

# Great Gidding CofE Primary School

Main Street, Great Gidding, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 5NX

## Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The new headteacher has made clear to pupils, parents, staff and governors her ambition for each pupil. Everyone shares this vision and they are working collaboratively to continuously improve the school.
- The curriculum has been redesigned to ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to study a wide range of subjects. Teaching in a wide range of subjects is interesting and usually challenging.
- Governors challenge and support other leaders effectively and this means that teaching has improved.
- Children get off to a good start in early years. As a result of thorough monitoring, the early years provision has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate good attitudes to their learning and behave extremely well. They attend school regularly and are punctual.
- Disadvantaged pupils, especially the most able, do as well as their peers and sometimes they do better.
- Leaders make sure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of school life.
- The school has a strong culture of safety and safeguards pupils from harm. Parents share this view. They speak highly of the school and say that their children are well cared for.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress because teachers plan well to meet their needs.
- The stronger practice seen in the majority of classes is not consistently evident in others. When inconsistencies occur, pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
- Teachers give teaching assistants the information they need to help pupils learn. While it is new, adults who have trialled the revised feedback system have done so effectively. As a result, work in pupils' books demonstrates improved progress.
- Outcomes require improvement. Pupils have not made strong enough progress because teachers did not have consistently high expectations.
- The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are not fully embedded. Consequently, pupils who are falling behind in their learning are not being identified quickly enough.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress pupils make by:
  - ensuring that all teachers precisely monitor where pupils are in their level of knowledge and understanding
  - consistently providing pupils with work that is suitably challenging
  - setting aspirational and challenging targets
  - identifying promptly where pupils are falling behind so that emerging gaps in their learning can be addressed
  - embedding the school's feedback system so that the improvements seen so far are replicated across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The new headteacher has worked tirelessly to make sure that pupils get the best possible experience at the school. She has worked effectively to make sure that other leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Leaders have in place robust improvement plans which accurately reflect the next steps that the school needs to take.
- The values of the school are embedded in every aspect of its work. Adults lead by example and are very respectful of each other, of the pupils and of the parents. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive.
- The headteacher has considerably improved the quality of teaching. On taking up the post, she quickly identified that teachers were unclear about what was expected of them and put in place a set of 'non-negotiables' to hold teachers to account. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching now consist of a wide range of evidence and this means that their judgements are well rounded and accurate.
- The training which teachers have is proving very useful in improving their practice. For example, teachers have made sure that problem solving in mathematics is a regular part of the pupils' learning experiences. Consequently, pupils are making better progress in this area of mathematics.
- The staff are very positive about working at the school. They say that the school is a calm place to be because leaders support them well to manage pupils' behaviour. They feel motivated and respected and they enjoy coming to work. They are all proud to be a member of staff at the school.
- A key strength of the new leadership is the curriculum, which has been reviewed and adapted to match the context of the school. Each session begins with a 'big question' such as, 'What makes Britain great?' Pupils have exciting opportunities to learn some of the answers to these questions, such as hearing from a local historian. Displays show that this way of working is already embedded across the school and pupils say that they enjoy the enhanced opportunities which the redesigned curriculum offers. Leaders have identified that they will need to take account of pupils' views as they review the curriculum later in the year.
- Leaders provide frequent, high-quality opportunities for the pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. In an assembly, the pupils responded well to the theme of 'having courage to make the first move' and the reflection time allowed them to think about how they could apply the theme to their own actions.
- Leaders promote British values effectively. For example, even the youngest children in the school show that they understand the concept of tolerance and democratic process because they listen carefully to each other's views and take turns to respond.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively to improve provision and provide support which enables pupils to make good progress from their starting points.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to ensure that those pupils who attract this

additional funding make progress which is in line with that of other pupils in the school. It is not possible to compare the outcomes in Year 6 to national data as there were too few pupils in the cohort.

- The physical education leader makes sure that the primary physical education and sport premium funding is well used. She is passionate about her subject. She plays an active part in the local school sports partnership. Her leadership has contributed to increased numbers of pupils taking part in games and competitive sports.
- Parents are unreservedly positive about the school. All those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire would recommend the school to others. They say that their children are happy and safe and that teachers provide appropriate homework which effectively supports progress. Parents also state that they receive all the information they need so that they know how well their children are doing.
- There has been substantial turbulence in leadership since the previous inspection. As a result, systems for tracking pupils' progress have been changed frequently. The new headteacher recognised that the previous systems were not used effectively to identify exactly what pupils could and could not do. Consequently, pupils' rates of progress were inconsistent. Since the headteacher introduced the new system, pupils' books show that progress is more rapid. However, not all pupils have caught up to where they need to be.
- The local authority has worked closely and effectively with leaders to make sure that improvement since the previous inspection has been rapid and sustained. Advisers have visited half termly to review the school's progress towards the priorities in the improvement plan. Leaders in the school have readily accepted their advice. The local authority has confidence in the new leadership to take the school forward.

