns so that the school can provide the best provision for the pupils.
- Each governor is assigned to a class and has a responsibility to oversee a specific area of the school's work. They visit the school regularly and are familiar to both parents and carers, and pupils. This has raised the profile of governors and parents and carers are more confident in approaching them with their concerns.
- They check reports provided by subject leaders. As a result, the governors have a strong awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors have an overview of checks on teachers' performance and understand that teachers who meet the targets set for them will progress along the pay scale. They effectively manage the performance of the headteacher.
- Training is offered to governors but is not always taken up by all of them.
- Governors track finances and are involved in decisions about how to spend additional money, such as pupil premium and sports funding. They understand the impact of these decisions.
- Governors make sure the school's arrangements for safeguarding children fully meet the current national requirements. They check that all adults who work with pupils are checked for suitability and that pupils are kept safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful of each other and of adults. They have good attitudes towards learning, follow instructions well and settle down to work quickly.
- Pupils behave well at playtimes and at lunchtimes. They use the outside spaces in a sensible manner. Pupils enter and leave the building in an orderly way. They are clear on acceptable behaviour rules on the playground and they are reminded of these through assemblies and in work in the classroom. A 'friendship' system ensures that pupils who feel lonely or sad at playtime can go and find someone to play with.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and feel that any incidents are dealt with fairly and quickly by the staff. They know what to do if incidents occur but say that that very little bullying takes place. Parents and carers strongly agree this is the case.
- Behaviour is managed well. There is a clear behaviour policy which all staff and pupils are aware of. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions and feel they are fair. The high number of adults in the school ensures there is good supervision at all times.
- The school has rewards for good attendance. Pupils are aware of this and it is beginning to have an impact in improving attendance, which has been below average for several years. A governor greets pupils at the door when they are late and records their reasons. This is beginning to have an impact on improving punctuality.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Procedures for keeping the pupils safe are effective. Pupils say they like coming to school and feel safe.
- The schools systems for safeguarding pupils are robust and comply with all statutory regulations.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the majority of lessons teaching engages pupils. Much of the work set for them is at the right level to

enable them to achieve well. Occasionally, work is too easy for some of the pupils and their learning does not proceed at a quick enough pace. Pupils are encouraged to work hard in most lessons and aim towards challenging targets, regardless of their abilities and starting points.

- Work seen in last year's books as well as checks done by the school leaders and evidence gathered throughout the inspection demonstrate that teaching over time impacts well on pupils' achievement and usually ensures that all of them achieve to the best of their ability. This work also shows that teachers promote the essential basic skills of literacy, including reading, and numeracy well.
- The atmosphere in classrooms is calm and purposeful. Pupils come prepared to work, take care over presentation and celebrate their achievements together.
- Overall, pupils make good progress because teachers give clear explanations. Teachers check pupils' understanding and progress throughout lessons by the use of careful questioning and adapting plans, where necessary, to take account of pupils' understanding. However, this is not consistent throughout the school.
- Teachers ensure pupils' attitudes to their learning and their interest in their work are strong by providing topics which takes into account the pupils' interests. Pupils talk positively about the topics they cover, the lessons they enjoy and how they like to learn new things. They particularly enjoy the themed weeks such as 'Shine Week' or 'Victorian Week' because they felt they learn a lot and they are exciting and different.
- Teachers' use of assessment information and other data is good. They are aware of how well each pupil in their class is learning and this helps them to address any underachievement quickly and effectively. They are also able to check the progress of different groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they usually plan lessons that capture, excite and involve pupils, resulting in rapid progress. However, this is not consistent, and sometimes pupils do not find activities sufficiently engaging.
- Teachers and support staff have good relationships with the pupils so they feel confident to discuss and comment when relevant. Adults use the rewards system and 'Golden Time' well to encourage good attitudes towards learning and to recognise good achievements.
- In the best practice, regular marking of pupils' work provides them with clear suggestions for improvements and is constructive. Pupils talk positively about how helpful they find the teachers' marking. However, this does not happen in all classes. Homework contributes well to pupils' progress. Pupils are encouraged to read at least four times a week with parents and carers and a reward system is in place for those who do. A weekly piece of homework is set on a Friday.
- Teaching assistants plan with teachers and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. They support pupils of all abilities and give extra learning sessions where they are needed.
- Teachers also plan activities and give guidance to help pupils of all abilities to build on what they have already learned. However, sometimes the more-able pupils are given work which is too easy and so they do not attain as well as they could.
- The majority of parents and carers who gave their views believe that their children are taught well and make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils join the school in the Nursery with skills that are broadly typical for their age, but vary considerably between individuals. A large proportion of pupils have weak skills in speaking and listening and poor vocabulary when they start. Children make good progress so that, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is

