

# Green Oaks Primary Academy

Whiston Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN2 7RR

## Inspection dates

30–31 October 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The principal and the new leadership team have transformed the school. They have brought about rapid improvements to all areas of the school's work.
- Leaders have been successful in eradicating previously inadequate teaching. The quality of teaching is now consistently good. Current pupils are making much better progress than has previously been the case.
- Leaders, including from the trust, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Leaders responsible for the pupil premium funding and for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are knowledgeable and ensure that these pupils have the right support to achieve well.
- The principal and leadership team have the overwhelming support of the staff and parents.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of after-school activities and educational visits.
- Pupils are polite, behave well and are kept safe. Instances of bullying and low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- Pupils who arrive at the school with little or no English settle quickly and make good progress.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. There is a harmonious, busy and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. They make good progress from their low and sometimes very low starting points.
- Despite improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, some pupils are not currently working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, not enough pupils achieved the expected standards in the end-of-key-stage tests.
- Some teachers do not consistently challenge pupils or have high enough expectations of what they can achieve.
- Despite recent improvements, pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence have been higher than the national averages over recent years.

## **Full report**

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

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

- Improve pupils' progress in order to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - teachers consistently challenge all pupils and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in subjects across the curriculum.
  
- Improve pupils' personal development and welfare by ensuring that:
  - pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence are consistently below the national averages.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since her appointment, the principal has provided the impetus and drive for improvement and change. The quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour, personal development and staff morale have all risen dramatically since the last inspection. Pupils' outcomes are also rising rapidly but are not yet consistently good in all subjects and in all classes.
- The principal and acting deputy principal are a coherent and capable team. Their knowledge, organisation and enthusiasm have enabled the quality of teaching to improve rapidly. They provide concise and helpful feedback for teachers and teaching assistants to improve their practice. Teachers and teaching assistants value the various training opportunities provided by the trust.
- The principal, in conjunction with other senior leaders, has created a culture of high ambition and achievement for staff and pupils. The school's vision of 'Together, we aim to be the very best we can be' is echoed through all aspects of its work.
- The school improvement plan is focused on the right areas. It has concise actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities. Meticulous checks on the plan's progress ensure that nothing is missed. The trust adviser monitors this plan frequently, therefore holding the senior leaders to account for their actions.
- The principal has an excellent overview of the current picture of rising attainment and improving progress. She is fully aware of classes and subjects that are now rapidly improving and those that still require extra support. The principal provides a comprehensive analysis of attainment and progress information that helps to inform teachers' planning and ensure that next steps in pupils' learning are now planned for carefully.
- Leaders responsible for the pupil premium funding and for the monitoring of pupils with SEND are knowledgeable and determined to ensure that pupils receive targeted support. The extra funding is used well and, consequently, pupils are now starting to make better progress than has previously been the case.
- Leaders responsible for English and mathematics have received effective support and training from the trust. They are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and clear about what needs to be done next for standards to continue to rise. For example, the mathematics leader has recently been successful in increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop and improve their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Leaders have used the physical education (PE) and sport funding effectively. Sports coaches have been employed to deliver specialist training for staff and provide specialist delivery of the curriculum. Pupils' participation in sport has increased with a much larger proportion of pupils taking part in after-school clubs and inter-school competitions than previously.
- The principal and leadership team have ensured there is a broad and balanced curriculum on offer. Recent 'theme days' have helped to broaden pupils' knowledge and experiences, for example focusing on the Ancient Greeks or a visit from a

rainforest explorer. The wide variety of after-school clubs and the opportunity to learn a musical instrument aid pupils' sporting and creative development.

- Leaders have ensured that teachers provide pupils with a stimulating and safe learning environment. Classrooms and the main corridor are awash with examples of pupils' work from a wide range of subjects. The materials on display to aid pupils in their learning are particularly effective in supporting pupils with writing and mathematics.
- The trust has been effective in supporting the principal and senior leaders in making the rapid improvements. The trust has provided training courses and monitoring exercises for staff that have helped to validate, for example, the quality of teaching and the recent, improved progress made by pupils.
- Staff and parents are unanimous in their view that the school has improved rapidly since the last inspection. Comments such as, 'It is a good, happy place to be,' were typical of the views gathered by inspectors.

