

# Green Oaks Primary Academy

Whiston Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN2 7RR

## Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are inadequate. The majority of pupils leave Year 6 without the knowledge and understanding to do well at secondary school.
- Due to a legacy of underachievement, most pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are not working at the standards expected for their age.
- Boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not achieve as well as other pupils in all years, including the early years.
- Teachers do not have a clear understanding of the school's system for tracking pupils' performance to ensure that all pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not promoted well enough.
- The curriculum is not well planned to help pupils to make enough progress and does not prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Consequently, they do not ensure that the most able pupils are challenged by the work they are set.
- Leaders and governors have not used the pupil premium funding effectively. Disadvantaged pupils are not making good enough progress compared to other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average. Too many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are regularly absent from the school.
- Leaders have not been successful in securing an adequate standard of teaching since the academy opened. They are too reliant on external support to drive improvements.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Not enough boys attain a good level of development at the end of Reception.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who begin at the school with little or no English make better progress than other pupils.
- Leaders have improved the quality of the learning environment in the early years and special resource provision.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Pupils have been given more opportunities to be involved in a wider range of competitive and participative sports.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2015, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards of attainment, particularly for boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, by ensuring that:
  - pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills in reasoning and solving problems in mathematics
  - pupils have sufficient opportunities to build upon and apply their skills in phonics to support their development in reading and writing
  - pupils have access to stimulating resources to help them develop a love of books and reading
  - all teachers understand and use information about pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that work is at the right level
  - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils, including the most able, can achieve and provide them with a stimulating learning environment in which to learn and work that is suitably challenging
  - lower-ability pupils are set tasks that they can attempt for themselves and that deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
  - ensuring that their attendance improves including that of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve the quality of early years provision by:
  - making sure that more boys reach a good level of development by the end of the early years.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management and the capacity of leaders to improve pupils' learning by:
  - ensuring that the school's system for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress is clear, understood by all, and used to ensure that all pupils make good progress from their starting points
  - making sure that leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to improve the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils
  - ensuring that senior and middle leaders are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and providing training and support to teachers so that they develop the skills and knowledge to become effective

- defining and implementing a strategic approach to the promotion of fundamental British values and the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils.

An external review of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Senior leaders' actions to secure an acceptable standard of teaching since the academy opened have been unsuccessful. Inconsistency in the quality of teaching between classes has resulted in pupils not making enough progress from their starting points. Standards at the end of Year 6 and for pupils in each year group across the school are low.
- Senior leaders are overgenerous in their view of the quality of teaching, outcomes for pupils and the school's effectiveness. The monitoring processes, which inform their views, lack precision and do not take into account the extent to which teaching is having an impact on pupils' outcomes. Consequently, they are not tackling weaknesses in teaching quickly or effectively enough.
- Underdeveloped assessment procedures have meant that leaders have not tracked pupils' progress closely from their starting points. Leaders are not able to give a clear overview of which pupils are making expected or better progress. This has limited their ability to determine the appropriate support required to help each pupil to achieve well.
- Senior leaders have not promoted a culture of high expectations for pupils' achievement which permeates school life. Leaders have not established a stimulating learning environment for pupils in key stages 1 and 2, which would inspire and motivate them to do their best. Displays rarely include examples of pupils' work to celebrate their achievements. Low expectations of the most able pupils were apparent throughout the school.
- Leaders and governors have not evaluated the impact of the ways they spend the pupil premium funding well enough. The fund is not being used effectively by leaders and is failing to improve quickly enough the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are not making good enough progress.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for pupils to find out about life in modern Britain are underdeveloped. Senior leaders have not ensured that there is a carefully planned, strategic approach, based on clear evaluation of the impact of the work, to ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. While the school provides a few experiences, such as school trips, it is unclear how these are built upon within the curriculum to enhance pupils' learning.
- Middle leaders are not evaluating the quality of their work and they are unclear about the steps that they should take to address shortcomings. Actions taken by the leaders of English and mathematics to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have failed to bring about the necessary improvements. The leader of mathematics has not ensured that pupils are provided with enough work to help them to develop their skills to solve problems and be able to reason. The leader of English has not promoted reading well enough across the school. There is a lack of a positive reading culture in the school.
- Leaders have adjusted the curriculum to target weaknesses in pupils' fundamental literacy and numeracy skills; increased time has been given for pupils to develop their

skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and calculating mentally in mathematics. Nevertheless, weaknesses in the quality of teaching have meant that this additional time has not ensured that pupils are catching up quickly to meet standards expected for their age by the time they leave the school. Pupils are not well prepared for their education at secondary school.

