

Kingfisher Community Primary School

Kingfisher Drive, Princes Park, Chatham, ME5 7NX

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is not consistently good.
- Progress is uneven across the school and some pupils are not yet making sufficient progress to close gaps in their learning.
- Across the school, achievement is weaker in writing than it is in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement because some teachers do not have high enough expectations for pupils' achievement and do not challenge them sufficiently with appropriately demanding work.
- Marking and feedback are not always effective. Sometimes pupils are not given time to respond to teachers' comments or are unsure what to do to improve their work.
- Teaching does not always fully engage or motivate all pupils. Sometimes pupils lose their focus on learning in lessons and their behaviour slips. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Middle leaders are yet to have a full impact on their curriculum areas and ensure that all teachers are clear about the next steps in learning in different subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The Trust has provided effective leadership, support and training for teachers. This has resulted in improvements to teaching and learning. Year 6 pupils are now making good progress.
- The Executive headteacher and the Head of School provide effective leadership for the school. They have raised morale and have secured the confidence of staff and parents since starting at the school.
- There is a positive, calm and orderly atmosphere in the school and pupils enjoy coming, as shown in their improving attendance.
- Behaviour has improved. Pupils conduct themselves well in the playground and around the school, and the majority of pupils are polite and friendly and want to learn.
- The school keeps pupils safe and secure.
- Pupils get off to good start in the early years. They enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Governors know the school well and, along with Trust colleagues, hold the school to account effectively for its performance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, some of them jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at pupils' work in their books, listened to some pupils read and observed pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the Executive headteacher, Head of School and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions took place with pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's own check on its performance and the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at the 11 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with some parents during a coffee morning meeting. They also took account of 16 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Anna Boshier

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of Year 6.
- Provision is made for the early years in a Nursery, which children attend for either morning or afternoon sessions or all day, and a Reception class, which children attend full time.
- There is a children's centre in the school which is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- In September 2013, the school became a sponsored academy as part of the Griffin Schools Trust, which oversees the work of 12 schools in the Midlands and the South-East of England.
- Since becoming an academy there have been changes in the senior leadership of the school. The previous headteacher resigned in December 2014. An interim headteacher led the school from January 2015 to June 2015, when the current Executive headteacher and Head of School took over the leadership of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve
 - work is consistently challenging
 - teaching fully captures pupils' interests so that they sustain their involvement in learning and behaviour does not slip during lessons
 - pupils know how to improve their work from teachers' marking and feedback and have time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Raise standards in writing to match the already improving standards in reading.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - continuing to support the middle leadership team to develop their curriculum areas so that all teachers are clear about the next steps in learning in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The Executive headteacher and the Head of School have, in a short space of time, secured the confidence of staff, pupils and parents in the leadership of the school. Morale is high and there is a shared sense of purpose and determination to improve.
- Parents are particularly positive about the Head of School's work and the changes she has made. For example, they appreciate the fact that she is at the gate every morning to welcome pupils and parents. They also like the opportunity pupils of all ages have to attend an increased number and range of clubs. Previously there was no provision for pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Since becoming an academy, the Griffin Schools Trust has successfully supported the school to raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching. The Trust has also secured a leadership and management team with a track record of expertise and the skills and enthusiasm needed to drive the necessary improvements.
- Building on the Trust's robust monitoring processes, and the work of the Trust's interim headteacher, current senior leaders have identified what needs to be improved and have made a successful start in tackling areas of weakness. This has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The management of teachers' performance is linked to pupils' progress and ambitious targets are appropriately set. Professional development supports whole-school improvement.
- Until this year, middle managers, including subject leaders, were not fully involved in the development of their subjects. They were also not involved with ensuring that all teachers were clear about the next steps in learning to ensure pupils' rapid achievement. This is now changing as a result of focused professional development and they now feel that 'their voice is finally being heard'.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, leaders have correctly identified that the curriculum needs a review in the light of the new National Curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the curriculum and assemblies. The school fosters good relationships between all its pupils and between pupils and staff. The school promotes equality of opportunity and works effectively with pupils to tackle discrimination and understand British values so that they are adequately prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and are effective. Procedures are implemented by all staff to keep pupils safe.
- Additional funding to provide a range of support for disadvantaged pupils is having some impact in improving progress, and the gaps between this group and others are beginning to narrow.
- The additional funding the school receives for sport is used effectively, mainly to join the Greenacre Sports partnership. This provides pupils and staff with access to good coaching so that they can increase their skills and expertise in physical education and sports. There are more opportunities for pupils to participate in after-school sports and breakfast clubs and pupils are trained to lead physical activities at lunchtimes, which help promote good behaviour.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body has a good knowledge of the work of the school. As a member of the Trust Board, and alongside colleagues within the Trust, she ensures that the school benefits from the additional expertise and capacity afforded by the Trust.
 - Governors are aware of the school's achievement data and the quality of teaching. Systems for performance management and the relationship to teachers' pay are understood. Governors and other members of the Trust work closely with the school to tackle underperformance, and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
 - Governors understand how additional funding is spent and the impact on pupils' achievement, health and well-being.
 - Governors hold the school to account effectively for its performance and provide a good balance of support and challenge.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because, on occasion in lessons, some pupils become restless and inattentive when teaching does not hold their interest or challenge them sufficiently and they lose their focus on learning. This sometimes causes some low-level disruption which can affect

