

Greenacres Primary School

Dunkerley Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL4 2AX

Inspection dates

6 June and 20–21 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' reviews of the progress made by groups of pupils are not always precise enough to move the school forward quickly.
- The work of middle leaders to improve the school is underdeveloped.
- Governors do not ask leaders enough probing questions about the work of the school.
- The quality of provision in the early years is not giving children a good start to their education.
- Some teaching does not fully meet the needs of the most able pupils or pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities because assessment is not always used well.
- While the quality of teaching over time is improving, it remains variable. This means that pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school.
- The quality of pupils' writing is inconsistent.
- Gaps in pupils' previous learning are holding some pupils' progress back. Disadvantaged pupils are not doing as well as other pupils.
- Pupils' attendance at school is below average.

The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders understand the key issues facing Greenacres. They are starting to turn the school around. Staff are responding positively to the fresh direction set for their work.
- In Years 5 and Year 6 pupils are catching up quickly in their learning because of much-improved teaching.
- Pupils are protected and cared for very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They show much self-control. They are enthusiastic and self-confident learners who look after their school and fellow pupils thoughtfully.
- The teaching of phonics is good.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and in science is rising quickly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - sharpening leaders' analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils, so actions are even more focused on pupils' needs
 - sharpening leaders' analysis of the impact made by funding on the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - developing the roles and influence of middle leaders to help the school to move forward
 - developing the skills of governors to challenge school leaders about the quality of the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - making sure that all staff and pupils understand the purpose of activities in lessons
 - using assessment fully to adapt activities during lessons in order to revisit, deepen or move pupils' learning on
 - making maximum use of opportunities in each lesson to help pupils make up for gaps in their previous learning
 - making sure that planned activities for developing pupils' writing from Nursery to Year 6 are meaningful and engaging, including by sharing the good work already undertaken by some classes
 - improving the quality of assessment and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they achieve well from their starting points
 - setting suitably challenging activities for the most able pupils
 - making sure that disadvantaged pupils make swifter progress and do as well as other pupils nationally.
- Improve the quality of education provided in the early years by:
 - raising staff expectations of children's abilities so that they learn as well as they should
 - developing the skills of staff in Reception to work successfully together as a team
 - improving the quality and organisation of resources and furniture to better support children's learning.
- Increase steps to raise pupils' attendance at school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The quality of education in the school declined quickly after the previous inspection. Relations between staff in the school and the wider community became poor. Widespread staffing changes, short-term appointments and staffing absences coincided with the introduction of the new national curriculum. Changes were not managed well by leaders. This upheaval negatively affected leadership, teaching and pupils' learning over time.
- The school's newly introduced approach for summarising the abilities of pupils gives leaders clear insight into the progress of individual pupils but less information about groups of pupils. Greater attention to analysing information is needed to establish the current picture of progress by groups of pupils to assist leaders in planning ahead.
- The role of middle leaders is underdeveloped. This means that not enough staff are playing a role in influencing the improvement of the school. Nonetheless, the roles of coordinators for English and mathematics are organised and developed successfully, resulting in rising standards in some classes.
- Pupil premium funding is planned and spent adequately. Pupils' achievement is rising but remains behind where it needs to be. Leaders recognise that a sharper focus on the impact of funded activities is now necessary.
- Special needs funding is used to provide valuable extra help for pupils in the school. However, leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, do not have a clear understanding of what difference this funding makes to the work of staff and to pupils' learning.
- New senior leaders are completely committed and determined to steer Greenacres on a path of improvement. They are willing to bring about the changes necessary in the school and it is clear that they have the best interests of pupils, families and staff at heart. Leaders are tackling lingering issues in the school with skill and determination. They have set a clear, new direction for the school and have a clear plan of action. These changes have raised staff morale and quickly improved the culture of learning. Relations with parents are now good. Leaders are realistic and honest in their reviews of the school and understand that much remains to be done.
- Physical education and sports premium funding is used well. For example, sports coaches are working with classes to improve pupils' skills and participation in games and in dance. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy these extra activities and are growing rapidly in their skills and confidence.
- Leaders check the work of the school carefully and regularly. Following recent training they are checking and debating the quality of pupils' work with increasing skill and precision. Teaching is observed often and staff given helpful feedback. Clear targets are used for the reviewing the performance of individual staff. Nevertheless, leaders need to improve weaker aspects of teaching further.
- Staff and leaders have redesigned the school curriculum to stimulate pupils' curiosity and make them eager to find out more about the world. Each activity is planned to consider not only what pupils need to know but also how they might innovate and

