

Greythorn Primary School

Greythorn Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG2 7GH

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has successfully ensured that the vision and values of this school are well known. Leaders and staff have worked together as a cohesive team to bring about improvements in teaching and outcomes.
- The Flying High Academy Trust (the trust) has provided effective support to leaders to enable them to improve their skills and the quality of provision at the school.
- Teaching across the school is characterised by strong subject knowledge and effective questioning skills. Teachers' use of assessment enables them to build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers plan lessons that engage and motivate pupils. Typically, they provide pupils with the correct amount of challenge and support during the lessons so that pupils can learn well.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to enable pupils to learn alongside their peers.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are well prepared to be citizens of modern British society.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils are confident that they are safe in school. They learn how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations.
- Pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school is above that seen nationally. Current pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are above those seen nationally.
- Pupils behave well in class and around school. They demonstrate good manners.
- Children achieve well in the Reception Year. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a range of activities that promote learning well.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers speak highly of the school.
- Leaders' plans for improvement, and for the spending of additional funding, lack the necessary precision that would allow them to evaluate the impact of their work more sharply.
- There is currently no permanent leader in place for the early years. The trust is committed to ensuring that it provides strong support while a substantive leader is appointed.
- Very occasionally, including in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers do not explain clearly the steps pupils must take to be successful, including at a higher standard. They provide limited opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical reasoning skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the plans for improvement, and for the allocation of additional funding, are characterised by precise targets and success criteria so that leaders and staff can be fully held to account
 - the trust providing strong support for the leadership of the early years during the time of transition from one substantive early years leader to another.
- Further improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that teachers:
 - have the same high expectations of pupils across all subjects as they do in English and mathematics
 - broaden the range of opportunities they provide for pupils to improve their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - make clear to all pupils the steps they must take, including those that provide additional challenge, in order to achieve the standards they should, particularly in their writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, governors and the trust have worked together effectively since the previous inspection, which took place prior to the school converting to academy status. They have successfully developed a strong ethos and culture, where all staff have contributed to bringing about significant improvements to teaching, pupils' behaviour and outcomes.
- The values of the school are well known and understood by all. Leaders and staff are a cohesive team, united behind a single vision that Greythorn will be 'the best school in the universe'.
- Senior and middle leaders understand the school's priorities and their role in bringing about school improvement. They work together to draft the school's improvement plan. Some of the targets and success criteria in the plan are too vague. Leaders do not have the information they require to challenge each other, or other staff, to ensure that the improvements being made are having the desired impact. It is not clear how leaders will be held to account for the success of various actions.
- Leaders are mindful of teachers' workload and well-being. New initiatives are introduced thoughtfully to ensure that staff are not overloaded with excessive marking. This is appreciated by staff. One staff member described the headteacher as 'a supportive head who is very aware of the demands of the job'.
- Staff are well motivated and value the range of professional development opportunities provided in school, from the trust and through the school's links with Candleby Lane Teaching School Alliance. Staff make the most of opportunities to share good practice with partner schools. The focus placed by leaders on effective professional development has improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of learning experiences both in and out of the classroom. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure that boys are engaged in learning, and this is proving successful in improving outcomes for boys across the school. Leaders have noticed that the current curriculum is not catering well enough for the school's changing population. They are already taking steps to develop the curriculum further so that the needs of the pupils who attend the school are fully met.
- Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a wide range of visits and visitors to enhance their learning. Visits, such as to the Space Centre in Leicester and the Attenborough Nature Reserve, support pupils' learning well. Visitors enhance pupils' understanding of different historical eras through drama. Pupils say that they enjoy these opportunities greatly.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities out of lesson time. These include drumming, recorders, clay work, knitting, gardening, choir and a wide range of sports.
- The leader with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities provides good leadership. She ensures that staff receive useful training to enable them to meet the differing needs of the pupils. She has implemented clear procedures to identify pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and ensure that

parents have regular opportunities to discuss the provision for their children, the progress they are making and how parents can help at home. The majority of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points. Their overall rates of attendance have improved significantly this year.

