

Great Creaton Primary School

Welford Road, Creaton, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN6 8NH

Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders', including governors', monitoring and evaluation of their plans for school improvement have not been effective enough to ensure the rapid improvements needed.
- Leaders do not monitor or track the progress of pupils robustly enough in order to quickly address underachievement.
- Governors are not consistently as effective as they could be because they are not always provided with enough information to hold others to account.
- Teachers do not consistently address pupils' misconceptions in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Consequently, pupils' progress in writing is not as rapid as it could be.
- Targets are not consistently well matched to all pupils' abilities, particularly in writing. As a result, pupils' progress is slowed.
- Tasks are not consistently well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, some pupils have become too reliant on adult support and are not as self-motivated in their learning as they could be and their engagement in learning is reduced.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics so as to deepen their understanding.
- Teaching assistants' subject knowledge in mathematics is not secure enough to enable pupils to make consistently good progress, particularly the less able pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and governors make sure systems are in place and pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- The teaching of phonics is good and pupils usually achieve the expected standard. Pupils use their phonics skills effectively when reading unfamiliar words.
- Provision in early years has improved and is now good. Strong leadership allows children to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils enjoy school and attendance is in line with the national average. The vast majority of parents and carers would recommend the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance by ensuring that:
 - actions detailed in the school improvement plan are monitored and evaluated regularly for their impact on pupils' progress
 - systems for the assessment of and checking on pupils' progress are used effectively so that underachievement is addressed quickly, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities
 - members of the governing body develop their understanding of how to more effectively hold school leaders to account for pupils' progress and attainment through well-informed monitoring activities.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - misconceptions of basic spelling, grammar and punctuation are consistently addressed
 - targets and work set by teachers are consistently well matched to pupils' abilities so that all pupils are challenged, motivated and fully engaged with their learning
 - pupils have regular opportunities to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics
 - teaching assistants receive training to improve their subject knowledge in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- At the start of the inspection, some parts of the school's evaluation of the work that it does were too generous. This means that leaders and governors did not have a completely accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- School leaders and governors do not evaluate the impact of their actions quickly enough in order to ensure rapid improvements for the performance of the school. As a result, the school has not improved quickly enough.
- Leaders do not monitor pupils' performance often enough in order to identify and effectively tackle slowed progress or underachievement. As a result, pupils do not make rapid enough progress in order to close gaps in attainment and do not always reach the levels they should. This is particularly true in writing, where progress remains weak.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is not robust enough. Targets to improve teaching are not given consistently and nor are they monitored quickly enough to ensure rapid improvements.
- Leaders face a variety of challenges. While the number of pupils attending the school is steadily declining, the number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has rapidly increased; this group of pupils currently makes up 47% of the school population. The local authority has provided additional funding and support for the school. This has gone some way towards supporting leaders with the high number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, the impact of this has not been effective enough.
- The leader for SEN and/or disabilities knows the individual pupils well. The school liaises with outside agencies effectively to identify pupils' needs. Additional support is provided promptly for pupils. However, the impact of this support is not monitored robustly enough to ensure that the skills acquired through additional training, for example, are transferred back into the classroom and are having a positive impact.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of subjects, which are further enhanced by off-site trips and visitors into school. The school works effectively with a specialist adviser and ambassador to improve the provision for science, and recently took part in a local science fair.
- There are a variety of extra-curricular activities available to pupils after school. Many of the pupils spoken to attend and enjoy these activities, which include gymnastics and football. Tag rugby is a popular after-school club. The school team won the local tournament last year.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, preparing them for life in modern Britain. Pupils spoke to the inspector about a recent trip to a local mosque and what they had learned while there.
- Spending of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been planned for and targeted to improve pupils' outcomes. The numbers of pupils eligible for this funding is too small to allow further comment without identifying individual pupils.
- Additional funding for primary physical education (PE) and sport has been used

effectively. A group of children have been trained by a sports coach to run activities at break and lunchtimes in order to promote active lifestyles. The number of pupils participating in sport has increased as a result of the use of this funding.

- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, and the free-text service, or who spoke to the inspector during the inspection, were keen to praise the work of the school.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is responsible for this and one other school within the federation.
- Governors have not consistently been given enough information in order to effectively monitor improvement, challenge leaders and hold them to account. However, they have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities.
- Governors are very supportive and have a clear understanding of the significant challenges of the school. They are keen to improve their skills and knowledge so that they can fully support the executive headteacher to bring about improvements and raise standards at the school. Governors are aware of the use of additional funds such as the pupil premium and receive updates about the impact on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements with regard to recruitment are met.
- Records show that concerns are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner and illustrate the steps taken to secure pupils' safety and welfare.
- Staff and governors receive regular training in safeguarding. Relevant updates and issues are discussed regularly. The school works well with external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families.
- Pupils spoken to say that they enjoy being part of a small school and they feel safe. Pupils say the teachers are friendly and they could talk to the adults in school about any concerns they might have if they needed to. Pupils were keen to share the fact that they know the ChildLine phone number and understand what it is for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement.
- Teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning, or the end-of-year expectations for their achievement that pupils must reach, to plan effectively for all pupils to progress sufficiently well. Work in pupils' books and observations of lessons show that pupils are not consistently given work which matches their ability or their needs. Too often, pupils are all given the same activity regardless of their year group or ability. As a result, for some the work is too easy and others are unsure of what to do, and therefore pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

- Learning targets given to pupils are not consistently well matched to their abilities, particularly in writing. Sometimes, pupils are expected to develop advanced punctuation when they have not yet mastered the basics. As a result, progress is slowed.
- Misconceptions in spelling, grammar and punctuation are not consistently addressed by teachers, hindering pupils' progress in writing. Work in books shows that while the content of most pupils' writing is improving steadily, spelling, grammar and punctuation are slow to improve.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics. As a result, they are not always confident in explaining their thinking or understanding of mathematical concepts and do not deepen their knowledge well enough.
- Gaps in the mathematical subject knowledge of some teaching assistants hinder pupils' progress, particularly pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Concepts are not consistently explained, effectively resulting in some misconceptions becoming embedded.
- Questioning is sometimes used effectively in lessons and pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking. When this happens, pupils develop a deeper understanding of key concepts and skills.
- Phonics is taught well in early years and key stage 1. Pupils enjoy phonics lessons and make good progress. However, this knowledge is not used effectively to improve pupils' spelling in key stage 2.
- Most pupils enjoy reading both at home and at school. Many are able to discuss what they are reading and apply their phonics skills effectively to read unfamiliar words. Comments in reading journals are reflective and supportive of progress. The visit from the author Sue Bentley was a memorable experience for the pupils.
- Teachers provide pupils with enriched experiences across the wider curriculum, which allow them to learn in a fun and exciting way. The school has its own museum displaying various historical artefacts. It is used in different ways, such as to promote creative writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are positive, and as a result, pupils demonstrate a good level of social awareness and skill. The small size and the nurturing ethos of the school provide individual support for pupils, which is appreciated by many parents. One told the inspector, 'The school operates like a family where older and younger children play, learn and share friendships together.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values as these are taught well through the curriculum and assembly themes. Pupils are very aware of the importance of accepting other views and beliefs even if they differ from their own. They spoke highly of a

recent visit from an imam and what they had learned from him.

- Pupils know how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including in relation to the internet. They and their parents feel that school is a safe place to be and that they are well cared for. Pupils have a solid understanding of the difference between falling out and bullying and they report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In the majority of lessons, some off-task behaviour was observed. Some pupils lack strategies to use when they are stuck and rely heavily on adult support. As a result, pupils' independence and self-motivation are underdeveloped.
- Additionally, engagement of pupils in their learning is not always as high as it could be. This occurs when tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities. When this happens, not all pupils are able to participate in the learning intended. They become disengaged and their progress is slowed.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well at different times of the school day. This is the result of the positive relationships they have with the adults in school as well as each other. Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Many parents made comments about how happy their children are to go to school. One volunteered, 'My children run to school with smiles on their faces.'