express their new understanding. There is a keen focus on the 40 things to do before you leave, for example to visit the seaside to collect shells and to visit Indian's Head high up on the Peak District moors. The deputy headteacher keeps a close check on how well the curriculum is being rolled out across classes. As a result, amendments are starting to be made regularly to curriculum planning. Pupils are benefiting much from the wide range of opportunities they are now experiencing. They are becoming confident learners. Their progress across the curriculum is improving. Lunchtime and after-school clubs including gardening and book-making are inspiring pupils to want to learn even more.

- A key improvement in the work of the school is the increased attention to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Thus, for example, pupils are learning about their place in the world through regular lessons about respect and human rights. Pupils with whom inspectors spoke show much respect for diversity and difference and a good understanding of democracy. Their learning is preparing them well for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the key priorities for improving the school and have a realistic understanding of how much further the school has to go before it is once again providing pupils with a good quality of education.
- Governors debate what they are told by leaders about the work of the school. Nevertheless, the amount of documents they feel they must read sometimes gets in the way of them focusing sharply on holding leaders to account. The questions they ask of leaders are not always challenging enough.
- Attendance at governing body meetings has improved in recent years and is now good. Governors are increasingly visiting the school to speak to staff and pupils and help in classrooms.
- Governors maintain an adequate check on school finances.
- Governors make sure that school policies are reviewed regularly and kept up to date.
- Clear plans are in place to improve school governance further when the school joins a multi-academy trust in autumn 2017.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher reviews and checks that all arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are well established.
- Safeguarding records kept by the school are of a high standard. Liaison with other agencies is prompt, regular and thorough.
- Frequent information is shared with pupils and parents about how pupils can be kept safe at home and while out in their local community.
- Staff access training regularly about the care and protection of pupils. They understand how to recognise and report key risks to pupils such as female genital mutilation and

being exposed to radicalised views of the modern world.

- Arrangements for checking visitors to the school are thorough. Access to the school playgrounds at the start and end of each school day is managed very carefully. Parents comment very positively about how visible the headteacher is at these key times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the school dipped significantly and sharply following the previous inspection. Wider issues in the school negatively affected staff morale, skills and knowledge. Weak teaching became the norm. The quality of teaching and learning also suffered because staff were not prepared fully for large-scale national changes to what pupils must be taught and how they are to be assessed. New leaders, working skilfully and supportively, are beginning to turn this issue around. The quality of teaching is improving and in some year groups is proving to be particularly successful. Nevertheless, inconsistencies remain, particularly in lower key stage 2.
- The school has adopted a new approach to developing pupils' communication and cooperation skills, and this is improving pupils' abilities. However, not all teachers apply the school's policy consistently. This is resulting in a lack of clarity about the purpose and focus of what staff are asking pupils to do in some classrooms.
- Staff assessments of pupils are becoming much more accurate and used to identify next steps in pupils' learning after a unit of work is completed. However, information is not always used fully enough to help pupils make up lost ground in their learning. Teachers do not always pick up quickly when pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, need additional help in their learning.
- Teaching for the most able pupils, including the disadvantaged most able pupils, is not routinely good enough. These pupils are completing work in some lessons that they find easy. This means that they are not being challenged to explore knowledge in more depth or stretch their skills as much as they should.
- The very best teaching in the school is highly engaging. This shows in clear subject knowledge, applied thoughtfully by teachers to create activities that prompt pupils to think, question and be excited about learning. At these times, teachers make well-considered use of teaching assistants and trainee teachers to enhance the support given to pupils.
- Teachers' skills and confidence in teaching mathematics and science are improving quickly. This is because of increased training and support. In mathematics, staff now teach pupils' arithmetic skills in more organised and engaging ways. Pupils are enjoying and learning mathematics much more successfully as a result.
- Pupils' work in books shows that the teaching of writing is beginning to improve, particularly in Year 6. Exciting, well-planned activities are resulting in strong examples of writing. Pupils are increasingly giving much consideration to their grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as the presentation of the work. However, not all classes are developing pupils' writing in interesting and worthwhile ways.
- After much attention this past year, the teaching of phonics has improved considerably. Assessment is thorough and frequent and activities are matched precisely to pupils'

