

Great Creaton Primary School

Welford Road, Creaton, Northampton NN6 8NH

Inspection dates

1–2 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement. Pupils are beginning to make much better progress in reading, writing, and mathematics. However, there are still too many gaps in pupils' learning for outcomes to be good overall.
- The most able pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are not yet reaching the highest levels, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is because in the past, pupils were not challenged well enough.
- Teaching assistants, particularly when interacting with pupils in Years 1 to 4, do not focus enough on reinforcing and developing pupils' thinking and understanding. This limits learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- During lessons, not all adults check that pupils fully understand what they are learning.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Not all children reach the levels expected of them, particularly the most able, because not all adults capitalise fully on children's interests and this hinders their progress.
- Leaders have not yet closed pupils' gaps in learning so that more pupils are working at age-related expectation throughout the school.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They take effective action to address the weaknesses they identify.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 2, has improved. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and those who are disadvantaged make good progress.
- The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful; pupils speak knowledgeably about different religions and cultures.
- Improvements in the quality of provision is resulting in pupils beginning to make faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is good; attendance is above average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes, throughout the school, by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils, especially in upper Key Stage 2, are set tasks that challenge them, to extend their learning further
 - teaching assistants focus more effectively on reinforcing and developing pupils' thinking and understanding so that they make good gains in their learning in Years 1 to 4
 - gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics and writing, are identified by teachers and addressed more rapidly
 - all adults working in the early years have the necessary skills to support the development and learning of the youngest children in the school so that they make better progress in learning across the early years curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The relatively new headteacher has been effective in halting the serious decline in standards at this school. She has brought about changes to begin to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This is beginning to make positive impact on the progress pupils make in learning. As a result, outcomes are improving steadily and learning gaps are beginning to close. Leaders at all levels are working hard to bring about change. This is as a result of the higher expectations that have been set by the headteacher.
- Progress, as pupils move through Years 3 to 6, has accelerated and outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved. However, leaders understand that due to a legacy of underachievement not all pupils reach the standards they should.
- Leaders have established systems to track and record pupils' performance. The headteacher has a clear picture of the progress individual pupils make. She is vigilant in tracking how well pupils are doing and is acting more quickly to address barriers to learning and overcome them. Pupils spoken with during the inspection remarked with excitement about the way their school has improved and their appreciation their new teachers' efforts to support them in their learning.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of what constitutes good teaching and checks the quality of teaching regularly. She ensures that teachers understand what they need to do to improve. The headteacher is well supported by the leaders of English and mathematics. They track the progress of pupils, and know how well each pupil is doing. Their actions for improvement are based on careful analysis of pupils' outcomes. As a result, they are effective in supporting the headteacher to bring about improvement in the school.
- There is a well-established system to measure teacher performance which is linked to teachers' salary structure. In addition, teachers say they are offered many professional development opportunities to improve their expertise.
- The curriculum is well planned to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During assemblies, all pupils have good opportunities to reflect about their thoughts and actions and identify the moral aspect of stories they listen to. During discussions, Year 5 and 6 pupils spoke of enjoying the opportunity to speak French and to learn about different religions. The many extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' personal development – which is good.
- Senior leaders and teachers ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 spoke confidently and with a good understanding about democracy and the importance of mutual respect for all. They discussed, with maturity, their understanding of freedom of speech and how the opinions of others are important.
- The physical education and sport premium is used effectively to enable pupils to take part in many sporting events, some of which are competitive. Teachers benefit from working with a sports coach to develop their expertise.
- Few pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for pupil premium funding. However, leaders ensure that those who are eligible receive effective support and so achieve well.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a well-organised monitoring schedule. As they monitor the school's plan for improvement, they take part in different activities which are linked to the schools' key priorities and enable them to develop their awareness of the quality of teaching and learning. Governors understand the systems in place for checking the work of the school, for example to measure teacher performance, and their involvement in appraising the headteacher's performance.
 - Governors and teachers talk confidently about pupil premium funding and the physical education and sport premium. They are aware of the pupils benefitting from the funding, and understand the impact it makes on their achievement.
 - Governors are well informed about the work of the school. Minutes from recent governing body meetings show that governors frequently ask for more information and challenge the school leaders during discussions. As a result, they ensure that they hold leaders to account for their work with rigour.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils say they are safe and have confidence in the adults who help them during their time in school. Governors and staff are suitably trained and work effectively together to ensure that pupils are safe. Parents do not have concerns about safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Senior leaders have done a great deal to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection, however, teaching is not yet of a consistently good quality. The new teachers are bringing more experience and expertise into the school and are beginning to improve the quality of learning experiences for pupils. There is evidence in pupils' books to show that pupils are beginning to make much better progress in their learning. However, pupils are not making consistently good progress to ensure that they are meeting age-related expectations. Teachers are working hard to improve the quality of pupils' learning, and they receive good guidance about how to do so from school leaders.
- Pupils' work rates have increased over recent times because their teachers expect more of them. Teachers have a secure understanding of pupils' skills and their prior knowledge. They are using this information to plan units of work, which is more closely meeting pupils' needs. Nevertheless, the most able pupils, have not been sufficiently challenged in the past to reach their full potential. Teachers are beginning to address this challenge, but still need to provide more suitably challenging work for these pupils.
- When teaching assistants interact with pupils, particularly with those in the Reception class and those in Years 1 to 4, they do not give them enough opportunities to share or explain their thinking. This is not built upon well enough to extent pupils' thinking or develop their understanding of what they are learning.
- Teachers provide pupils with accurate feedback on how well they are doing following checks on their learning. The marking of pupils' work complies with the school's marking policy and enables pupils to identify what they need to do to improve.
- Where teaching is good, assessment information is used well to match activities to pupils' abilities. For instance, teachers ensure that the oldest pupils are provided with suitably challenging texts that are aligned to their stage of development in reading. Pupils enjoy reading and are motivated to discuss a range of texts with their peers and adults. Consequently, pupils of different abilities are quickly developing their skills in being able to understand the meaning of the reading material.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. In this area, pupils are well prepared for their next school.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted within the curriculum. Pupils speak confidently, knowledgeably and enjoy discussions with each other and adults. Pupils listen and are respectful towards each other as their classmates speak, for example, about the importance of eating healthily. They are appreciative of the opportunities they are given to take part in physical education lessons and the additional sporting activities that are on offer which also keep their bodies healthy. Links with other schools develop their cultural awareness well. For example, pupils visited a school in Leicester – where many children come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- During discussions, pupils say they feel safe in school and demonstrate that they have every confidence in the adults who work in the school to keep them safe. They talk sensibly about internet safety and the importance of being aware of the dangers when online. Pupils know about the possible dangers related to associations with strangers. They know that even when at home they have to be careful, for example, when near electricity.
- Pupils demonstrate well developed social skills. For example, the youngest children mix well with the older pupils and vice versa. Older pupils were seen working well together, discussing what they were learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour is good as pupils move around the school and also in almost all lessons. Occasionally, if a group of pupils is off task, for whatever reason, there can be chattering. Teachers' expectations at these times are sometimes too low and it takes too long for pupils to respond to the teachers' instructions or requests. This is rare, because attitudes to learning are generally positive.
- The school has developed systems to log incidents of behaviour that are less than good. There are few