## **Governance of the school**

- There have been considerable changes to the governance of the school since the previous inspection. As a result of the external review of governance, recommended at the previous inspection, governors have improved the effectiveness of the standards and resources committees. Governors join the committees according to their skills and this means that they confidently and effectively carry out their roles.
- Governors are committed to playing their part in improving standards for the pupils and they have an action plan to focus their challenge and support. They make sure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities reach their potential.
- Governors have an accurate view about the strengths and weaknesses of the school because they make regular focused visits, for example to make checks on pupils' books.
- Minutes of governing body meetings cite examples of challenging questions, such as, 'What are the progress gaps in the school and what will be done to narrow them?' Rightly, governors identify that they must improve their knowledge of how performance management systems work so they can ensure that pay progressions are more rigorously reviewed.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a culture of urgency and vigilance. They know each of their pupils and families well, and this means that they can spot changes in their attitudes and behaviour which may indicate a cause for concern.
- Leaders are aware of the particular challenges that may face pupils at the school and have carried out risk assessments to make sure that staff are prepared to deal with such eventualities. Leaders work closely with other agencies when required to make sure that the pupils are safe.
- Staff understand their responsibility for safeguarding pupils and know how to use the school's procedures and policies. They benefit from regular, up-to-date training on safeguarding and this means that they can carry out their statutory responsibilities.
- Checks on staff when they are recruited to work at the school are rigorous and meet statutory requirements.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online. They are aware of bullying and extremism and know what to do if they are worried or have concerns.
- Staff have carried out training on a range of aspects related to safeguarding, such as children missing from education and child sexual exploitation. An example of the impact of this training is that processes for following up absence are much more rigorous than previously.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teaching captures pupils' interests. The pupils say that they enjoy learning about the 'big questions' which are a key part of the newly designed curriculum. Most, including the most able, say that their learning is pitched 'just right'. Where they say that it is a little easy, they come up with ideas about how to make it more difficult.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge to ask questions which consolidate key concepts or which challenge pupils' thinking. For example, in a mathematics lesson on the properties of quadrilaterals, when pupils suggested that a rhombus was an irregular shape, the teacher asked them what they had decided about the rhombus in a previous lesson. Pupils went on to say that a rhombus is 'a square which has been pushed over.' The teacher asked, 'What do you know about squares?' and the pupils came to the conclusion that a rhombus is in fact a regular quadrilateral.
- Relationships are strong in all classes and this means that the pupils are confident in their learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, so that learning is not interrupted. Pupils work hard because adults expect them to.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from activities which are well matched to what they need and so make good gains in their learning. Most-able pupils are given demanding work in most lessons.
- Teachers give good guidance to teaching assistants about what they expect pupils to learn and the content and quality of the work they expect pupils to produce. The teaching assistants have their own versions of the teachers' plans and this means that they have the information they need to take pupils' learning forward.

- In a few lessons, teachers and teaching assistants do not precisely assess what the pupils understand. When this happens, pupils are not consistently moved on to more difficult tasks quickly enough and this means that progress is slower.
- Until recently, the evaluations of teaching were not specific enough about the progress that the pupils were making. Under the current leadership, monitoring and evaluation of teaching are being changed to include a greater focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Subsequently, the standard of teaching across the school has significantly improved.
- The policy for written feedback is new. In the classes where the teachers have tested it out, it is embedded in practice and the pupils can explain the meaning of the pink and green annotations and of their 'purple polishing pens'. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that this is having a positive impact on the rate of pupils' progress. Leaders are committed to making sure that the policy is rolled out across the school.
- Teachers have worked hard to make sure that the assessments which they make at the end of each term are accurate. Teachers use the school's tracking system consistently to set end-of-year targets for the pupils. Sometimes the targets are not ambitious enough.
- Assessment at the end of each term in physical education and religious education is well developed and shows that pupils are working at the standard expected of them. In physical education, many more pupils take part in sports activities than previously.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Most apply themselves wholeheartedly to their learning. On the few occasions where teaching does not stretch pupils well enough, just a few lose focus.
- Pupils like their school and know that regular attendance is important for their future.
- Pupils feel supported by their teachers, who ensure that they are safe and well cared for. Bullying is rare. Pupils say that adults deal well with any concerns they have.
- Each Year 6 pupil is an ambassador for a specific aspect such as technology. They know that their leadership roles are crucial in making sure that pupils do their best and feel looked after.
- Pupils are encouraged to empathise with others throughout the curriculum. For example, in the 'What makes Britain great' displays, pupils write about the impact of a Second World War bomber aircraft landing in the village and what that meant for the villagers. Consequently, pupils are considerate and thoughtful.
- Leaders support pupils to have high aspirations. The new headteacher has introduced the Great Gidding University where pupils take part in activities such as building London with plastic bricks and the Great British Sewing Bee. One of the governors works with the pupils on environmental science projects as this is his area of expertise.

