

Gray's Farm Primary Academy

Gray's Farm Road, Orpington, Bromley BR5 3AD

Inspection dates 6–7 July 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a school that has been transformed. Significant improvements have been achieved in all areas of the school's work with pupils and parents. The school is in a strong position to continue securing positive outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have successfully ensured that pupils' learning is at the heart of everything the school does. This means that pupils make consistently good progress, regardless of their starting point or group.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are highly respectful of their peers and staff. Those pupils who in the past demonstrated challenging behaviour have rapidly improved their conduct. All pupils display impeccable conduct in and around the school.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after. Staff work exceptionally well with other agencies to secure the help and support pupils need.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly developed throughout the school's curriculum. Pupils respect the views of others and show empathy for their feelings.
- The early years provision is good. Children make good progress from their individual starting points. Three out of four children achieve above the national expectations of a good level of development.
- The whole staff team is highly committed to equality of opportunity. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. Over time, these pupils are being helped to catch up and make good or better progress in their learning.
- The vast majority of parents are highly positive about the changes that have been made to the school. They are proud of the work of the school and testify to the 'transformational journey' that the school has rapidly undertaken.
- The governing body skilfully ensures that leaders are continually challenged. They reflect on the effectiveness of the school and how they can better drive improvements that benefit pupils' learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few middle leaders are not skilled enough in checking pupils' learning in their subject areas.
- The teaching of science does not give pupils the depth of skill or understanding that they need to conduct experiments and draw conclusions.

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the skills of some middle leaders, so that all are consistently highly skilled at checking pupils' learning and the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- Improve the teaching of science so that all pupils are competent at planning, conducting and drawing conclusions from simple science experiments.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders and governors have transformed this school. There is now a culture which wholeheartedly focuses on securing high-quality learning for all pupils. Staff and pupils show mutual respect and a united desire to achieve. Barriers are no longer accepted and everyone strives to achieve more. One parent explained, '...the school has become something we could only dream of before... What's happened to our school is extraordinary.'
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The executive headteacher and headteacher together carefully assess how their work has driven improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and behaviour. Senior leaders make frequent and regular checks on the consistency of improvements and staff are determined to do their very best for pupils. This united approach ensures that improvements are rapid.
- Since January 2016, leaders have ensured that staff model excellent handwriting for pupils in line with the school's policy. Pupils have equally risen to this increased expectation and now present neat joined-up handwriting. Parents are equally involved in these improvements and, for example, there was a recent competition for the best handwriting among parents.
- Improvements in teaching have been secured by high-quality internal and external continuing professional development (CPD). Teachers and teaching assistants have been set challenging targets that ensure they are highly focused on securing consistently good progress from all pupils. Senior leaders, together with other members of staff, review the progress of pupils and the impact of CPD on pupils' achievements. These reviews have helped staff to ensure that they are contributing effectively both to pupils' learning targets and to whole-school improvement priorities.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to see the world through other people's eyes and to consider different viewpoints. Pupils from different backgrounds form friendships and treat one another with respect and tolerance. Discriminatory behaviours are now extremely rare. Pupils say that their comprehensive understanding of these issues is, in part, due to the school's improved personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. The school has a clear focus on ensuring that pupils develop into well-rounded citizens of Britain. Their understanding of British society and values is secure.
- Pupil premium funding is being used effectively throughout the school to support disadvantaged pupils. Careful consideration is given to individual pupils' needs and how these can be met with additional support and challenge. Six-weekly reviews consider the impact of the additional funding and, if they are required, to make modifications to maximise an individual pupil's learning. This work has successfully ensured that disadvantaged pupils make at least as much progress as their peers. In mathematics, these pupils make greater progress than their peers in school.
- The English, mathematics and early years leaders have been successful in driving improvements in their areas of responsibility. They have led regular, high-quality and detailed checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. They work well together, with senior leaders and with other members of staff. They share and have modelled effectively the school's expectations, driving improvements in pupils' writing, their reasoning in mathematics and the recording of children's learning in the early years. Other middle leaders are relatively new in their roles. They are in the early stages of being trained by their more established colleagues, but it is too soon to see the impact of this work.
- The school's curriculum has been revitalised and focuses on the interests of pupils and children. The school recognises, however, that the teaching of science is not as strong as the teaching of other subjects. The updated curriculum is ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to school and their learning. They are enthusiastic and engaged throughout their lessons. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms is typically impeccable as a result.
- Leaders have ensured that additional funding for primary physical education and sport has helped to widen the range of sports offered at the school, including competitive sports. Participation of pupils is much higher and pupils speak proudly of their achievements in the recent Kemnal Academies Trust Olympics.
- The academy's sponsor responded very quickly to the judgement of special measures. It immediately secured an executive headteacher to build greater leadership capacity. Weekly monitoring visits were established by the trust to ensure that the school's post-Ofsted action plan was consistently delivered and on track, and to provide support and challenge to the school's leaders. Over the past 13 months, these visits and the support were reduced as the school began to secure improvements independently. The

school has successfully worked independently to secure improvements since February 2016.

