

# Greenfields Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134857
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	341544
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Marshall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	273
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Chell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debra Gamson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Oxford Road Shepway Maidstone ME15 8DF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at documents including school policies, pupil progress data, attendance figures and school improvement planning. Ninety-eight parental questionnaires as well as 106 Key Stage 2 pupil questionnaires were evaluated.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of all pupils
- the extent to which leaders and teachers use assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning and raise attainment
- the effectiveness of leaders at all levels in monitoring and evaluation to improve teaching and secure pupils' progress.

## Information about the school

Greenfields Community Primary School is a larger than average school. The pupils are mostly from White British families. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is greater than usually found in primary schools. Most of these pupils have behavioural, social and emotional needs or moderate learning difficulties. The school has just completed a lengthy rebuilding project.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. A particular strength is the continually developing links it has worked very hard to foster with parents. Along with the school's focus on care and support, this has been a key factor in maintaining the good behaviour seen at the last inspection, whilst also dramatically reducing the number of pupil exclusions. Pupils talk with pride and enthusiasm about their school and the many activities and clubs they enjoy in the newly developed school and grounds. They keep healthy and active, help each other and comment themselves on how behaviour has improved. Most pupils attend school regularly, though attendance remains below the national average. This is due to a very small minority who find it difficult to attend regularly. Whilst the school has had some success in raising their attendance, it is aware of the need to redouble its efforts with these pupils and parents.

Teaching is typically satisfactory and sometimes better throughout the school. However, inconsistencies remain and as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Consequently, they do not build consistently well on their learning as they move up through the school. All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set suitably challenging work for all pupils. This hinders the progress some pupils make. While day-to-day assessment, including marking, is good in some classes, in others it is not used well enough. Not all pupils are made aware of the next small steps needed to improve their learning and this limits their ability to take responsibility for their learning. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the rest of the school, checks on progress show that whilst attainment overall in the rest of the school remains low, an increasing proportion of pupils are achieving well, especially in reading and mathematics.

The school is now solidly focused on improving the learning experience for the pupils after a period of change during the building work and with the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher over the last year. Leaders at all levels are becoming increasingly involved in formal self-evaluation. Led by the headteacher, the school has an accurate awareness of what it needs to do to improve further. This, combined with the effective action to bring about improvement since the last inspection, especially in raising standards in mathematics, shows that the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- raise the achievement of pupils and consistency of teaching by:
  - all leaders developing their role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
  - leading improvements and taking more responsibility for ensuring success.
- accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - developing teachers' marking so pupils understand what to do next to improve their work
  - improving teachers' use of assessment to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well.
  - improve the level of attendance to reach the local authority target by 2010 by: working more closely and effectively with those parents who find it difficult to send their children to school regularly.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Children's skills and understanding when they join the school in the nursery and reception are below those typically expected. Recent improvements are ensuring that the progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to build successfully on this good start but have yet to make consistently good progress in order to raise their attainment by the end of Year 2. Regardless of gender or different groups, pupils across Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress from their low starting points in Year 3. Due to the school's focus, they achieve increasingly well in reading and mathematics and, whilst standards overall remain low, they are broadly average in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as others because of the additional support they receive in and out of the classroom. In lessons, pupils make at least satisfactory and, for the younger pupils, often good progress. Progress slows in lessons where assessment is not used skilfully enough to challenge pupils sufficiently and consequently pupils' interest and behaviour dips.

Pupils achieve well in their personal and social development. Their enjoyment of school life is evident in their supportive approach towards one another which helps to make the school a safe and welcoming place. Pupils say they like coming to school because they are cared for and feel safe. As a result, although a very small minority of parents and pupils have concerns, the inspectors judge behaviour good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Relationships between staff and pupils are good and help to foster pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. Some lessons are planned and organised well with interesting activities to engage the pupils. However, in others, opportunities to capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for learning and to challenge their thinking further are often missed. The tasks set do not move pupils' learning on sufficiently and the pace of teaching is not quick enough. Consequently in these lessons, progress slows and some pupils become restless and less attentive. Whilst all lessons have a clear learning intention, in the best lessons pupils quickly shared their thoughts and ideas as they were very clear what they were learning and why. The school has introduced more rigorous assessment and tracking systems which are increasingly holding teachers to account for their pupils' progress. However, in some lessons and classes, this information is not currently used sufficiently well to set targets or plan work that is closely tailored to all pupils' needs. Teachers' marking does not refer consistently enough to the next steps in pupils' learning in order to help them know how to improve their work.

The curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those in mixed age classes. Having successfully raised standards in mathematics, the school is now taking action to improve the provision for writing and science. A good range of extra-curricular activities add to the pupils' enjoyment of school, along with the successful breakfast club and more recent activities such as the highly praised open day. More targeted support, such as the Total Impact club and parents' sessions, are other effective ways the school seeks to engage pupils, parents and the wider community. It is in these aspects of pastoral care, including their work

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with outside agencies, that the school's provision has strengths. Individual and group programmes of support are drawn up for pupils with individual needs, although these are currently under review in order to maximise their effectiveness and accelerate pupils' progress further.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, supported by leaders at all levels, provides a clear vision for how the school can move forward. There is a positive team spirit and a real atmosphere of 'can do' amongst the staff, especially amongst senior leaders. Devolved leadership is in its early stages, with some senior leaders relatively new to their posts. As part of the school's development plan, leaders are beginning to become increasingly involved in the analysis of the school's results and in monitoring teaching to see where it is most effective. As a result, all have a clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses; however, they have not yet had time to tackle inconsistencies in teaching and secure good progress for all pupils. Governors play an appropriate part in checking how well the school is doing, although they are aware that these skills are not sufficiently well developed. All leaders support the drive for equality and diversity and play their part in ensuring that safeguarding requirements are adequately met. Although pupils are encouraged sufficiently to play their part in the life of the school, local area and wider world, leaders have begun to evaluate the school's role in developing community cohesion. They are tackling those issues raised, such as developing links with other schools nationally. Consequently, this aspect of the school's work is satisfactory.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills and understanding that are low but they quickly build in confidence, becoming keen explorers and learners by the time they enter school in Year 1. Children are provided with a stimulating and safe environment in which to learn and grow. The curriculum is adapted effectively to engage learners though there are times when opportunities to capitalise on children's enthusiasm and accelerate learning even further are missed. Teaching is good across the Early Years Foundation Stage and the children learn effectively from a well-balanced diet of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. Staff are skilled at encouraging communication and supporting developing language skills. They make effective use of the recommended phonic programme that helps children develop their reading and writing skills, recently being identified as a lead school for the initiative by the local authority. Good assessments show that children make good gains in this aspect as well as the other areas of learning. Staff work well with parents and carers to ensure there are good levels of communication, and children get off to a good start. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader gives good support to her enthusiastic team.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parent questionnaires were positive and many of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the caring attitude of the school, its support for pupils and how much their children enjoyed the school. A typical comment was: 'The team at the school have really helped me and



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my children'; 'I cannot praise Greenfields highly enough'; 'My child found settling into school very difficult . . . The school were extremely supportive'.

A very small minority of parents reported concerns over the lack of progress being made by their children. Inspection evidence showed that while all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress and increasing numbers making good progress, especially in mathematics, progress across the school is not consistently good. A few recorded concerns about several other issues, including the school's efforts to ensure that parents are kept informed about pupils' progress and healthy lifestyles being promoted. These concerns were not expressed in the very large majority of parents' comments and the inspection found no evidence to support them.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greenfields Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 98 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 273 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	44	49	52	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	44	49	52	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	34	57	60	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	37	52	55	5	5	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	41	43	48	51	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	37	55	58	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	41	51	54	4	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	30	60	63	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	37	52	55	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	39	52	55	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	23	63	66	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	31	57	60	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	50	43	45	2	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



16 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greenfields Community Primary School, Maidstone ME15 8DF

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear you like school and we agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do and get involved in. You all get on with one another and are working hard to behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help to know how to be healthy and safe. We agree that there are lots of interesting clubs and activities to get involved in.

Your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work, although you do better in reading and mathematics than in writing and science. The leaders in the school do an adequate job of running your school. They know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do three things:

- Keep checking to make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and interesting.
- Make better use of marking to help you understand how to improve.
- Work with your families and those of you who don't always attend school regularly to make sure you miss as little of your learning as possible.

You can help by always using the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours faithfully

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

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