abilities. Activities help pupils to blend and segment sounds as well as apply new knowledge in different contexts. Teaching assistants make a notable contribution to the success of phonics teaching because they have been trained effectively and supported alongside their teacher colleagues.

- Inspectors listened to pupils read confidently and with much expression in Years 2 and 4. Pupils show skill when tackling unfamiliar words and understand the plot and characters well. Their wider knowledge of traditional and modern authors is well developed because they are reading widely at home and school.
- Pupils' learning is celebrated positively in attractive displays on the walls of the school and information is used well in teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are very happy to meet visitors, such as inspectors, to talk about their learning.
- Pupils understand which behaviours might represent bullying. They say that it is rare in the school and that staff act promptly whenever concerns are raised by pupils.
- Pupils say they feel safe in classes and around the school premises. They have a well-developed knowledge of staying safe when using the internet and when using social media.
- As a result of much work by staff, pupils are developing a clear understanding of the behaviours and attitudes they need in order to succeed at learning. They talk confidently about how they 'try and then try again'. They talk clearly about 'fulfilling potential' and 'improving ourselves'.
- Pupils value the different opportunities to help develop their school. One particularly successful example is of pupils acting as health champions, who planned and delivered a recent lesson to each class about the dangers to health posed by sugar.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, cooperative and calm in classrooms, the dining hall and around the premises. They act sensibly when playing outdoors in the large school grounds.
- In the past, pupils did not always relate well to one another. However, pupils' relationships across the school are now consistently positive. Pupils know how to respect others and how to manage their own feelings and behaviour.
- Classroom life is calm and focused. Lessons are disrupted rarely because pupils know and respect the boundaries and expectations set by staff. Pupils understand the importance of completing their homework and what sanctions will occur if they do not.
- Pupils look after their classrooms, workbooks, reading books and resources with care.

- Pupils' attendance at school is improving rapidly because staff and leaders are working relentlessly to tackle this issue. Levels of persistent absence are decreasing quickly. Nevertheless, not all pupils attend as much as they should and attendance remains below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The majority of pupils start school with abilities that are below those typical for the age. Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 who meet expected standards for their age do not make consistently good progress during their time at the school. Turbulence and upheaval in the life and work of Greenacres has negatively affected pupils' learning.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 have been low over the past three years. School information, as well as current pupils' work, shows that pupils' achievement is now rising quickly. While the school is now on the road to recovery, pupils' attainment and progress are not consistently good across all classes and subjects.
- The proportion of pupils across the school working at greater depth in mathematics, reading and writing is rising. However, not enough most-able pupils, including the disadvantaged most able, are making as much progress as they should. They are not mastering their learning in complex ways.
- From their starting points, some low-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make individually significant steps forward in their learning. However, pupils' progress is variable because teaching is not always strong enough.
- While expenditure of the pupil premium is improving the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils, their skills and abilities remain behind those of other pupils nationally. Nonetheless, pupils are becoming confident, settled and enthusiastic learners.
- The work that pupils have completed since September confirms that recent improvements in the teaching of science are benefiting pupils. For example, pupils are more confident in conducting experiments and explaining their thinking in scientific language. School information shows that many pupils are now working at an expected standard in science.
- In history and geography, pupils are developing much new knowledge and a passionate interest in the topics studied.
- In Year 6 this year, almost twice as many pupils as last year are working at the expected standard in their learning in mathematics, reading and writing. This is because of higher expectations, better teaching and extra support to boost pupils' skills. Pupils are ready for the move to secondary school.
- The school gives good support to pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils who are newly arrived in the United Kingdom are supported particularly skilfully. As a result, they learn to speak and write English confidently.
- Pupils' abilities to blend and segment the sounds in words are improving strongly due to a concerted effort to raise standards across the school this year. For example, a high

