

Inspection of a good school: Green Lea First School

Mill Lane, Milwich, Stafford, Staffordshire ST18 0EU

Inspection date: 20 January 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Green Lea First School is a friendly school where the pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything they do. Parents hold the school in high regard and value its important place in the community. The school's motto of 'Everybody is somebody' is evident in the personal approach that staff have towards every child. Parents appreciate this.

Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. They develop respect and have a strong sense of belonging to their small, rural community. Leaders have thought carefully about how to develop links across the generations. For example, pupils enjoy selling vegetables that they have grown in the school allotment and love learning how to make lace with the local residents.

Leaders have been working hard to develop the curriculum. They have set out what they want children to learn and when. However, there is variation in the way that staff implement these plans, and the quality of education is inconsistent. Pupils do not learn and remember the essential knowledge they need as well as they should in all subjects. They cannot always recall what they have learned or do not always understand how to apply their learning.

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

There is a structured approach to reading across the school. Pupils read regularly at home and in school. They enjoy story time at the end of each day. In the early years, daily phonics sessions help pupils learn their sounds. All staff have received training in the teaching of phonics. Leaders have also invested in reading books to support the younger readers. Most pupils read with confidence and fluency because the books they read are carefully chosen. However, for a small number of older pupils who are at the earlier

stages of learning to read, the books do not match the sounds that they know. This slows their progress in learning to read.

The mathematics curriculum is appropriately sequenced across the school. Leaders have identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to remember and use to help them do well in mathematics. However, staff do not always help pupils to understand key concepts. Sometimes this is because they do not present the information as clearly as they could. As a result, pupils do not always remember and apply their learning.

Pupils enjoy music lessons. Singing is part of the wider culture of the school. Everyone enjoys and celebrates it. Many pupils take up the opportunity to learn to play the violin.

Although staff want the very best for pupils, expectations are not always high enough. Work is not always matched well to pupils' ability. As a result of this, pupils sometimes wait too long for adults to move them on in their learning. This reduces the amount of progress that pupils can make.

Staff meet the emotional needs of pupils through extra support and a nurturing approach. Pupils behave well and understand what bullying is. Occasionally, some pupils cause low-level disruption, but this is when they do not have enough work to do during lessons.

Leaders have planned a range of opportunities to develop pupils' skills in becoming effective citizens. Many interesting activities and opportunities enrich pupils' personal development. This means that pupils understand and learn about people different to themselves. Pupils understand why they need to show respect to others. They welcome everyone into school and celebrate their differences.

The governing body has considerable expertise. It provides good support for leaders. In many areas the governing body also provides effective challenge. However, the governing body is not aware of the school's statutory responsibility about the national award qualification for the special educational needs coordinator. This responsibility is currently commissioned from an external source to ensure that the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being met. Inspectors found no evidence that this arrangement has adversely affected pupils. Pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and are fully included in all aspects of school life.

The headteacher and governors are mindful of staff workload. All staff agree that leaders are considerate of their well-being.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that curriculum implementation, support for older pupils at the earlier stages of learning to read and expectations of pupils may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff ensure that pupils are well looked after and supported. They take this responsibility very seriously. All staff receive regular training that ensures they can identify any problems that pupils may face. Policies and procedures for safeguarding are clear and well communicated.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe both in and outside the school and when online. Pupils told the inspector that bullying does not happen, but they know that adults will help to resolve any issues or worries if they have them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some older pupils who are at the earlier stages of reading practice are using books that are not precisely matched to the sounds they know. This prevents these pupils from becoming better readers. Leaders should ensure that pupils practise reading from books that are closely matched to their phonics ability.
- In some subjects, for example mathematics, there is variation in how well the curriculum is implemented. This means that not all pupils know and remember what they need to. Leaders need to ensure that all staff have the skills and knowledge needed to implement the curriculum effectively.
- At times, expectations of pupils are too low. Sometimes, pupils wait too long for adults to move them on in their learning. This reduces the progress that they make. Leaders need to ensure that all staff have high expectations so that pupils make as much progress as possible.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	124105
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10200301
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Lord
Headteacher	Katy Wilson
Website	www.greenlea.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is provision on site for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the governing body and had a separate telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection focused on reading, mathematics and music. Inspectors met subject leaders for these subjects and undertook joint visits to lessons. They also talked to pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to curriculum planning and development, safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance.

- Inspectors also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Emma Gater, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Helen Forrest

Her Majesty's Inspector

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