- Concerns from a very small number of parents were communicated to the inspection team. These suggested that staff did not understand the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors spoke with pupils with identified needs, looked at how they were supported, their learning over time and the progress that they make. Records of meetings with parents and external agencies were reviewed, along with pupils' work. Inspectors also received a range of letters from individual parents who were directly complimenting the provision for these pupils at the school. Inspectors judged that the leadership of special educational needs is strong. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) works closely with senior leaders and other staff to ensure that pupils receive high-quality support, teaching and specialist help. Overall, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The new governing body has been highly effective in challenging staff to secure rapid improvements in teaching, pupils' achievement and behaviour. It has contributed effectively to all areas of the school's improvement. Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience to their roles. They form a reflective group and actively develop their own skills over time. This development helps to ensure that they remain up to date with the national changes in education.
 - Governors make regular visits to the school to enrich their understanding of the school's work and to check on the accuracy of leaders' reports. Attendance at governing body meetings is consistently high, with very few absences. This ensures that, collectively, governors are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a comprehensive understanding of the school's assessment information and what this tells them about teaching and pupils' learning across the curriculum. They keep up to date and, for example, understand how the school's test results in 2016 compare with national averages.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have regular training in child protection. They understand the school's policies and procedures. Regular updates ensure that all staff, regardless of their roles, understand their responsibilities to protect pupils and children. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect and radicalisation. Staff understand well their responsibilities related to the prevention of female genital mutilation and extremism (the 'Prevent' duty).

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers work well together, sharing good practice, resources and strategies to overcome challenges in teaching individual pupils. This has created an atmosphere where best practice is discussed and ideas shared, trialled and developed to improve pupils' progress. Teaching across year groups captures the interests of pupils. One pupil explained, 'I want to come to school now because learning is fun. I would come on Saturday if it was open!'
- Oral and written feedback is used consistently to ensure that pupils are aware of how they are making progress. Pupils clearly understand their next steps in learning. They value the daily opportunities provided to reflect and improve their work following this feedback. Pupils' books show that they consistently edit and improve their work.
- Pupils have improved their handwriting immeasurably since January 2016. Teachers take pride in modelling accurate, fluent joined handwriting. Pupils now consistently form legible, neat script in key stage 1 and, by the end of Year 6, produce beautiful joined-up writing in line with the school's policy.
- The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength throughout the school. Pupils are making big strides in their ability to solve problems and explain their calculation strategies. Their oral and written explanations are of a high quality. Teachers effectively ensure that the most able pupils have regular opportunities to deepen their understanding by applying their learning in new, more challenging contexts. Pupils who find mathematics more challenging use physical resources to help them learn and meet the expectations for their age group.
- Teachers ensure that pupils apply their writing skills in a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction settings. Pupils are encouraged to expand their vocabulary while they learn how to use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately. Writing is developing well across a range of subjects including in geography and history. Teachers ensure that pupils maintain high expectations of what they can achieve, so pupils apply their writing skills, no matter what they are writing.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Pupils

develop a love of reading and, over time, begin to understand how to read for pleasure and to enhance their own learning.