### **Governance of the school**

- The Greenwood Academies Trust is responsible for governance.
- The trust has been successful in overseeing the recent rapid improvements at the school. The appointment of the principal from another school within the trust has been the catalyst for this improvement.
- Frequent visits by the senior education adviser ensure that leaders are held to account for their actions. The adviser has helped to ensure that the quality of teaching has improved and that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and attainment are accurate.
- The trust has provided effective training for staff, including in the early years, newly and recently qualified teachers and in the teaching of phonics (the letters and sounds they represent).

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding leads have received appropriate training in such areas as safer recruitment, spotting the signs of child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation. Detailed records are maintained to ensure that training is kept up to date.
- Staff ensure that they keep detailed records of any welfare concerns they have about a pupil or a family. They share information with outside agencies, such as social care and the local safeguarding team, promptly. This ensures that any extra support is received swiftly, should a welfare concern arise.
- Staff understand the range of risks that pupils may be vulnerable to. They know the pupils well and are quick to recognise any changes in behaviour, for example. They work well with parents to keep them informed about safeguarding issues and to ensure that the right support is in place.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The principal has been successful in eradicating previously inadequate teaching. The quality of teaching is now consistently good across the school.
- Teachers plan learning that motivates and interests pupils. Pupils in all classes are therefore engaged in learning and keen to succeed.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers ensure that pupils use appropriate materials to help support learning. For example, in the Reception and Year 1 classes, pupils used cubes and counters to help them understand how two smaller numbers add together to make a larger number.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are supported well with writing. Teachers are clear with pupils on how to structure their writing and how to improve it. In Year 2, pupils were enthusiastically writing diary entries for the day. One pupil had correctly written, 'This Wednesday, my mum shouted at me to get up, but I was exhausted!'
- The teaching of phonics is now a strength. Staff have received effective training and feedback on how to improve their teaching. Staff plan a variety of interesting and stimulating sessions that engage pupils and enable them to practise saying and writing the sounds that letters make.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading and read frequently. Pupils in key stage 1 use phonics skills to decode any unfamiliar words and their reading books provide appropriate challenge. Pupils in key stage 2 told inspectors that there is a good range of books for them to choose from in the well-stocked library. More-able readers frequently choose books from a specific 'challenge area' of the library or their classroom.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively across the school. They support the learning of all groups of pupils and are skilled in challenging them to think. Teaching assistants promote the independence of pupils with SEND by allowing them to complete some activities on their own.
- Teachers consistently use the school's marking and feedback policy to assess pupils' work. Pupils told inspectors that they appreciate the opportunity to review their learning and make improvements to finished pieces of work.
- Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to continue learning at home. 'Learning logs' record the various activities that pupils complete around a particular topic or theme. For example, pupils in Year 6 had recently improved their design and technology skills by making models of various Ancient Greek buildings as part of a history topic.
- End-of-year reports give parents and carers accurate information about how well their child is progressing and whether their attainment is line with standards expected for their age.
- However, not all teachers challenge pupils to reach the standards that they are capable of. As a result, too few pupils reach age-related expectations.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they are happy and safe at Green Oaks. They are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways, including wearing something reflective at night or keeping personal information private when online. Pupils spoke confidently regarding the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through getting a good amount of sleep, eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise.
- A range of educational visits is on offer for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. For example, Year 5 recently visited a chocolate factory as part of their Mayans topic and the National Space Centre when learning about space. There are residential opportunities for pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 to develop their outdoor and adventurous physical education skills.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of equality and the dangers of stereotyping. They demonstrate empathy for individuals who may be different to themselves, and have a good knowledge of different world faiths and British values. They are therefore being prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils enjoy the extra responsibility of being playground buddies, librarians, members of the democratically elected school council and carrying out jobs during assemblies.
- Pupils take pride in their school and enjoy talking about the school and their learning. They treat resources with respect and keep classrooms and shared areas tidy.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in classrooms, corridors and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently and incidents of poor behaviour and low-level disruption are extremely rare. Pupils follow adults' instructions swiftly, meaning that lessons run smoothly with little interruption.
- Pupils say that instances of bullying are rare and that they trust staff to sort out any disagreements quickly and fairly. The principal keeps detailed records of any instances of poor behaviour to check for any patterns or specific triggers.
- Pupils look smart in their school uniform and treat each other, visitors and staff with respect. Pupils are polite and many cheerfully greeted inspectors in the mornings. They are punctual and keen to learn.
- Despite improvements over recent years, pupils' rates of absence and persistent absence have remained higher than the national averages.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is lower than it should be. This is particularly the case for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 tests have improved over recent years. However, in 2018, the proportion achieving at the expected and higher standards remained below the national averages.
- In the last academic year, pupils made much better progress in writing. This was particularly the case in Years 5 and 6. However, progress in reading and mathematics was less secure.
- Current pupils are starting to make much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Information provided by the school and work seen in pupils' workbooks shows that standards are rising rapidly in the vast majority of classes.
- Standards are rising in phonics. In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics test rose to above the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now starting to make much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than was previously the case. A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils are working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics than this time last year. This is particularly the case in Year 1 and Year 2.
- Pupils with SEND are now making much stronger progress. The careful monitoring of interventions and specialist training for staff have enabled pupils to be identified quickly and then given the targeted support they need in order to catch up.
- Pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar skills has improved dramatically recently. Pupils' writing books show that pupils are using these skills consistently well and at an age-appropriate standard. In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the key stage 2 spelling, punctuation and grammar test rose sharply and was just below the national average.
- Pupils take great pride in their work and present it well. Handwriting is now a strength, and this is evident in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils new to the school and, in particular, those who have little or no English settle quickly and make good progress. This is particularly the case for their speaking and listening skills and in reading and writing.