- Leaders ensure that the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent well. Leaders consider carefully the barriers to learning for these pupils. They make certain that the appropriate interventions and support are in place to enable pupils to make strong progress from their starting points. The evaluation of the spending of the funding is not sufficiently sharp, however, because the targets and success criteria lack precision.
- The primary sport premium is used effectively to provide training for teachers to improve their skills in teaching physical education (PE). It is also used to broaden the range of sporting opportunities on offer to pupils. In common with other plans in school, the plan for the spending of this funding lacks some of the detail that would allow a more precise evaluation of the impact of the funding.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The slogan 'Everyone different. Everyone equal' is proudly displayed on the wall in the school hall. An attractive display of pupils' biographies celebrates the diversity of the pupil population. Several pupils quoted the slogan to inspectors and made it very clear that they believe in the philosophy.
- Pupils spoke to inspectors about their understanding that people have lifestyles and cultures that may be different from their own, but that these are respected. Pupils visit places of worship, including a church and a mosque. Parents visit school to help teach pupils about different religions and cultures. Pupils can learn to play a musical instrument and visit a theatre. They raise money for charities, and the pupils' knitting club regularly visits the local residential home to enjoy a knitting session alongside the residents.
- Pupils gain a clear understanding of life in modern Britain. They democratically vote for their classmates to represent them on the active school council. Some pupils have the opportunity to interview Members of Parliament and take part in local 'pupil parliaments'.
- An overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of the leadership and would recommend the school to others. Parents who spoke with inspectors or responded to the online survey, Parent View, typically spoke of the school staff as a 'team'. One parent summed up the views of many, saying, 'The school values, and being part of Flying High Trust as well, have impacted on making this a super environment for children to learn, be safe and be happy. I could not recommend Greythorn more highly.'

Governance of the school

- The trust has overall responsibility for governance of the school. It devolves some responsibilities to a local governing body. Both the trust and the local governing body understand their different responsibilities.
- The trust and the local governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and of the further improvements they would like to make. They both make regular visits to school to see it in action for themselves and to discuss aspects of the school's work with staff and pupils. They both receive regular and

detailed reports about the work of the school from leaders. Minutes of governors' meetings show that they ask questions to seek clarity and further information.

- The trust has provided vital support to leaders to raise the expectations of staff, to embed a culture of high expectations and to raise the quality of teaching and learning at the school.
- The trust and local governors are united in their ambition for the school to build upon the improvements that have been made.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that all the necessary vetting checks take place when an adult starts to work, or volunteer, at the school. Records are well kept.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive training in safeguarding. Leaders provide staff with useful updates during the regular staff briefing meetings.
- Leaders and staff work well together to ensure that any concerns about a child's welfare are shared, recorded and reviewed appropriately. Staff know the pupils well. They make referrals to external agencies in a timely manner, if this is appropriate for a child's welfare. They continue to monitor any concerns that have arisen through weekly meetings. When they can, staff provide support for families and pupils before problems escalate.
- Governors keep a close eye on the school's safeguarding procedures and practices to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They explained that fire drills and other procedures reassure them that staff have every eventuality in hand, should an emergency occur.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when they use the internet. They learn about 'stranger danger' and how to both cross roads and cycle on roads safely. Older pupils gain an understanding of the dangers associated with gangs, drugs and knives at a level appropriate for their age.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over recent years. It is now good across the school.
- Teachers have focused on ensuring that learning is planned to engage the interest of both boys and girls. This has contributed to the gap between boys' and girls' achievement diminishing.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of writing. Teachers ensure that pupils use the skills they are taught in grammar, punctuation and spelling in the regular opportunities they provide for pupils to write at length. Standards in writing, particularly across key stage 2, have improved year-on-year since 2016.

- Reading is taught well. In reading lessons, teachers explore unfamiliar words such as, 'stratagem' and 'pedlar', effectively with pupils to broaden their vocabulary. Pupils at an early stage of reading use their phonic knowledge successfully to help them read accurately. More proficient readers read fluently and with expression. They told inspectors that they enjoy reading.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers encourage pupils to draw upon previous knowledge and skills to support their new learning. For example, pupils used their knowledge of multiplication and of simplifying to understand ratio. Teachers provide pupils with equipment that will help them to grasp new concepts. Pupils' books show that while teachers provide opportunities for pupils to solve problems, their reasoning skills are less well developed.
- Pupils' books show that teachers plan lessons sequentially so that pupils build on previous knowledge and understanding. At the start of lessons, teachers provide pupils with information about the steps they need to achieve to be successful in their learning and to challenge them further in their thinking. Very occasionally, the steps are not sufficiently precise for pupils to know exactly what they have to do to achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers typically assess pupils' understanding of the ideas being taught during the lesson, stepping in to provide further explanations or levels of challenge when pupils need them.
- Teaching assistants provide high-quality support for pupils. They use well-considered questions and a balance of encouragement and praise to enable pupils to learn well alongside their classmates.
- The strong relationships that exist between adults and pupils engender an atmosphere of trust and a willingness to offer answers and ideas in class. Pupils participate well in their lessons, showing respect for each other's suggestions.
- Teachers provide pupils with homework in line with the school's policy to support the learning that takes place in lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in English and mathematics. In other subjects, teachers do not reliably exhibit the same high expectations. For example, pupils' books show that teachers do not insist that pupils write to the same high standard as they do in English lessons. Teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical reasoning skills across a range of subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They listen attentively when their teacher is talking to them. Almost without exception, pupils present their work neatly, demonstrating that they take pride in their work.
- Leaders ensure that pupils gain a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They