the learning of others.

- There are a few pupils with specific behavioural difficulties. They are managed well by most teachers and most pupils, who accept and understand that some pupils need support to manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils' conduct around the school, in assemblies and in the playground is good. They are polite and friendly and happy to talk to visitors about their work and their school. There is a positive, happy atmosphere and pupils get on well together.
- Actions to improve the behaviour of pupils have had a positive impact. Pupils say that behaviour has improved. Pupils and their parents appreciate the morning welcome and lining up in the playground as it ensures a calm, orderly start to the day.
- A teaching assistant runs the 'Oasis Group' at playtimes and lunchtimes for pupils who find it easier to socialise in a smaller group. This is a good example of the importance the school gives to the welfare, care and personal and social development of pupils.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities, such as head girl and head boy and as members of the school parliament. They are proud of their responsibilities and take their roles seriously.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a calm, safe and healthy start to the school day and has helped to improve attendance, which has improved and is closer to average, and punctuality.
- A minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire still have some concerns about behaviour and bullying. However, the majority believe that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved, as do all of the parents who spoke to an inspector.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and that the school helps them to stay safe in and out of school.
- Pupils say that they know how to stay safe when online or using computers or mobile phones.
- Pupils say that there is no longer any bullying at the school. They have a good awareness of what sort of behaviour constitutes bullying and are confident that should any issues arise, they would be listened to and staff would sort it out quickly.
- Most parents who responded to the questionnaire believe that the school keeps their children safe and that they are well looked after and happy.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress across the school is too variable. The quality of teaching has improved recently because there has been a consistent and concerted effort to secure good quality teaching and support for staff already working in the school. This has led to improvements. Some teaching is good or better but pupils' achievement remains inconsistent across the school.
- Sometimes pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their learning because some teachers' expectations are not high enough. As a consequence, these pupils often lose their attention to learning in lessons and their progress is not as rapid as it should be.
- There are some good examples of marking and feedback which give pupils clear pointers on how to improve their work. However, this is not done consistently well across the school. Sometimes pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve or they do not have time to respond to teachers' comments to address any misunderstandings or to correct their work.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is improving. Better and increased use of resources to help pupils explain and understand mathematical concepts is helping teachers to more fully meet the needs of all abilities in mathematics. This, together with teachers' improved subject knowledge, is helping pupils to start making more rapid progress. Teaching of reading is a strength. However, leaders have correctly identified that teaching in writing is not as effective and plans have already been put in place to improve this aspect of the school's work. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to talk about their ideas for writing before getting their thoughts down on paper. A group of pupils agreed that this, 'really helps us to get things sorted in our head and we can get good ideas from each other'.
- Teachers expect pupils to produce work that is neat and tidy, and this is evident in their books. Displays of work and helpful information on the walls are used well by teachers and pupils to support learning. Children in the early years were very proud of, and keen to talk about, their 'wow walls'.
- Teaching assistants usually work well with teachers and make an increasingly effective contribution to pupils' learning as a result of training opportunities to develop their skills.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2014, standards at the end of Year 6 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Many pupils made the expected progress from their low starting points. However, progress was not rapid enough, given a legacy of underachievement and low attainment, for many to catch up in their learning and attain the nationally expected level by the time they leave Year 6.