- Pupils have a good understanding about how to live a healthy lifestyle. This is because the main principles are taught well. Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. For example, the prospectus gives guidance to parents about what makes for a healthy lunchbox and pupils have fresh fruit and milk or healthy snacks daily. Because most of the pupils live in the village, they walk to school. In addition, families also regularly take part in the weekly 'golden mile' where they walk at least a mile before school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils understand what constitutes exemplary behaviour and this means that they behave exceptionally well whether an adult is present or not.
- All pupils respond with immediacy to requests from adults. Behaviour in lessons is usually exemplary, because pupils are absorbed in their learning. Behaviour incidents have decreased under the new leadership.
- Attendance is above average, including for the different groups of pupils. Pupils are punctual and ready to learn.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The progress which pupils make over time is inconsistent. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress, but for others the picture has been too variable. This is particularly the case in key stage 2.
- In 2017, just five pupils took the key stage 2 national tests. Provisional 2017 attainment figures are much better than those in 2016. Although this provisional data shows an improvement in pupils' attainment compared with 2016, the figures remained below average.
- Provisional progress information also remains below the national average. However, progress in each of these pupils' books, across the curriculum, shows that four of the five made average progress from their starting points. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils at the school are very low. There were no disadvantaged pupils in the previous cohort of key stage 2. Across the other year groups, those on roll make progress which is in line with that of their peers at school. The large majority of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress and reach standards above those expected for their age.
- Since the summer term, pupils have been making stronger progress and in some cases it is striking. For example, some key stage 2 pupils went from making number bonds to 10 to solving word problems using three-digit numbers. Other pupils went from understanding basic place value to solving simple algebraic problems.
- More than three quarters of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made accelerated progress since the middle of the summer term. They have not yet caught up to where they need to be, but are on track to do so. The more rapid and sustained progress is due to the much improved picture of the quality of teaching.
- In 2017, pupils made average progress across key stage 1 and typical progress in early



years. The unvalidated 2017 data shows that the proportions of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception Year, reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1, and reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 compare favourably with national figures.

- In physical education, pupils are developing their skills well. In religious education, standards are high.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader has an accurate picture of the strengths of the provision and uses monitoring effectively to determine next steps for improvement. She has put in place actions to address weaknesses and these have led to improvements in the learning environment and in the use of an online assessment system.
- Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements are met. There are close links with external agencies such as the educational psychology team, the speech and language therapy team, and the special educational needs team.
- Adults who work in early years value their training. There have been improvements, for example, in the way that children move from activity to activity.
- Phonics is well taught. The impact of this effective teaching is seen in most children's confidence and ability to use what they know to write unfamiliar words.
- Most children are motivated by activities which stimulate their interest. Adults make the best of the outdoor learning environment, but leaders have identified that it is in need of improvement. When they are learning outside, children use the climbing equipment and the trees safely and carefully because they have been well taught by adults.
- Displays and learning journals show that there is a good balance across all the areas of learning and this means that children have a wide range of experiences. Adults know the early years curriculum very well and this means that they can ask questions which take children's learning forward.
- Children enter early years with skills and abilities which are typical for their age. As a result of the good provision, they make good progress and most leave having reached a good level of development. They are articulate children who benefit from an environment which is rich with language opportunities.
- The school website includes useful information for parents about learning experiences and opportunities. There are two weekly newsletters and monthly surgeries where parents can talk with staff about their children's progress. Parents have their own log-in for the online assessment system. Most have made their own comments about home learning.



## School details

Unique reference number	110813
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10036256

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Byard
Headteacher	Suki Hinton
Telephone number	01832 293466
Website	<a href="http://www.greatgidding.cambs.sch.uk">www.greatgidding.cambs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@greatgidding.cambs.sch.uk">office@greatgidding.cambs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22–23 September 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, and pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The pupils are largely from White British families.
- The proportions of pupils who attract the pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are much smaller than those found nationally. No pupil has an education, health and care plan.
- The previous substantive headteacher left the post in July 2014 and the current headteacher took up the substantive post in September 2017 and was an acting senior leader in the school in the spring and summer terms preceding this inspection. Two of the five teachers have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum

expectations for primary schools, in 2016. Too few pupils took the national tests in 2017 to publish the results.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classrooms and also made shorter visits to classrooms to check on the quality of pupils' learning across the curriculum. The majority of these observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at a range of pupils' books in subjects across the curriculum.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, who is also responsible for assessment, English, special educational needs and/or disabilities and early years, and with other school leaders and the newly qualified teacher.
- She met with a group of three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and with a representative from the local authority.
- To gain their views of the school, the inspector spoke to pupils in their lessons, around the school and on the playground. She heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- She spoke to parents at the start of the inspection and considered 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- She also considered five responses to the online staff questionnaire.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, pupils' achievement and leadership.

## Inspection team

Helen Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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