- The curriculum is not planned or delivered well enough to ensure that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have few opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. The curriculum is dominated by English and mathematics and has too narrow a focus. This means that pupils do not have opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in a range of subjects, which slows their rate of progress. Leaders recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that this provision captures pupils' imaginations and engages them in their learning.
- The primary physical education and sport premium funding has been used to increase pupils' participation in a wider range of sports and to enable them to enter local competitions. Nevertheless, leaders have not evaluated the impact of this provision for different groups of pupils so that they are clear that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are taught in the mainstream classes, is inadequate. Until recently, weak arrangements for identifying their needs and checking their progress meant they did not get the right support quickly enough to enable them to do well. Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not helping enough of them to achieve well and catch up in their learning.
- Leadership of the special resource unit for autism spectrum disorder has been effective in ensuring that the needs of pupils are being met.
- Until recently, the support and challenge from the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust has not been rapid or effective enough to overturn the legacy of pupils' underperformance.
- Leadership is too reliant on external support. Since the recent appointment of a senior education adviser, senior leaders are beginning to gain a better understanding of the quality of teaching across the school and the support required to help teachers to improve their practice. All staff at the school have access to a wide range of online training through the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust. Staff told inspectors that they value this bespoke approach to their professional development. Nonetheless, the impact of this training is yet to be seen in improvements to pupils' outcomes.
- The senior education adviser supported the headteacher to put together an appropriate improvement plan, which she regularly reviews and monitors. She provides effective support and challenge to the headteacher.
- Over the last six months, The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust has provided the school with expertise from outstanding leaders in the early years and special education provision. The quality of teaching and of the learning environment in these areas of the school has improved as a result of this support.
- The headteacher and the new leadership team have secured improvements to pupils' behaviour. Although pupils' behaviour requires improvement, the school's records show that there are fewer incidents of poor behaviour over recent times. Pupils' attendance

has started to improve this term after being below average in each of the last two years; pupils say that they enjoy coming to school.

- Given the recent changes to staffing, including the appointment of two teachers who are new to teaching, I recommend that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## **Governance of the school**

- The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust is responsible for the governance of the school.
- The chief executive officer of the trust acknowledges that, until recently, the school did not engage with the trust and the trust was not vigilant or forceful enough in preventing the decline in pupils' outcomes. Governors are not challenging senior leaders about the progress of different groups of pupils, Scrutiny of governing body minutes shows that data relating to disadvantaged pupils about their progress is not shown to governors.
- The chief executive officer acknowledges that the use of the pupil premium funding has not been checked carefully enough by the school, or the trust, to evaluate the extent to which this has made a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Consequently, leaders are not taking effective action to support the needs of disadvantaged pupils.
- Since April 2016, the senior education adviser meets weekly with the headteacher. Through her regular reports, the trust now has a clearer understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The trust has supported the headteacher to hold staff to account for the quality of education provided.
- The trust ensures that the school's performance management practice accurately reflects the trust's policy.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are tested, rigorous and robust. Leaders and governors ensure that staff have up-to-date training, including how to identify ways that pupils may be at risk from extremist views. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Evidence seen in school files shows that staff act promptly if they do have a concern. Records, including the single central record, are well maintained, monitored and updated. Leaders undertake the appropriate checks before a new member of staff starts working at the school. The school has a high and complex caseload of safeguarding issues. The headteacher is well supported by a knowledgeable safeguarding team, who are all appropriately trained and vigilant in making sure that safeguarding is given the highest priority. The team ensure that parents readily engage with the initial support that they provide, before issues escalate into more serious concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils are safe. The trust carries out the necessary checks to assure themselves that school leaders are meeting statutory requirements.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Inadequate**

- Over time too much teaching has been inadequate. Instability in staffing, staff absences, weak teaching and variable assessment practices have resulted in a decline

in standards. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and pupils' outcomes show that too much teaching is not good enough to ensure that pupils are catching up quickly the ground they have lost in previous years.