provide pupils, particularly in key stage 2, with sports and games at lunchtime. The curriculum, for example through science and personal, social, health education (PSHE), ensures that pupils learn about the importance of a healthy diet and exercise.

- Pupils say that bullying is rare at Greythorn, but they are confident that when it does occur adults take the time to deal with it effectively. Pupils engage with anti-bullying week and explained to inspectors their motto: 'Don't be a bystander, be an upstander.'
- Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility around school. They can act as pet-care assistants to the school's guinea pig or as ambassadors for behaviour, the environment and English, to name but a few. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. Teachers provide pupils with training so that they can undertake their duties successfully. Pupils recognise that these responsibilities are preparing them well for life beyond primary school.
- During assembly, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their school values and how they relate to the wider world. They do so respectfully. During the inspection, the headteacher capitalised on England's performance in the World Cup football tournament to relate the players' aspirations, confidence and resilience to the school's same values.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to both adults and each other alike. They demonstrate their very good manners in class and around school, holding doors open for each other and standing aside for adults to walk down corridors. On many occasions, inspectors were greeted with 'Good morning' or 'Hello' with a cheery smile from pupils.
- In lessons, pupils behave well. They engage well with their learning and cooperate well together. A few pupils drift off task when, very occasionally, teachers' expectations or explanations are not sufficiently clear.
- At playtime, pupils play together sensibly. Leaders have made improvements to the lunchtime arrangements this year. They have provided additional activities to occupy the pupils on the key stage 2 playground and field. This includes a sports coach who organises games and a 'zone' for pupils to play different sports. Rewards that have been introduced motivate pupils to demonstrate their good behaviour and respect at lunchtime. One of the most highly prized rewards is to be able to sit at the 'table of awesomeness' for lunch, where pupils are treated to juice and after-dinner mints. Pupils spoke about the improvements that have been made to lunchtimes with great enthusiasm.
- Pupils' rates of attendance have been above the national average for three years, indicating that pupils enjoy coming to school. The pastoral support manager keeps an eye on the very few pupils who arrive late to school and provides support for the few parents whose children do not attend school regularly enough.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Published information shows that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment at both the expected and the higher standard in reading and mathematics exceeded the national averages in 2016 and 2017. Very early, unvalidated data indicates that this is set to continue in 2018.
- Published information shows that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of Year 6 in writing fell below the national average in 2016, but rose to be in line with the national average in 2017. Provisional, unvalidated data for 2018 shows that the proportion achieving this standard in 2018 will exceed the national average for 2017. This demonstrates a clear upward trend in attainment in writing at the end of key stage 2.
- Published information shows that in 2017, the progress made by pupils in each of reading, writing and mathematics was in line with that seen nationally. In writing, this was an improvement on 2016, when progress fell below the national average.
- Pupils' books and school assessment information show that most pupils currently in school make the progress that the school expects of them from their different starting points, with some pupils exceeding this expectation.
- There is a small number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group. Nevertheless, pupils' books show that these pupils, just like the increasing proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, make strong progress in both English and mathematics from their individual starting points.
- Early reading is well taught. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been above that seen nationally for three years and looks set to be so in 2018.
- By the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard and the greater depth of understanding is generally just above the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion achieving a greater depth in writing fell in 2017.
- Historically, boys have not made as much progress, or attained as highly, as girls, particularly in English. Leaders have been acutely aware of this and have acted successfully to reverse this trend. Teachers plan learning that engages boys and have focused on ensuring that they make strong progress. School assessment information and pupils' books show that boys' achievement is now closer to girls' in several year groups and the difference has been eliminated in other year groups.
- Middle leaders with responsibility for subjects other than English and mathematics check teachers' planning and examine pupils' books to ensure that there is an appropriate coverage of subjects. They have plans in place to track more closely the progress pupils make across a wide range of subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development in the early years. They have ensured that provision in the early years is good. The leader

with specific responsibility for the early years took up her post in January 2018 and will be leaving the school at the end of the summer term. Leaders, including those from the trust, are determined to provide strong support for the interim leader during the transition phase while a substantive leader is appointed.

