

Great Smeaton Academy Primary School

Great Smeaton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 2EQ

Inspection dates	1–2 December 2015
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and governors have managed a period of significant change so that the quality of teaching has improved and outcomes for pupils continue to be good. As a result, the overall effectiveness of the school has improved.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and new systems for holding staff to account for the impact of their work and for managing the performance of teachers are effective.
- Teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Lessons are interesting and progress at a pace which ensures that pupils are interested and motivated to learn.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are particularly strong and contribute to the good behaviour and attitudes of pupils. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school.
- Improvements have been made to the arrangements for assessing and tracking the attainment and progress of pupils. This is helping teachers to identify any gaps in learning and plan lessons to remedy these.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They are effective at boosting the skills of pupils who have gaps in their learning or who are falling behind.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and recent improvements mean that reading, writing and mathematics are taught systematically.
- Typically children in the Reception Year make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Small inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that occasionally work set does not challenge the most-able pupils well enough to deepen or extend their understanding, particularly in mathematics.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is not consistently implemented across all classes and this sometimes limits pupils' progress.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and as a consequence their skills at influencing the work of other teachers are underdeveloped.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning even further by offering greater challenge for the most-able pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school's policies, for example the school's marking and feedback policy, is consistently implemented by all teachers
 - the skills of new subject leaders are developed further so that they can influence the work of other teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and managers have successfully addressed all of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection. Strengths have been maintained and built upon so that teaching, pupils' behaviour and outcomes are securely good. Consequently, this is a happy school where pupils enjoy both the social and academic opportunities and learn well.
- The school's leadership, including the governing body, now has a clearer understanding of its role than at the last inspection. Improved monitoring and evaluation of teaching has helped to target resources and bring about improvement.
- The new headteacher has been instrumental in engaging with other schools. Staff have benefited from visiting other schools and from effective training, guidance and support for teachers. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching. Leaders know there is potential to exploit these valuable links further, for example to provide opportunities for teachers to compare their assessments with teachers in other schools.
- Performance management is used robustly to identify annual targets for all teachers and is helping to hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes. The evaluation of teaching is accurate and pinpoints areas where individuals need further training or support. This provides leaders with an accurate view of the impact of teaching over time.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is effective and has ensured that teaching has improved. However, although work is regularly marked the school's policy on marking and corrections is not always followed fully. Teachers' comments are typically encouraging and contributes to the good relationships that exist between teachers. All teachers acknowledge and praise what has been done well. In the best examples pupils are given clear guidance for improving their next piece of work or directed to make improvements to the current piece of work. However, sometimes, even where the need for work to be corrected or improved has been identified, corrections are not made.
- The good curriculum is broad and balanced. It has recently been reviewed to ensure that reading, writing and mathematics are taught more systematically. However, leaders know there is more to do with their planning for spelling. Termly class topics provide the basis for teaching other subjects, such as history and geography, and allow pupils many opportunities to practise their writing skills.
- Although the curriculum provides effectively for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the planning for this aspect of the school's work is relatively new. Nevertheless, assemblies and whole-school themes, such as the 'statements we live by', contribute to pupils' good all-round development. Leaders correctly identify the need to plan for these areas more systematically.
- Pupil premium funding is used to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum, including residential visits, and to provide focused support for individual pupils. Consequently, a wide range of extra programmes, designed to help pupils who have additional needs, are in place and are helping pupils to make good progress.
- Sports funding is being used well to allow a local specialist teacher to work alongside staff to deliver physical education and to develop the skills of staff. Pupils say they enjoy exercise and understand the importance of regular exercise.
- Although the work of leaders at all levels has improved, a few are relatively new to their roles and their skills at influencing the work of other teachers are still developing.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of how well the school is doing. Governors have high aspirations for the school's future success and do not want the school to become isolated again. They are clear about the progress pupils are making through their good knowledge of national performance measures. Governors have regular updates on pupil progress, and they challenge senior leaders to ensure that pupils are doing well across the school.
 - The governing body is clear about the arrangements linking teachers' performance to pay. Governors use their skills to check the school's budget and the use of pupil premium funding and know its impact on disadvantaged pupils. However, the formal review of some policies is not always timely.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet statutory requirements. Staff are appropriately trained and vigilant. Leaders work with parents and other agencies to make sure pupils are well cared for and supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and outcomes continue to be good. Teachers manage classes well. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils work very well in lessons and are always keen to succeed.
- Teachers' questioning is effective and teachers skilfully question pupils in lessons, to check understanding. Pupils benefit from much individual adult time and support. Pupils say they value the time and attention their teachers are able to give them because of the small size of classes.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Younger pupils benefit from daily phonics lessons to teach them the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. In one particularly strong lesson, balloons were popped to reveal a selection of words for pupils to sort by identifying words containing 'ai', 'ay' or 'a_e'. Pupils responded particularly well and were very successful at reading and sorting the words and going on to write sentences using some of the words. Pupils read individually and in groups and they value the opportunity to borrow books from the school library.
- In mathematics lessons teachers explain ideas clearly, often using the interactive whiteboards effectively to clarify key points of learning. In one mathematics lesson, pupils were provided with a series of challenges of increasing difficulty, all related to measuring the size of angles. They all worked well to complete the challenges using protractors accurately.
- Teachers plan activities that interest and engage pupils, as well as developing their skills and understanding systematically. This means that pupils are enthusiastic about their work. Teachers develop pupils' social skills and their speaking and listening abilities very well. For example, in one lesson pupils very enthusiastically worked in pairs to identify persuasive language to sell a range of products. When each pair presented their interesting ideas other pupils listened attentively.
- Assessments are regular and teachers use their knowledge of pupils well to provide work that is neither too easy nor too hard for different ages or abilities within the class, so that pupils make good progress. However, in a small number of cases the most able are not always challenged and sometimes undertake work that does not allow them to show their depth of understanding or their well-developed skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are generally articulate and confident learners. They understand that school is a place where they will learn new things and they are motivated to do well.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They learn to get along well with others and demonstrate well-developed social skills. They have an understanding of right and wrong. For example, some older pupils described as unfair the fact that in some countries women are not allowed to drive cars. One pupil talked sensitively about a television programme she had watched where a teenage girl felt she was in the wrong body.
- Pupils understand that the rules within the school are designed to keep them safe. Similarly, they understand that across the country laws are also designed to keep everyone safe. Older pupils have some knowledge of democracy and voting. Although pupils are very tolerant and respectful of others, their knowledge and understanding of the wide range of faiths and cultures that are present in Britain are less well developed.
- Pupils have a reasonable understanding of different types of bullying. They are clear that although there was some bullying in the past this is no longer an issue at the school. They categorically state that the 'mentor groups', led by staff so that all pupils are in small mixed-age groups, would allow any difficulties to be shared and sorted out quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils stated that behaviour around the school is usually good and any disagreements are quickly sorted out by adults. They state clearly that lessons are never disrupted because of inappropriate behaviour. Indeed, during the inspection pupils' very good behaviour in almost all lessons contributed significantly to their enjoyment and learning.
- Behaviour at lunchtime and playtime was observed to be good. Pupils value the activities and games they can access during wet playtimes and in the playground there were many examples observed of older pupils helping younger pupils.

- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good and often exemplary. They are polite and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for school is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. They arrive punctually and are keen to begin their work promptly at the start of the day and after lunchtime and playtimes.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- The quality of work in pupils' books, learning observed in lessons and the school's assessment information all show that pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- From their different starting points pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Children usually enter the Reception class with attainment that is above what is typical for their age, but this varies from year to year and between individuals. They get off to a good start and are well prepared for their time in Key Stage 1. Their skills at working out unknown words are strong when they enter Year 1 and this helps with the development of their reading skills. Consequently, by the time they reach the end of Year 1 almost all pupils are at the expected level when their phonics skills are checked in national assessments.
- When pupils leave Year 2 they are well prepared for Key Stage 2. During their time in Key Stage 2 pupils make consistently good progress and by the end of Year 6 attainment is consistently above average.
- Across the school the achievement of the most-able pupils sometimes varies a little. Although they make good progress, occasionally the work set is not quite challenging enough or the teachers' expectations do not reflect pupils' already high levels of skills or knowledge. Consequently, outcomes for these pupils are good rather than outstanding.
- By Year 6, pupils are typically competent, regular and keen readers, who display preferences for the types of books they choose to read. They make particularly good use of their writing skills, in a range of subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points because of the extra help they receive that is carefully tailored to their needs. Consequently, they make good gains in their knowledge and understanding so that most reach similar standards to their peers by the time they leave the school.
- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils make good progress and their attainment and progress is in line with their peers at the school and nationally. Good achievement of all groups reflects the school's effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Pupils are proud of their work and the environment is used effectively to celebrate pupils' work in a broad range of subjects including art, history and science.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in a well-ordered and stimulating environment where all learners are valued, cared for and supported well. Partnerships with parents are strong and this contributes to the good outcomes for children. Parents say they value the care and attention given to their children when they first start at the school.
- From their differing starting points school records and recorded work show that children make good progress in all areas of learning. Although attainment on entry is usually above what is typical this varies from year to year and is sometimes closer to what is typical. By the time they enter Year 1, almost all pupils are working at the level expected for their age. This ensures that they are well prepared for their next stage of education. For example, the skills of those pupils now in Year 1 show that they are able to form letters well, can write some sentences independently and know and can order numbers.
- Good care and relationships between staff and children are evident from the way that children talk about their first year at the school. Children benefit from regular access to computers, and acquire good basic skills in computing.
- A particular strength is the teaching of reading and the development of children's understanding of letters and sounds. Consequently, by the time they are in Year 1 almost all are able to work out unknown words.
- Staff know children well and there are effective systems in place to track progress.

School details

Unique reference number	137348
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10002082

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Beauchamp
Headteacher	Bernie Greenwood
Telephone number	01609 881349
Website	www.greatsmeatonschool.co.uk
Email address	office@greatsmeatonschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2013

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those pupils in local authority care and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- Since the last inspection the previously acting headteacher has become the permanent headteacher. Two of the three class teachers have changed.
- At the time of the inspection there were no children in the early years stage of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight parts of lessons, taught by four teachers, of which six were jointly observed with the headteacher. Additionally, some lessons were visited for short periods of time to scrutinise the work in pupils' books and to observe their behaviour. The inspector listened to some pupils read
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff and members of the governing body. The inspector met with a group of pupils and pupils were spoken with in lessons and in the playground.
- The inspector analysed the 19 responses that had been submitted to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. The inspector spoke to 14 parents and grandparents as they collected their children at the end of the day.
- A range of school documents were scrutinised, including school improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The evaluation of the early years was undertaken using a range of evidence from previous years, including children's work from their time in Reception, photographs, planning, discussions with the children in Year 1 and 2 about their first year at the school and discussions with parents as well as responses to Parent View. Additionally, the school's own assessment and tracking information was evaluated along with the outcomes of the national assessments of children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection team

Amraz Ali, Lead Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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