## Early years provision

## Good

- The vast majority of children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and experiences that are below and sometimes well below those expected for their age. Children make good progress from these low starting points and are ready for the Year 1 curriculum. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has risen steadily over the past three years.

- Children make particularly strong progress in writing. Several children have already progressed from mark making to writing simple words. One child had written 'A pink princess' to describe a recent drawing.
- Children and parents make frequent visits to both the Nursery and Reception classes before children start. Parental workshops and 'stay and play' sessions give opportunities for parents to share information with staff about their children. This effective transition enables staff to have a good understanding of children before they start. It also enables children to settle quickly because they are already familiar with staff and routines.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff ensure that there is a wide variety of stimulating and engaging activities that interest and engage children. There are opportunities for children to develop number and writing skills, as well as activities that improve their physical, creative and speech and language development. For example, children were encouraged to count out while scooping out the inside of a pumpkin and were carefully cutting out pictures of spiders to make a potion in a cauldron.
- The outdoor and covered shared areas contain a wide variety of activities to help develop children's knowledge and skills. Recently, the outdoor area was turned into an 'ice cream parlour', which helped to improve pupils' communication and social skills. There are also plentiful support materials available that children use when they are practising writing letters, simple words and numbers.
- Relationships between adults and children are extremely positive. Well-established routines ensure that children move safely around the classrooms with little fuss. Children behave well and get on well with each other. For example, in the Reception class, children were seen working cooperatively to tidy away resources before the start of the next session.
- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and development areas. There are opportunities for staff to attend training and moderation events with other schools to ensure that the judgements they are making about children's progress are accurate and secure.
- There are good links with outside agencies such as the speech and language team and the educational psychologist. Any child who requires extra support is therefore referred swiftly. Recent visitors have included the local police, fire service and dentist. Such visits enable children to develop their understanding of how to stay safe and keep themselves healthy.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff have received appropriate training, for example in spotting the signs of abuse and paediatric first aid.
- Parents are equally positive about the early years as they are about the rest of the school, with one commenting, 'The teachers have been very helpful in settling him in. It's brilliant!'

## School details

Unique reference number	140327
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10038653

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of academy	Primary
Academy category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the academy roll	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Wendy Gordon
Telephone number	0160 4715249
Website	<a href="http://www.greenoaksprimaryacademy.org.uk">www.greenoaksprimaryacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@greenoaksprimaryacademy.org">admin@greenoaksprimaryacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2016

## Information about this school

- The principal took up her post in January 2017. Many of the senior leaders are also relatively new to their roles.
- The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school during the academic year is high.
- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and the proportion who have an education, health and care plan are well above the national averages.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups and classes. Some lessons were seen jointly with the principal and senior education adviser from the trust.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior leaders, a group of staff and the senior education adviser from the trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised in detail the work in a range of pupils' books.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of the school's documentation, including the evaluation of the school's own performance and its development plan; information on pupils' attainment and progress, and on behaviour and bullying; attendance records; safeguarding procedures; and records of trust monitoring visits.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with a group of pupils from key stage 2 and informally with pupils from Year 1 at lunchtime. Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2 5 and 6.
- Inspectors spoke with a number of parents before the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Ferguson

Ofsted Inspector

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