recorded because these incidents are rare.

- Pupils believe that behaviour in their school is good and so do almost all parents. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils behave well. Pupils also say that bullying is very rare because they all get along and are kind towards each other.
- Pupils say they really enjoy coming to school and their parents endorse this. As a result, attendance is above average and there are no persistent absentees.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The trend over the last three years shows average attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Progress as pupils move through Years 1 to 6 is accelerating but inconsistencies remain in the progress they make in different classes. Most pupils make at least expected progress, with some making good progress, particularly in reading. In the most recent outcomes for the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils making or exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is close to the national average. This is an improvement from the previously inadequate progress that was made by the last two cohorts of pupils who left the school at the end of Year 6. This improvement is closely aligned to the improving quality of teaching at the school.
- The standards pupils reach are not high enough. While standards in reading have improved considerably, and for the most part are now broadly in line with age-related expectations across the school, pupils still lag behind in writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils are not reaching standards that are typical for their age, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough. School performance information shows that they do not attain as well as they should, particularly in writing. Hence, their outcomes are less than good.
- Pupils' outcomes are better in reading than in writing and mathematics. In Year 1, pupils do well in the national screening check in phonics and the proportion who reach the expected level is above average. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils demonstrate a love of reading and only a few read below the levels expected for their ages. Pupils' reading skills are carefully tracked and they are supported well by the teacher and teaching assistant.
- School performance information shows that a number of current Year 6 pupils, who need to catch up because of previous underachievement, made good progress last year in reading and mathematics. This was not the case in writing and they have further to go to reach age-related expectations.
- Across each year group, current pupils' rates of progress are accelerating. This is evidenced in pupils' workbooks and verified by the school's own data.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities generally make good progress in relation to their starting points. This is because adults know them well and they are effectively supported by their teachers.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because teachers ensure that their individual needs are specifically catered for.
- Leaders and managers track the progress of individual pupils closely and is helping to identify where pupils have gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, with the exception of the most able, pupils are being given activities that are helping them to make faster progress. This is helping pupils to narrow the gap in attainment in reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils' skills in writing remain below what is expected in relation to their age. Consequently, pupils are not as well prepared as they could be for secondary education.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- The majority of children enter Reception with skills and attributes that are broadly typical for their age in all seven areas of the early years curriculum.
- School performance information, over the last two years, shows that the majority of children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception year. This means that children are well prepared for their start in Year 1. Nevertheless, the work in children's learning journals shows that children are not making anything more than expected progress from their starting points. The most able children, do not make the progress they should because not all adults are as skilled in supporting and challenging them as they should

