

Greensted Junior School

Kirby Road, Basildon SS14 1RX

Inspection dates	6–7 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- 'Excellence for all' is an expectation at Greensted Junior School rather than merely an aim. Staff work remarkably well as a strong and cohesive team to achieve this.
- The headteacher's exceptional leadership has steered the school's rapid and sustained improvement since the last inspection.
- Standards have risen year on year since the school opened. Results in the most recent assessments for 11-year-olds are well above the provisional national figures in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Exceptional achievement is the result of consistently high-quality teaching, excellent use of assessment and outstanding pastoral care.
- All pupils make substantial and sustained progress, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The most able pupils achieve particularly well because they are stretched by the challenging curriculum and by teachers' high expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils make outstanding progress because the school ensures that there are no barriers to their participating fully and achieving their potential.
- Leaders at all levels are relentless in their drive for improvement and tireless in securing the best possible outcomes for all pupils.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes and exemplary behaviour have a strong positive impact on their progress and achievement. They are self-assured learners who are proud of their achievements and of their school.
- The governing body is highly effective and very well led. Governors strike the right balance between support and challenge for leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in foundation subjects, such as history, geography and religious education, by:
 - defining more precisely and ambitiously the subject knowledge, understanding and skills that each topic can develop
 - planning more systematically opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when teaching these subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader who has created a climate where nurture and the promotion of academic excellence work in perfect synergy. Staff understand how high academic achievement is dependent on pupils' strong personal development and ensuring that pupils feel happy, safe and fully motivated.
- Greensted's success is rooted in exemplary leadership, excellent teamwork and effective collaboration between staff, pupils, parents and carers and governors, who all share the same ambition. A staff team, supported by parents and pupils, raised almost £4,000 for Great Ormond Street Hospital.
- The school's transformation over the last four years has been steered by the skilful leadership and determination of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They have drawn sensibly on high quality support and guidance, both from the academy trust and the Basildon Excellence Partnership, and have developed so many strengths that the school can now reciprocate in contributing to strong local school-to-school support arrangements.
- Excellent leadership stems from the way that senior leaders model their uncompromisingly high expectations and routinely check that staff and pupils are fulfilling them. However, leaders have created a culture where staff are trusted, motivated and appreciated. Teachers are confident to take risks and innovate to improve their teaching. Responses from the staff inspection survey show how much they enjoy working at the school and how they value the support of senior leaders.
- Leaders are relentless in assuring the quality of provision because reviewing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is integral to their everyday work. The headteacher expects a lot from her staff and effectively holds them to account, while also trusting them to take risks with their teaching and try new things. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent teachers who lead by example. This year, the headteacher has taught the new mathematics curriculum so that she can see first hand how the revised requirements need to be met. The headteacher leads staff training and development so that everyone knows what is expected.
- Subject leadership is excellent, particularly in English and mathematics. Where areas for improvement are identified, specialist support is quickly initiated. Staff training for teaching science and French, for example, have been expertly led and highly effective. The wider leadership team has excellent capacity to sustain the school's rapid improvements, and also to support the work of other schools.
- Greensted provides equality of opportunity for everyone, ensuring that pupils have the chance to participate, succeed and excel across a wide range of activities and aspects of learning. Leaders ensure that economic disadvantage, personal or social difficulties or specific learning needs do not present an insurmountable barrier to any pupil's full involvement or achievement.
- The school has developed a suitably balanced curriculum, which is broadened by a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including trips, visits, speakers and after-school clubs and activities. The curriculum is enhanced by high-quality specialist provision, and opportunities for pupils to immerse themselves more deeply in different areas of learning.
- The splendid displays around the school celebrate the rich and varied learning that the pupils have experienced. This year, for example, the pupils experienced a French day when they could learn language in the context of national culture and food, and an external art organisation also worked with pupils to produce remarkable three-dimensional artworks that now adorn the public spaces and corridors throughout the school. These initiatives help to foster pupils' love of learning and the self-assurance to take on new challenges, while also widening their experiences and raising their aspirations.
- The headteacher has worked hard to develop strong relationships and good communication with parents, without compromising the school's high expectations. Parents are encouraged to support their children and are routinely invited into school to see at first hand the pupils at work. Recently, parents have been invited to attend mathematics and creative writing sessions that show them how they can best support their children.
- Excellent support for families is pivotal to the success of the school. Staff are quick to identify possible barriers to pupils' high achievement and quickly address these. Parental responses attested to the many occasions that the school has provided personal support for parents and children in time of need.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's everyday work. The school successfully values and celebrates people's differences and encourages pupils to be curious about the different cultural and

linguistic backgrounds of others in the school. These are given value when they are explored and celebrated in assembly, and when pupils are encouraged to use a 'word fan' to have a go with key words in new languages such as Romanian or Hungarian in the playground.