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- By the end of key stage 2, in 2017, pupils' attainment at the expected standard was below national averages in reading and writing and mathematics. The proportions exceeding the expected standard were also below average. The majority of pupils made insufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in writing was in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally.
- By the end of key stage 1, in 2017, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average at both the expected and the higher than expected standard. However, this was a very small cohort of pupils and therefore comparisons with national averages are not statistically meaningful.
- Progress for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent. Not all make the progress of which they are capable. Targets for some of these pupils are not consistently well matched to their needs or abilities and misconceptions are not always addressed effectively. This slows their progress.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils across the school is too small to report on their progress without the risk of identifying them.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that the majority of current pupils are building effectively on standards they reached in the past. However, too few pupils make rapid enough progress to close gaps in attainment.
- Published data for 2017 shows that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected

standard in phonics has been above the national average for several years. Historically, usually 100% of children achieve the expected standard. In 2017, the average score was also above the national average. Currently, pupils are making good progress with their phonics.

- The number of children achieving a good level of development in early years has been improving year on year and in 2017, the school was in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- With some support from the local authority, improvements have been made in early years since the previous inspection and early years is now good.
- Children in early years get off to a good start in their education. Parents are fully involved in their child's induction to the school and children settle quickly into school life. All are appreciative of the staff's support and encouragement. Transition into school is supported through nursery visits and meetings with families before children start school. These are well attended and appreciated by parents.
- Provision in early years is good because the leader has a strong understanding of the needs of young children. She is quick to assess children's development needs and interests and skilfully plans activities based on these. As a result, children are excited to participate in lessons and engagement is high.
- Children are inquisitive and keen to talk about what they are learning. For example, a child who had completed a piece of writing about a robot happily read his sentence and discussed the robot with the inspector.
- Staff monitor children's progress closely and ensure that judgements are secure through regular discussions and reviews of their work. The school moderates its assessments within a local cluster group. Work in current children's books show that they are making good progress in all areas of learning. Children are prepared well for entering Year 1.
- Children benefit from the positive relationships they have with their older classmates. Although the leader sets tasks to meet early years development expectations, children are keen to join in with the older pupils in their mixed-age class. This particularly supports the good progress of the most able children in early years.
- Early phonics, reading, writing and mathematical skills are taught well in early years. All activities have a clear purpose and all areas of learning are catered for both indoors and out. The opportunity to make a water feature was very popular and the children worked collaboratively to solve problems in order to make it work. Children are motivated and eager to join in with activities.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective and statutory duties are met. Children generally work well together and support each other's learning. Relationships are strong between adults and children, allowing children to feel safe and secure.
- There is a high level of parental engagement and this is actively promoted by the leader. Parents are invited to participate in the school's online assessment system, which allows parents to see what their children have been learning. Parents participate in this by sharing comments and photos of learning which has occurred outside school.

- When adults use effective, probing questions to further engage and challenge children's thinking, they are able to move children's learning forward. However, when children are working independently, they do not always demonstrate sustained concentration and sometimes flit from one activity to another.

School details

Unique reference number	121820
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10041561

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Leah
Executive Headteacher	Emma Mercer
Telephone number	01604 505535
Website	www.greatcreaton.com
Email address	head@clipstonandcreaton.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 December 2015

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and children are taught in two mixed-age classes.
- The school is part of a federation of two schools that share a governing body.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has received support from the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in seven lessons, five jointly with the executive headteacher, visiting both classes. She looked at pupils' work in books covering a range of abilities and year groups.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and leaders with responsibility for early years and SEN and/or disabilities, and English and mathematics.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and considered their views of their school. She also spoke informally with pupils during lessons and around the school. She also considered the 22 responses to the online pupil survey.
- The inspector considered the 26 responses from the parent online survey, Parent View, 25 responses to the free-text service and one written letter, and she spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the leaders' self-evaluation of the school's performance, the school improvement plan, monitoring files, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's assessment information and documentation related to safeguarding and attendance.

Inspection team

Heidi Malliff, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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