

Inspection of a good school: Greenmount Primary School

St Vincent's Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 3PT

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Outcome

Greenmount Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' outcomes have been low for the last two years. Leaders have taken some effective actions to improve standards, but there is more to be done to ensure that all pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They particularly like it when they do practical activities. During the inspection, pupils were thoroughly enjoying 'science day'. Pupils work well together and help each other by talking through the tasks they have been given. Pupils are also enthused by the regular trips they go on.

Most pupils behave well. In lessons, they are generally attentive and hardworking. At lunchtime, there is a happy atmosphere. Pupils generally get along well together, and say they feel safe. Most pupils do not worry about bullying because it is rare and quickly dealt with by staff. However, a few pupils are less confident that any bullying will be stopped. Some pupils say that occasionally their lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour.

Staff have caring relationships with pupils and know their families well. The capable pastoral team is there to help pupils whenever they have some difficulties.

There have been a number of changes this year, including a building programme in the school and a new headteacher.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and governors have prioritised raising pupils' achievement. Since September, leaders and teachers have drawn on useful training from local authority advisers to improve teaching in English and mathematics. This is helping pupils to learn more and remember more.

Leaders have rightly made raising standards in reading a key priority. Children get off to a good start in learning to read in Reception Year. They learn their phonics quickly because teaching is consistently effective. This continues into Year 1, where pupils practise the skills they are learning using books that are well matched to their level. However, as they move up the school, those who begin to struggle do not catch up rapidly, despite some additional support. Leaders are introducing a richer range of books to help develop pupils' love of reading. Older pupils enjoy drawing on what they have read to inspire their own writing.

The teaching of mathematics is improving. Teachers use their plans to make sure that pupils cover a wide range of mathematical knowledge. Teachers use assessment well to build on what pupils learned before. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge in order to solve challenging problems and explain their reasoning. This means that pupils' understanding is sometimes not deepened or extended.

In science, there is a strong focus on practical work and exciting, memorable experiences. Plans show how pupils build their knowledge in clear steps, and pupils can remember what they have learned. Pupils are less confident when conducting investigations. They sometimes get muddled and do not use the correct vocabulary to explain their ideas.

In the foundation subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills are not built as securely over time as in English, mathematics and science. Leaders are starting to improve learning in other subjects. Subject leaders are keen to develop their subjects, and some work is underway. However, senior leaders have not shared a clear vision for what they want pupils to learn. Subject leaders need more direction, time and training in order to carry out the development work they crave.

New leaders have improved the way that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are clearly identified. This information is given to subject leaders, teachers and support staff so that they can adapt the curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of the pupils with SEND. Pupils who attend the specialist unit, Greenhaven, now spend more time learning in the main school. There are some early signs that these measures are beneficial. Local authority advisers have helpfully guided the new leaders through these changes, although more training is needed to help staff adjust.

Pupils' wider education is enriched by a range of trips which are linked to their learning. For example, Year 3 all went to Stonehenge when they were studying the Stone Age. The school also welcomes visitors, such as scientists with expertise in space. There is a strong involvement in community arts projects.

The school uses a well-established behaviour policy called 'good to be green', which is designed to reward good behaviour. Leaders have further raised expectations for behaviour and the vast majority of pupils have responded positively. A few pupils are struggling to improve their behaviour and work is underway to help them.

The school is undergoing a transition. In addition to the changes outlined above, there has been the inevitable disruption caused by building and refurbishment work. Some staff absence has also contributed to turbulence. Many staff have responded positively to raised expectations. However, some feel rather overwhelmed by the extent of the changes. Some staff do not feel as well supported as they would like. However, teachers have appreciated a reduction in the marking load.

Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire feel positive about the school. Many praise the commitment of staff and the care provided for their children. A few are unsettled by the changes and their confidence in the school has been dented.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that how well pupils learn and achieve, especially in foundation subjects like history, art and music, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The deputy headteacher has been the designated safeguarding officer since September. She has significantly improved the systems for gathering and sharing information about pupils who are at risk of harm. She leads with determination, compassion and tenacity.

Leaders ensure that pupils' safety and welfare have high priority, and that staff are well trained. Staff know the pupils really well. This means that they can spot any concerns straight away and act upon them. Records are carefully organised, and information is shared quickly with external agencies when needed. The pastoral team uses its expertise to support vulnerable pupils and help families get the support they need from other agencies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In Year 2 and above, some pupils who struggle to read fall further behind. Leaders need to ensure that pupils who need to catch up in reading receive effective support, and that teaching closely meets their needs, so that their reading progress improves, and they achieve well in reading.
- The knowledge and skills pupils need in English are now coherently planned and sequenced, leading to improvements in pupils' reading and writing. Well-ordered planning in science and mathematics helps pupils to acquire basic knowledge and skills, but pupils cannot always apply their knowledge or explain their thinking. This is because teachers are not always clear about the concepts and vocabulary to be emphasised and revisited. The school's curriculum is not coherently planned in foundation subjects. Leaders need to improve planning across most subjects, so that knowledge and skills are sequenced in a logical order with clearly defined end points. This planning needs to include pupils with SEND.

- In order to make the necessary improvements to the school, the staff's accountabilities have increased. The majority of staff are keen to develop their practice. Many are attending external and internal training, and benefiting from the support of local authority advisers. Nevertheless, some staff feel daunted by leaders' expectations and others are frustrated that they cannot get on with making the changes they would like. Leadership capacity needs to increase to support the transition taking place. Further staff training is needed in supporting the needs of pupils with SEND, behaviour management, subject leadership and pedagogical content.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4–5 May 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	118177
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	10111378
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steven Vaughan
Headteacher	Samantha Cox
Website	www.greenmount.iow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Greenmount Primary has grown since the last inspection to be a larger-than-average primary school. Currently, building work is underway to enable the school to accommodate two classes per year group.
- A number of leadership roles changed in September 2019. A new headteacher joined the school. One teacher at the school became the new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and another took over leadership of the Greenhaven resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the early years leader, the SENCo and subject leaders.
- I met five governors, including the chair and acting vice-chair of the governing body.
- I evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. I met with the designated safeguarding lead to check the procedures in place for keeping children safe. I reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff. I spoke to pupils about how the school keeps them safe.
- To help us understand the quality of education, I looked in detail at some subjects. I did deep dives into reading, mathematics and science. I spoke with leaders for these

subjects, visited lessons, talked with groups of pupils, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers.

- I spoke to pupils, staff and parents to gather their views about the school. Survey responses from 99 pupils, 45 members of staff and 63 parents were considered. I also spoke with parents before and after school.

Inspection team

Theresa Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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