- The school is excellent at integrating pupils who join the school at times other than the start of Year 3 or during the year, including those who speak English as an additional language and pupils who have had a turbulent education or who face particularly challenging circumstances.
 - The school makes excellent use of its additional funding, both for the pupil premium and primary physical education (PE) and sports premium, and can demonstrate that it uses these resources to secure the best possible outcomes for the pupils that these resources support.
 - The school has benefited from support and guidance from the Basildon Excellence Partnership, including peer review by other headteachers, and is already providing external support for other schools, for example in mathematics.
- **The governance of the school**
- School governance is the responsibility of the Lee Chapel Academy Trust.
 - Governors are hard-working, well informed and skilfully led. They provide effective strategic leadership, while also fulfilling their statutory duties. Governors are thorough in making all necessary checks.
 - Good training and support for the governing body ensure that governors understand their roles and are well equipped to fulfil their responsibilities. They have a clear oversight of financial matters and ensure the judicious management of resources, including the school's allocation of pupil premium funding and primary PE and sports premium funding to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils.
 - The governing body strikes the right balance between supporting the school and holding leaders to account. Regular visits and helpful reports ensure that they understand the school's strengths and its priorities for improvement. Teachers' performance is carefully considered in overseeing decisions about pay progression.
 - The governing body takes its responsibility for safeguarding very seriously, and ensures that pupils are safe.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school is meticulous in ensuring that it meets all statutory guidance, including for the safe recruitment of staff. Leaders have created a culture of vigilance, with pupils' welfare at the heart of the school's work. All staff are well trained and understand their responsibilities in regard to keeping children safe. The remarkably high level of trust between adults and children means that pupils are confident to share their concerns and ask for support. Parents, staff and pupils know that the headteacher's door is always open, and have no hesitation in sharing their worries, safe in the knowledge that the school will go 'the extra mile' to help and support them. Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support pupils who are vulnerable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- All teachers have the highest expectations of how pupils will behave and how they will engage and contribute in lessons. Teaching is confident, sharply focused and well paced. Teachers plan lessons very effectively so that lesson time is used to the full and learning is never dull. This high-quality planning, combined with excellent behaviour management, ensures that no learning time is wasted and that pupils work hard from start to finish.
- Teachers work effectively as a strong, mutually supportive team. They have a detailed knowledge of the subjects they teach, and draw on the expertise of others, for example to plan or teach science, French, PE or art. Teaching assistants are an integral and essential part of the teaching team. They are well trained and effectively deployed to support the individual needs of pupils, both academically and behaviourally. Teachers liaise closely with their teaching assistants so that their support is sharply focused and maximised.
- Lessons are calm and purposeful, but with a buzz of activity. Teachers sustain a rapid pace by well-focused questioning, but also allow pupils ample time to draft, review and edit their work to produce work of genuine quality and detail.
- Well-established routines ensure that pupils quickly learn to work independently. If pupils are stumped by a question, they are expected to consult one another and share ideas to refine their thinking. They are so

accustomed to working together in groups that they readily spark ideas and confidently exchange opinions.

- Assessment is a notable strength because it informs teaching and accelerates pupils' progress. Teachers routinely check what pupils know and can do before they embark on a new topic, by posing a 'cold question', and then pitch work at just the right level for different groups.
- Teachers' marking is excellent and feedback to pupils is highly effective. Pupils understand what they need to do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. They like using their purple polishing pens, and their work over time shows just how effective this strategy is.
- Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching to explore issues that are interesting and topical, such as the choice of Muhammad Ali for Year 5 pupils' biographical writing, and use a good range of resources to support pupils' learning. Teachers set suitably challenging homework to consolidate and extend pupils' learning, and pupils like the element of choice, and the opportunity to stretch themselves.
- All the strengths of teaching and use of assessment outlined above ensure that the most able pupils are consistently stretched in their learning.
- Teaching across all subjects is highly effective, but pupils sometimes do not achieve as much as they could when planned learning objectives are less ambitious. This is evident in subjects such as history, geography and religious education, where pupils learn about people, places and different religious beliefs, but do not use the same high levels of analysis and deduction that they apply in English, mathematics or science.
- Adults model positive attitudes and values, including British values of tolerance and mutual respect, and strongly support pupils' moral and social development through their high expectations of behaviour and conduct. The lively and exciting curriculum effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and teachers are alert to opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of British values, for example by comparing Athenian democracy with Sparta, and discussing the recent national referendum. However, teachers do not make the most of every opportunity because they have too narrow a view of pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff prioritise pupils' social, physical and emotional well-being because everyone understands that pupils' welfare underpins their personal development and academic achievement. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. Staff ensure that all pupils are involved in extra-curricular activities, and participation in out-of-school sport and enrichment is high.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe at all times. One member of staff described the school as 'an oasis of security'. Staff know the individual needs of pupils and are sensitive to these, without compromising on standards of behaviour or expectations of achievement.
- Pupils recognise different forms of bullying, but say that the school's zero tolerance of bullying means that it is very rare. When it does happen, it is immediately reported and teachers sort it out. Pupils say that they feel completely safe because the school is such a friendly place, and they know that adults will never walk away if they have a problem. Pupils say that they are listened to and feel that they have a voice.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online and of the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social media. They have produced their own video on e-safety to communicate the risks to others.
- Pupils are given the chance for wider experiences that can be life enhancing and even life changing. In addition to the Year 6 residential trip to the Isle of Wight, pupils can for example choose to go on a skiing trip and participate in the Challenger Troop, where they learn the importance of teamwork and the value of making a positive contribution to their wider community. The resilience and self-confidence that pupils develop stand them in good stead to overcome personal challenges and also for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are inspired to make the most of their particular aptitudes and interests. There is a 'maths club' and a 'spoken word' club for the most able pupils to explore, extend and apply their learning, as well as clubs for art, photography, science and a wide range of music and sports enrichment. The gifted writers

from each of the four year groups have successfully produced a school newspaper.