above the national average. This was the case in 2014.

- More able pupils make good progress. Some are supported by the pupil premium funding. Occasionally the work they are given does not provide sufficient challenge.
- Pupils make good progress in their reading. Most pupils read well and have many opportunities to use their reading skills in lessons and in topic work. Less-able readers are helped with regular support sessions and opportunities to practise reading in small groups or individually. Pupils show clearly how they cope with unfamiliar words using 'sounding out' and blending techniques which they have been taught.
- The school has taken part in various literacy projects which have a positive impact on achievement in writing and reading.
- Data about the achievement of pupils currently in the school confirm they are making good progress in all areas. This is affirmed by the work seen in their books.
- This year, in mathematics there has been a focus on practical activities and problem-solving. Subject leaders have been supported by an outside consultant.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in phonics (linking letters and sounds) in 2014 were above the national average. Pupils are taught phonics in a systematic way which enables them to make good progress.
- There is evidence of good achievement in other subjects. Pupils produce some good quality, interesting work. They take a pride in the presentation of their work and handwriting is neat, with the majority of letters and numbers correctly formed. The good grounding pupils are given in basic skills enables them to transfer their learning to topic work.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit greatly from the additional one-to-one support they are given, which the pupil premium has funded. This ensures that these pupils achieve well. Although disadvantaged pupils have achieved well, in 2014 the gap between disadvantaged pupils and pupils within the school and those nationally has widened, particularly in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. They receive effective extra help and the impact of this support is evident in their good progress.
- Primary sports funding has been used to widen the range of opportunities to take part in a variety of games and sports supported by specialist sports coaches. This has led to greater confidence in some children and a greater awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle.

The early years provision is good

- The strong relationships and effective communication with parents, including home visits by staff, ensures that children's entry into Nursery is smooth and effective.
- A large proportion of children have weak skills in speaking and listening when they start school. Adults work effectively with them in small groups to develop these skills systematically, so they are greatly improved by the end of Reception.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Good systems and routines are embedded from the beginning by all adults so that children understand acceptable behaviour and rules both in the classroom and outdoors.
- Children make good progress from what are sometimes very low starting points so that, by the end of the Reception Year, their skills, knowledge and understanding in almost all areas are broadly average.

- Careful and detailed systems to check children’s learning ensure that problems are identified as quickly as possible. Any child who needs extra help is given it quickly and effectively, and activities are matched to all children’s different abilities.
- Children are kept safe by the adults who support them.
- There are strong relationships between adults and children. This enables the children to develop self confidence and become confident learners. Staff encourage parents to ‘stay and play’ with their children. Parents and carers appreciate this arrangement and feel their children settle well into school. This also gives them an idea of what goes on in school and how they can best support this.
- Transition from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year 1 is planned for and runs smoothly. Close links between the classes ensures up to date and detailed information about each child is shared, ensuring all adults are aware of relevant information they need to know in order to make the best provision for each child.
- The outside areas provide an interesting and stimulating environment in which the children can develop a wide range of skills.
- When children are choosing their own activities adults do not intervene enough with questions to stimulate children’s thinking and moving learning forward. This slows the development of essential skills, knowledge and understanding particularly in the acquisition of language. For example in the Nursery class, a group of children with poor speaking and listening skills, playing with rockets and spaceships, were playing alongside each other without interacting or speaking to each other. Adults missed the chance to develop the childrens’ language skills in a context that clearly engaged them.

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	114863
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	448448

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Hunt
Headteacher	Jo Farrow
Date of previous school inspection	24-25 March 2010
Telephone number	01268 552535
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