

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 March 2018

Graeme Garthwaite
Headteacher
Cage Green Primary School
Cage Green Road
Tonbridge
Kent
TN10 4PT

Dear Mr Garthwaite

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cage Green Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- develop the assessment system to check pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics
- strengthen the school improvement plan by:
 - including current priorities for improvement, as well as those identified in the previous inspection which have not yet been fully addressed
 - adding targets for groups of pupils.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the head of the Phoenix Centre, the assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. I also met three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I conducted a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. You led me on a tour of the school and provided me with a wide range of the school's documentation to scrutinise. We discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. I reviewed pupils' work with your assistant headteachers. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I spoke informally with parents waiting to collect their children at the end of school.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection, you have reorganised the senior leadership team by appointing four assistant headteachers and including the head of the Phoenix Centre, a specialist provision for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder.

Main findings

You continue to provide strong leadership of the school. You have a clear vision for the high standards expected at the school. You are ably supported by the head of the Phoenix Centre and the four assistant headteachers. Leaders share a clear determination to enable every pupil in the school to thrive and achieve well. Leaders' actions are successfully tackling the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. A very large majority of parents I spoke to or who provided feedback through Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were positive about the school.

During my visits to classrooms, the atmosphere was purposeful and pupils were enjoying a range of learning activities. The learning environment and teaching strategies were consistent across all classes. Pupils were confidently and independently using resources and classroom displays to help their thinking. You were able to demonstrate the steps taken to improve teaching through bespoke coaching of individuals alongside whole-staff training, as well as identifying where further development is needed. Strong relationships were evident, particularly in the Phoenix Centre. Teaching assistants were supporting pupils' learning effectively throughout the school.

Pupils' outcomes in 2017 show higher attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 than in 2016. The school's published performance information includes pupils who attend the school's specialist provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The school's own analysis shows that, in 2017, the attainment and progress scores of Year 6 and Year 2 pupils who attend the main school were broadly in line with

national averages. Leaders rightly identified that standards in mathematics need to improve further, particularly at the higher levels.

The assistant headteachers have increased the leadership capacity for further improvement considerably. Working as an effective team, they have improved the systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and the rates of pupils' progress. Their systematic quality assurance quickly identifies where teaching needs strengthening, leading to useful coaching and training. A review of some pupils' work showed how the actions taken by the assistant headteachers to improve the quality of teaching have had a positive impact. For example, books showed an increase in problem solving in mathematics and higher standards of writing by the most able pupils. Detailed and helpful feedback to pupils by teachers, in line with the school's policy, is consistent across all years. High expectations are evident in pupils' work in both English and mathematics. However, the standard of work in pupils' books from other subjects was generally lower. Leaders have already identified that tracking and improving pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is a priority for improvement. Bright displays of art work in corridors and 'topic' boards in classrooms indicate the breadth of the curriculum, but assessing pupils' progression through a range of subjects needs further development.

The head of the Phoenix Centre provides significant expertise to the oversight of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities throughout the school. Together with the special educational needs coordinator, they deploy staff trained in speech and language development to screen all pupils on entry to the school. Leaders ensure that pupils' diverse needs and starting points are accurately identified, drawing on advice from other agencies where needed. This precise identification forms the basis of personalised plans to support all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, both in the main school and the Phoenix Centre. The school also provides a pastoral team to offer further support for vulnerable pupils in school. This team works with parents and outside agencies to provide the right support for pupils, alongside high expectations. Leaders are checking that this support and intervention is helping pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make strong progress.

The assistant headteacher with oversight of disadvantaged pupils shows the same detailed level of attention to the needs of this group of pupils. There is careful monitoring of their attendance and behaviour, and extra learning or pastoral support is also provided. Leaders now check the progress made by disadvantaged pupils more carefully. The evidence indicates that the leaders' generally positive evaluations of the interventions used are justified. Governors are aware of the level of care shown for individual pupils and the effective steps taken to support those in danger of falling behind. However, governors do not yet have clarity about the overall impact of pupil premium expenditure on the progress of disadvantaged pupils, compared with other pupils nationally with the same starting points. There is also more to do to identify the most able disadvantaged pupils and ensure that they make accelerated progress.

Since the previous inspection, governors raised their expectations further and sought guidance from an external consultant. Governors show effective support and challenge to school leaders and are rightly proud of the improvements that have taken place at the school. However, school leaders, including governors, are still prioritising actions based on the areas for improvement recommended in the previous inspection report. This was well over a year ago; since then, outcomes for 2017 have been published, and there is a great deal of performance information about current pupils. It is time for leaders to complete a robust self-evaluation to identify current strengths and weaknesses. Your judgements can then be used to update the school's improvement plan, including setting targets and milestones for the achievement of groups in the school, such as disadvantaged and the most able pupils. This would make it easier for leaders and governors to evaluate the success of actions taken to improve the performance of these groups.

External support

School leaders and teachers are benefiting from effective support provided by advisers from Kent local authority. The link adviser offered appropriate challenge and support, and a new adviser is now getting to know the school. Other advisers are helping to improve leadership and teaching and learning, particularly in English and mathematics. Leaders have also benefited through participation in local school collaborations, which have provided peer review, moderation of work and training for subject leaders.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Theresa Phillips
Her Majesty's Inspector