- Teachers ensure that pupils understand the expectations of homework. Pupils now understand the need to apply their classroom learning to their homework tasks. They take care in the completion of their homework and are proud of what they have achieved. They submit it on time and receive clear feedback to support them in follow-up learning. Homework is, therefore, a central part of pupils' work and is valued by all.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They work very well alongside teachers and effectively support individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that teaching assistants are clear about what is expected of them in lessons. Together, they work seamlessly alongside each other, challenging pupils so that they improve their learning. They skilfully help pupils to consider identified misconceptions and mistakes. In this way, teaching assistants play a key role in helping pupils to make good progress.
- The teaching of science is not as strong as it is for the rest of the primary curriculum. Some pupils are not confident in planning or conducting simple experiments. Throughout the school, too few pupils are confident in drawing scientific conclusions from the experiments that they have undertaken. This means that some pupils are not developing a suitable mastery of the scientific skills expected for their age.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils respect others' views and show empathy for the feelings of others. This is helped by the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school's curriculum and assemblies. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were considering how bereavement could affect an individual. Their responses were highly thoughtful and caring.
- Pupils' attendance has improved rapidly this academic year. It is now at the national average and continues to rise. Pupils who had low attendance in the past have been helped to attend very regularly over the year. Overall, the very small number of pupils who are still persistently absent (missing more than one in every 10 days of school) are being helped to improve their attendance rapidly through a wide range of support and challenge. This improvement has been a key feature in ensuring that all groups of pupils now make at least good progress in their learning across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders have developed regular opportunities where parents talk to pupils about their jobs. This is helping pupils, at this early stage, to develop an understanding of the world of work. They are beginning to develop a mature understanding of the skills and qualifications that they would need to take up particular careers. For example, one pupil in Year 6 spoke with passion about wanting to be a '...chip and pin engineer when I leave school'. Pupils have well-reasoned career ambitions and a developing understanding of what jobs involve.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe, both in school and beyond. They have a comprehensive understanding of the risks posed by the internet, social media, mobile phones and games consoles. Pupils are aware of the safety measures that help to keep them safe when using such devices. For example, they know that they should not send photographs of themselves to anyone.
- Staff carefully monitor minor accidents to pupils to ensure that there is no pattern. Risk assessments are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe, for example when using the school's climbing frame.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning and school make a significant contribution to their own learning and the life of the school. This is equally true of behaviour in the early years, which has significantly improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils have a love of learning and of school. They display consistently high levels of concentration. Throughout the school, pupils are highly enthusiastic and care deeply about the quality of their work. They want to do their very best in every aspect of their school life. Pupils work equally well whether they are in their classroom or around school in smaller groups, for example when working with a teaching assistant.

- Pupils' conduct is impeccable in classrooms and around the school building and site. They are polite and friendly to each other and hold polite conversations, for example when opening doors for each other. Break and lunchtimes are social occasions. Pupils are orderly and play together with good humour and respect. They are courteous to visitors and adults regardless of their role.
- Leaders and class teachers keep detailed records of any emerging concerns about pupils' behaviour. These logs are rigorously analysed for patterns and have been used to help plan support for those who have historically found controlling their behaviour a challenge. Over time, these pupils have considerably improved their behaviour, and fixed-term exclusions have been eradicated as a result. Pupils are individually able to explain and testify how the school's support has helped them improve their behaviour. Others are articulate in sharing how they have been taught strategies to manage their temper or to develop better friendships with their peers.
- Pupils have developed a highly mature attitude towards friendship and preventing bullying. They understand what bullying is and how it affects individuals. Their understanding is comprehensive, for example, about homophobic bullying and why this behaviour is not acceptable within British society. Pupils understand their personal responsibilities towards preventing bullying in and beyond the school. They say that it is now extremely rare and, 'We really look after each other now. Most problems are squabbles, and we can sort these out quickly. When we need help, teachers help us solve the things that worry us.'