- The leader makes sure that the progress that children make is clearly recorded and that assessments of what children can do are accurate. Staff across the early years contribute to these assessments and build upon the information they provide to plan further learning for the children.
- The leader gathers information about children from pre-school settings and parents before the children start school. She ensures that transition plans are in place for children who have SEN and/or disabilities so that their needs can be met. At the end of the Reception Year, staff share information with Year 1 teachers and provide opportunities for children to visit their new class.
- Leaders make effective use of the small amount of additional funding to make certain that those children who are entitled to benefit from it, such as disadvantaged children, can do so.
- The majority of children start school with the skills, knowledge and understanding that are typical of children their age. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is at least in line with the national average. Provisional information for 2018 shows that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is set to exceed that seen nationally in 2017. This indicates that children make strong progress in the early years and are ready to start Year 1.
- The learning environment is bright and attractive. Displays are well chosen to promote learning. Adults have focused on a dinosaur theme in order to engage the interest of both boys and girls. Adults show the children great care. They encourage independence, as they gently support children to have a go for themselves. Children in the Reception classes behave well and cooperate well together in their learning activities and in their play.
- Children engage well with their learning. They show a willingness to sustain concentration on the activities that teachers provide. Adults use effective questioning skills to promote learning and creativity well. For example, an adult successfully supported a small group of pupils to produce a collage of a river.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to children who have SEN and/or disabilities. They consider carefully the particular needs of these children and engage well with their parents to ensure that the children can learn successfully alongside their classmates.
- Teachers plan activities that will promote children's learning across the curriculum both indoors and outdoors. During the inspection, some children were developing their mathematical skills and learning about the world by planting potatoes and using non-standard measures to weigh vegetables. Others used electronic equipment to develop their understanding of numbers to 20. Adults provide a good level of support to encourage children to use their early phonic skills when they write.
- In mathematics, teachers provide clear explanations to children, and an appropriate range of equipment, to help them grasp the concepts being taught. Very occasionally, teachers use incorrect terminology, referring to a subtraction question as 'a sum'.

- Teachers provide children with reasons to write that will capture the interests of both boys and girls. During the inspection, the teacher showed the children a video clip of a canoeist making his way down rapids at Holme Pierrepont. She skilfully narrated the short clip, using vocabulary such as 'splashing', 'wavy', 'bubbly' and 'foaming'. This inspired the children as they wrote a letter about a canoeing adventure. As he was composing his letter, one boy declared his love of writing saying, 'It makes my heart happy!'

School details

Unique reference number	142548
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10053508

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Neil Robinson
Headteacher	Sally MacDonald
Telephone number	0115 914 9779
Website	www.greythornschoo.co.uk/
Email address	office@greythorn.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- Greythorn Primary School converted to academy status in January 2016. At the same time, it joined the Flying High Academy Trust.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average and rising. Just under half of the pupil population are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the learning taking place in 15 lessons, sometimes with the headteacher. They examined a range of pupils' books from every year group.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and with leaders with responsibility for the spending of the pupil premium funding and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They also spoke with the leaders responsible for English, mathematics and the early years.
- Meetings were also held with representatives of governance from the trust and the local governing body.
- There were no responses to the pupils' online survey. Inspectors met with three groups of pupils. They heard six pupils read and spoke to them about their reading. Inspectors observed pupils during assembly, playtime and lunchtime and spoke to several pupils informally.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. They considered the 135 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the 105 free-text comments that parents contributed. They also considered the letters that were delivered directly from parents to inspectors. There were no responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and a range of improvement plans. They scrutinised the school's single central record of recruitment and documentation related to the safeguarding of pupils. They read the recent local authority reports on the moderation of teachers' assessments of writing and discussed the progress that current pupils are making with school leaders.

Inspection team

Deirdre Duignan, lead inspector	Senior Her Majesty's Inspector
Di Mullan	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Carter	Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

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