- The school takes positive steps to develop pupils' self-assurance by constantly setting challenging but achievable tasks, such as presenting in assembly or playing to a large audience. Pupils are given the confidence to pitch themselves against other schools and, in addition to their sporting successes, have achieved impressively well in local and national poetry competitions, and had their stunning artwork displayed at a local art gallery. Individual pupils who compete in national competitions, or even in one case on the London stage, are fully supported so that they can maintain their academic achievement while advancing their talent.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are impeccably behaved in lessons and around the school. They are polite, thoughtful and considerate towards one another and with adults and visitors. The school council recommended a 'friendship bench' in the playground so that pupils could support anyone who might feel lonely.
- Pupils who have challenging behaviour are given the right support so that they quickly learn how to conduct themselves and how to manage their emotions.
- On day two of the inspection, the whole school sat through the extended music assembly, listening to the individual performances. Pupils in the audience listened intently and sustained their concentration remarkably well and showed genuine appreciation for the efforts of their classmates.
- By Year 4, pupils have become much more self-assured and confident learners who take responsibility for their own learning and progress. Pupils enjoy using their purple pens to edit and improve their work, and take real pride in its presentation and quality. They do not shy away from difficult tasks and enjoy choosing the most demanding questions, such as the ones posed during their guided reading session. Most pupils even welcome the challenge set in homework.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements. The 'Pride of Greensted' awards are difficult to achieve because competition is so fierce, and they are highly valued. During the inspection, 23 pupils confidently showcased their musical talents in a concert for parents and pupils, while the athletes set off to represent their school at the district sports event, proudly wearing their smart school kit. Unsurprisingly, the relay team performed particularly well!
- Pupils enjoy school and attend well. Attendance has increased by one percentage point year on year since the last inspection and is currently above the national figure for 2014/15. The previously high level of absence for disadvantaged pupils has been eradicated. Likewise, exclusions are negligible.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Standards have risen sharply in the four years since the school opened and are above those expected nationally. Unvalidated results in the recent tests and assessments for 11-year-olds indicate that attainment in writing and mathematics is well above the provisional national figures and above the national average in reading. Results in the assessment for grammar, punctuation and spelling, which were previously below average, have also exceeded the national figure.
- These impressive results, alongside evidence from pupils' work and the school's systematic assessment information, show that pupils make exceptional progress from their different starting points, even when they join the school after the start of Year 3. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move up through the school because teaching addresses weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics and enables pupils to extend their learning in the upper school.
- Any gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils are negligible. Disadvantaged pupils make better progress and attain at least as well as all pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with that of other pupils because support for their learning is so effective.
- Published results in 2015 suggest that too few pupils made better than expected progress to reach higher levels of attainment, but scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of learning show that the most able pupils are consistently well challenged and make outstanding progress.
- High-quality teaching and excellent use of assessment across all subjects enable pupils to make substantial progress across all areas of learning in the curriculum and to acquire excellent knowledge, understanding and skills. However, standards in English and mathematics are higher than in humanities

subjects, where pupils' learning could be further extended.

Pupils enjoy reading and, by the end of Year 6, can read with fluency and good comprehension. They are taught to skim and scan text, as well as read for deeper meaning.

- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education because:
 - they have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to succeed
 - they develop the necessary independence and resilience to persevere
 - they are confident learners who enjoy a challenge.

Transition arrangements are also excellent.

School details

Unique reference number	138604
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10011868

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Craig O'Callaghan
Headteacher	Melanie Gaskin
Telephone number	01268 553359
Website	www.greensted-jun.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@greensted-jun.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2014

Information about this school

- Greensted Junior School is the same size as the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Lee Chapel Academy Trust. In September 2016, plans are in place for the trust to expand from two to five academies.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional government funding to support children who are looked after by the local authority or pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average.
- No pupils are educated off site or through alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in a series of extended lesson observations and learning walks across all four classes and in different subjects in order to inform judgements on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. Inspectors also met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school policies, safeguarding documents, pupils' progress information, attendance data and a wide range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of the second day and took note of their views through the 24 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 15 free-text responses, and also through the school's own parental survey information.
- Inspectors spoke formally to a group of pupils, and also talked to pupils in lessons about their work, and spoke informally to pupils in the playground and at lunchtime.
- Analysis was undertaken of the inspection survey forms submitted by 16 members of staff and one pupil.

Inspection team

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