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- The achievement of all groups of pupils has improved considerably. Pupils who had previously fallen behind have been helped to catch up. In 2016, pupils in Year 6 performed better than other pupils nationally, particularly in mathematics and reading. Writing, which was assessed by the school, also shows considerable improvement with standards that are above average. All groups of pupils have closed the gap in standards with their peers nationally, and a majority are achieving better than expected. This was significantly better than in previous years when standards were below average.
- Most children enter the early years with skill levels below those typical for their age, particularly in relation to reading, writing and speaking. They make consistently good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, three in every four have reached a good level of development.
- The school's assessment information and work in books shows that pupils are making faster progress and that their attainment is rising quickly across Years 1 to 6. This is true for reading, writing and mathematics. Across these subjects, all pupils are making the progress expected of them, and a large majority make rapid progress. This ensures that pupils are increasingly well prepared for the next stage in their learning as they are achieving at least the standards expected for their age.
- The gaps in attainment between pupil groups have been successfully closed across the school. No gaps are evident between different ethnic groups or for those who speak English as an additional language. Disadvantaged pupils are outperforming their peers in school in virtually every subject and year group.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities still have gaps from their peers in school, but these are being closed through effective support that meets their individual needs. Leaders carefully check on the impact of support and ensure that it is effective at accelerating their learning.
- The most able pupils make good progress throughout the school. They are challenged effectively in their learning. Those who have fallen behind in the past have been helped to catch up with their peers nationally.
- Pupils develop a love of reading. Staff give this a high priority in school, and it is promoted in a weekly assembly. Pupils truly love becoming the weekly star reader and compete to see who can read the most words. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they read and this helps them to develop their ability to read between the lines of a story.
- Phonics is taught consistently. Pupils make strong progress across the early years and attain more highly than the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. By the end of Year 2, virtually all pupils have met the national standard for achievement in phonics.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years has improved considerably. The early years leader and new nursery manager have transformed the learning environment so that it is bright and engaging for young children. They have worked well to develop a close-knit team that works together well and consistently applies all school policies and expectations.
- Staff are aware of which pupils have particular difficulties on entry to the Nursery Year, for example in reading, writing, speaking or self-care. They build learning opportunities all around the classroom. No opportunity is lost to reinforce early learning.
- Many activities are planned to support children in the early stages of reading, writing and speaking. A wide range of mark making is available so that children can begin to form early writing. Books are widely available inside and in the playground, and children eagerly explore books. For example, one boy with identified special educational needs was observed during the inspection 'reading' from left to right using the pictures as clues. At the end of the book, he said, 'The end.' This demonstrates that staff are modelling and developing the speech of pupils effectively over time.
- Adults know the children in the Nursery and Reception Years well and plan interesting activities to match their needs. Strong phonics teaching and adult support ensure that children make good progress.
- Throughout the early years, few children are identified as being most able. The good provision made for them, however, means that they receive teaching aimed at their needs. This ensures that the most able children make good progress and enter Year 1 very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- Staff work very well with parents. There are frequent opportunities for parents to visit the Reception and Nursery classes. Staff help parents to understand the early years curriculum, as well as what and how their child is learning. Regular communication builds on the regular opportunities for parents to contribute to ongoing assessments of a child's skills.
- Children are assessed very regularly and systematically. Staff capture a clear picture of what a child has achieved. They plan small steps to push on their learning. Photographs, work and speech capture the learning so that parents can see clearly how their child is progressing. Judgements about a child's progress have been moderated internally, across the academy trust and by the local authority.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in the early years. Learning activities are adapted to ensure that children with specific needs make consistently good progress across the early years. Staff work very well with the range of external agencies involved with the school.

School details

Unique reference number	139639
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10012865

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jim Rouncefield
Headteacher	Gianni Bianchi (executive headteacher) Nicola Abrahams (headteacher)
Telephone number	020 8300 5283
Website	www.graysfarm-tkat.org
Email address	admin@graysfarm-tkat.org
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2015

Information about this school

- Gray's Farm Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- It opened in September 2013 as a sponsored academy. It is sponsored by The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT).
- The early years is made up of two Reception classes and one Nursery class. Children in the Reception Year attend full time. The children in the Nursery Year attend part time, either in the morning or the afternoon.
- A majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- An above-average proportion of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups.
- One in 10 pupils speaks English as an additional language. This is below the national average. Very few of these pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
- Almost half of pupils are supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils – pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority). This is a higher proportion than is typical for all schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school's interim executive board (IEB) was dissolved in January 2016. A local governing body, which includes the former members of the IEB, was established in its place.
- Since September 2015, there have been very few staffing changes. No staff turnover is expected for September 2016.
- The school offers a daily breakfast club. This was visited by inspectors during the inspection.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- When the school was inspected in June 2015, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school received one monitoring visit. This second monitoring visit was undertaken as a full inspection of the school.
- Inspectors visited all classes during the inspection to observe teaching, learning and pupils' behaviour and written work. Some visits to classrooms were conducted jointly with the executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher or SENCO.
- Inspectors observed pupils as they arrived at school, and during morning and lunchtime breaks, including in the school canteen. Pupils' conduct around the school building was observed.
- During day one of the inspection, pupils attended an anti-bullying workshop. Inspectors observed part of one session.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading, looked at a very wide range of workbooks, classroom and corridor displays and photographic evidence of their curriculum 'Wow' days.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses received to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Additionally, inspectors considered the views of four parents who requested to speak directly to inspectors. Six letters received during the inspection were also considered as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils both formally and informally while they were learning and playing around school. Pupils discussed the school's curriculum, behaviour, bullying and safety at the school. A meeting was held with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. Inspectors also met with a representative of The Kennal Academies Trust.
- Evidence from Her Majesty's Inspector's monitoring visit in January 2016 was also taken into account during the inspection.

Inspection team

David Storrie, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Angela Trigg	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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