- Actions taken by the Trust and senior leaders are starting to have an impact. Work in pupils' books and the school's checks on how well pupils are doing show that significantly more pupils are on track to attain the expected level by the end of Year 6 this year in reading and mathematics. Writing, however, is not showing a similar level of improvement. Overall, standards are improving but are not yet high enough for all pupils across the school.
- Similarly, a higher proportion of pupils are on track to achieve the expected level in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2, but not in writing.
- Progress is improving but remains uneven across the year groups. It is not as strong in writing as it is in reading and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 are making rapid progress which is exceeding what is expected. This is a result of good and often outstanding teaching. For example, some outstanding progress was made by a small group of pupils in mathematics who were average at the end of Year 2 and are on track to attain the highest National Curriculum Level 6 this year.
- An increased proportion of most-able pupils are on track to achieve well and reach the higher National Curriculum levels this year compared to last year by the end of Year 6.
- Last year, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) checks was below average. Currently, pupils in Year 1 are achieving more rapidly in phonics and senior leaders have plans well underway to implement a different approach to teaching phonics next academic year. This is to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to apply their phonic skills when reading and writing.
- Improvements in pupils' achievement in reading this year have been, in part, due to small-group guided reading sessions and a greater promotion of reading and enjoyment of reading across the school. The older, most-able pupils can express their preferences for reading styles and favourite authors.
- From their different starting points, disadvantaged pupils are beginning to make better progress, particularly in reading and writing in Years 1 to 3. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 6 was over 12 months behind that of other pupils nationally in mathematics, and around 16 months behind in reading and writing. Compared to their classmates, disadvantaged pupils were nearly six months behind in mathematics and around 12 months behind in reading and writing.
- There is an improving picture of progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs because their needs are being met increasingly effectively. Where this is the case, especially for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, their progress is sometimes more rapid than it is for other pupils. However, the gap between their achievement and others in the school remains too wide.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Nursery or Reception classes with levels of skills and knowledge that are generally below those typical for their ages. Their literacy and mathematical skills are weaker than normal.
- They make good progress throughout the early years. By the end of the Reception Year the proportion of children who reach a good level of development is above that found nationally. Children are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- Children settle well, are happy and quickly grow in confidence and independence. They play and work together well. They behave well and have good relationships with staff, who ensure that they are kept safe.
- Teaching is good. Staff provide a good range of stimulating, interesting activities that motivate and engage children. Children enjoy all that they do and particularly enjoy being 'learning detectives' and questioning each other about what they know.
- Teamwork is strong and all staff are well prepared and organised to support the children when they are learning in small groups, as in phonics, or when children choose activities for themselves.
- Regular use is made of the outdoor area and children particularly enjoy learning in the 'Forest School' where they learn to take risks and work and play in a different environment.
- The leadership and management of the early years, supported by the Head of School from a partner school, are effective. A close check is kept on children's progress and development. There are good links between home and school before children start and during their time in the early years.

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	139927
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	450304

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The Griffin Schools Trust
Chair	Jennie Thomas
Headteacher	Janey Denton Executive headteacher Amardeep Panesar Head of School
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01634 335850
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