proportion of current pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are doing well in their phonics skills. They are becoming more confident and skilled readers.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Provision in the Nursery and Reception classes has not escaped the impact of upheaval happening across the school in recent years. Weaknesses in school leadership, inconsistent teaching and learning have all held back the improvement of provision for the youngest children. As with the rest of the school, new leadership is now beginning to take provision in a stronger direction. Leaders have identified that much remains to be achieved.
- While children, including disadvantaged children, make adequate progress from their low starting points, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception is below the national average. Additional funding to support disadvantaged children in not making enough difference to children's progress. Teaching in Reception is not consistently strong enough to narrow the gaps in children's learning and help them be fully ready for the curriculum in Year 1.
- Over time, leadership in the early years has not been effective. For example, in the Reception class staff do not always work well as a team.
- The quality of activities to develop children's writing skills are not always meaningful and interesting enough in Nursery and Reception to help children become confident, skilled writers. Expectations of children are not always high enough.
- The curriculum for children at the school is adequate. Children benefit from visits such as a trip to the local mosque, as well as lots of opportunities to learn outdoors. Learning indoors involves lots of opportunities for role play and making model worlds with toy animals, cars and blocks. However, resources, furniture and displays of children's learning are variable in quality and not always used well for teaching.
- Staff check carefully what children know, understand and can do when starting school at three years old. They use this information to provide activities, for example about number and about being physical, which are aspects of learning where they have the greatest gaps.
- Children in the early years are calm, settled and well behaved. They explore confidently and happily. They listen carefully to staff instructions, for example when taking a trip to the school library. Children feel safe in Nursery and Reception. Staff make sure that children are looked after well.
- This year, improved teaching in Nursery is helping children to be better prepared for Reception class than in the past.
- Parents say that children are helped to settle quickly at school by staff. Parents are pleased with the information they receive from school because this helps them to support their child at home.
- The strongest teaching in the early years involves staff working with high expectations of what children are able to do, for example helping children to recognise and order numbers up to 20 correctly. Other successful teaching involves staff talking patiently and thoughtfully with children, for example to help children understand how to behave

when playing together.

- The provision and use of stories, books and rhymes in children's learning is good. Lots of opportunities are given to children to learn through talk and through playing with one another and staff. Children are becoming confident at using and talking about books and stories.

School details

Unique reference number	105631
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10037204

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Clarke
Headteacher	Gordon Leach
Telephone number	0161 770 5350
Website	www.greenacres.oldham.sch.uk
Email address	info@greenacres.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 January 2014

Information about this school

- Greenacres is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher and the chair of governors are new to the school since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the government's pupil premium funding is above average.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the majority of whom are of Pakistani heritage.
- The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an

education, health and care plan is average.

- The school offers a breakfast club every morning.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on Key Stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- The school will be converting to an academy as part of Moor End Multi-Academy Trust in autumn 2017.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors conducted a series of joint observations of teaching and learning with the headteacher, and with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors checked pupils' work to see what learning and progress have been like since September 2016.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in classes and around the school premises. Inspectors reviewed seven responses from pupils to an Ofsted questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with a random sample of 24 pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors met with the school leaders for English, mathematics, special needs and early years.
- Inspectors reviewed 16 responses from staff to an Ofsted questionnaire.
- Inspectors held a number of meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to consider their reviews of the school and plans for improvement.
- Inspectors considered a range of school information, including examples of targets for staff, checks made by leaders on the quality of teaching and learning and reviews of how well the school is doing.
- The inspectors met twice with a representative of Oldham local authority and met twice with the chair of the school governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents as they dropped their children at school at the start of two of the inspection days. There were too few parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to analyse.
- An inspector heard some pupils from Year 2 and Year 4 read.
- Inspectors reviewed the checks made of staff suitability to work with pupils and reviewed school records about the care and protection of pupils.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Seneviratne, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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