be.

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities make progress that is slower than others do in some areas of learning such as literacy. However, the early years leader carefully plans for their needs where they demonstrate particular aptitudes and skills children do well.
- The early years leader knows the children well and is aware of the challenges associated with improving the support that other adults provide. She has begun to address this through training and careful checking of their work. As a result of training, children's understanding of phonics has improved because adults have a more secure knowledge of what to teach.
- The few children in the early years are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 to 4. The weaknesses in teaching that affect the progress of the other pupils also affect the children in the early years. These are related to learning not consistently being developed and reinforced well during interactions between teaching assistants and the children. In addition, adults' checks on children's learning are not consistently focused enough ensuring that children have understood what they are learning.
- Adults use their assessment information to plan activities that are suitable for children of this age and that usually engage them in their learning. However, this interest is not capitalised upon with sufficient skill to ensure children get the most out of their learning.
- There are many opportunities offered for children to make marks on paper, develop the idea of writing recognisable letters and mathematical skills. Children were seen confidently using whiteboards to 'write' but were given too little guidance to improve their letter formation. Mathematical skills are promoted as children take turns to count objects and repeat simple patterns. Children were observed counting and colouring but opportunities were missed to develop accurate counting. Teaching requires improvement because children are given too little guidance to improve as they articulate their thoughts and understanding, and when they start to record their thoughts.
- Children have many opportunities to learn, both inside and when working outdoors. Personal and social skills are promoted well in all activities. As a result, behaviour is good and children quickly learn school routines and confidently move around the school. Healthy snacks are provided daily and children sit and munch on fruit and have a drink while they discuss what they have been learning about. Speaking and listening skills and the need to be polite and sit while eating are promoted well during these sessions. Children were seen being polite to one another and listening carefully as others spoke about what they had learnt about cold climates.
- Parents had no concerns about this provision. Inspection evidence shows that there are strengths in this provision, particularly related to the positive relationships established between parents and staff and children's good personal development.

School details

Unique reference number	121820
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10001810

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Leah
Executive Headteacher	Emma Mercer
Telephone number	01604 505535
Website	www.greatcreatonschool.org
Email address	bursar@creaton.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from White British families.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-aged classes. Both teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium, which is the additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below average.
- No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The headteacher also leads and manages Clipston Endowed Voluntary Controlled Primary School. The two schools have formed a federation under a single governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in eight parts of lessons taught by two teachers. The headteacher was involved in most of the observations.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders and governors. A discussion with a representative from the local authority took place by telephone.
- The inspector looked at a variety of documents which included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, minutes from governors' meetings, pupils' performance information, pupils' previous work and their current work, as well as safeguarding documents.
- The views of parents were considered by analysing the results of 27 responses to Parent View, the online survey.
- Following the inspection days on 1-2 December 2015, Her Majesty's Inspectors identified that some additional evidence was required in order to complete the inspection. Jan Connor HMI visited the school on 26 January 2016 to gather this evidence and to complete the inspection.

Inspection team

Nina Bee, lead inspector
Jan Connor

Ofsted Inspector
Her Majesty's Inspector

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