- Teachers do not all fully understand assessment information or where pupils are in their learning. Teachers do not regularly check on pupils' understanding in lessons or plan learning that is appropriate to pupils' needs. Consequently, learning is either too easy or too difficult and does not take into account pupils' starting points.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils, especially the most able and disadvantaged pupils, can achieve. As a result, teachers do not suitably challenge pupils. Pupils told inspectors that they did not feel challenged at the school. They complete work set in lessons, but many appear bored. This is because pupils have become resigned to a diet of uninspiring learning, which is failing to engage their interest and enthusiasm for new knowledge.
- The lower-ability pupils are given too much support. Inspectors saw repeated examples in pupils' books where they had clearly copied work which they did not understand. Lower-ability pupils are not being given the opportunity to attempt new learning for themselves or learn from their mistakes. This is significantly limiting their progress. Information about how well pupils are doing confirms that the lower-ability pupils are making the least progress, from their starting points, across the school.
- Teachers have not ensured that pupils have enough opportunities to practise problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics. This is a key reason why pupils have underachieved in this subject. New leaders have recognised this and have planned more opportunities into the mathematics curriculum. It is too early to see the impact of this on pupils' progress.
- Teachers have failed to develop a love of reading in pupils, including for the most able pupils. Very few can name more than a couple of authors or books. Many do not have the basic reading skills to access new books. In particular, lower-ability pupils struggle to sound out unfamiliar words because their phonics skills are underdeveloped.
- Where learning is most effective, it is because teaching is very carefully targeted to pupils' needs and enables them to move on quickly. This is most evident in the early years and in the specialist provision unit.
- Adults who work in the specialist resource provision engage pupils in their learning. There is a purposeful climate for learning and tasks are well matched to meet the needs of pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive, indicative of the nurturing ethos of the provision.
- Most teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' learning. Over the last year, teaching assistants have completed additional training and qualifications. They now work successfully with small groups of pupils and ask pupils questions which develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers are providing pupils with clear guidance on how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve the quality of their work. This is in line with the school's marking policy.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders are not fully promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While the school provides a few activities to support pupils' personal development, these are not planned carefully enough to ensure that pupils receive sufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of the world. For instance, pupils have limited understanding of the beliefs of different religious groups.
- All the pupils who spoke with inspectors said they feel safe and that bullying is rare. They have complete trust in their teachers to help them if it does happen. However, some concerns were expressed by parents, both in their conversations with inspectors during the inspection and in their responses to the Ofsted free-text service, about bullying. Leaders are determined to address this and are raising the profile of the issue, for example through introducing an anti-bullying week.
- There are some signs of improvement to pupils' personal development. Their physical development is improving, as a result of improved sporting opportunities and the school's use of the sport funding. Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy taking part in competitive sport.
- Pupils successfully learn about how to keep themselves safe online. They have a number of strategies they can use if they are worried about anything.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Over recent years pupils' attendance has been below average, particularly for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' overall attendance declined further last year. The new deputy headteacher has started to take positive steps to address this. Current in-year attendance information indicates that improvements are starting to be seen, including for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Although the majority of pupils concentrate on their work during lessons, the uninspiring curriculum has failed to develop pupils' love of learning, acquisition of new knowledge, or positive attitudes to achievement.
- The school's new behaviour policy and the headteacher's higher expectations for behaviour have proven effective in improving pupils' behaviour around the school. Parents have also welcomed and supported the new higher standards of behaviour.
- Pupils usually mix freely with each other and behave well around the school and in the playground. They told inspectors that if they see another pupil on their own they will go and play with them.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and adults. Pupils' workbooks are generally well presented.



## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- A legacy of poor teaching and low expectations has meant that pupils have not made sufficient progress from their starting points and have underachieved throughout the school. The school's performance was below the government's floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics are well below those expected for their age at key stage 1 and key stage 2. Year 6 pupils left the school without the knowledge and understanding to do well at secondary school. Their mathematics skills were particularly weak.
- Boys significantly underachieve, compared to girls, throughout the school. Leaders have not been quick enough to recognise this trend or halt its decline. Therefore it continues.
- Lower-ability pupils make even less progress than other pupils at the school. Leaders have not identified these pupils early enough or given them appropriate support to help them catch up with other pupils before they leave the school.
- The most able pupils are not given appropriate challenge to help them make the accelerated progress which they are capable of.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, have not made sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are taught in mainstream classes underachieve. They have not made enough progress because the correct support has not been put into place.
- Pupils, as an overall cohort, achieved close to the national average in the phonics screening test in Year 1, in 2015. However, boys' performance was much weaker than that of the girls. Pupils' phonics skills, acquired in Year 1, have not been well developed throughout the rest of their time at the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement in reading is inadequate.
- Pupils who begin at the school with little or no English make better progress. Effective teaching of reading and speaking skills enables these pupils to acquire new language quickly.
- The progress made by the most recent cohort of Year 6 pupils across key stage 2, was faster than previous cohorts of pupils overall. However, pupils made inadequate progress in mathematics.
- Children's attainment in the early years is better than in the rest of the school, but boys significantly underachieve compared to girls.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- While the overall proportion of children in the early years who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is now close to the national average, some boys are not as well prepared for learning in Year 1 as they should be.

- Most children are focused on their learning; however, occasionally a few children, particularly boys, move from one activity to the next without showing the concentration to develop their learning. Adults do not always intervene quickly enough to redirect children's learning or make their play purposeful. Opportunities to develop children's key skills of reading, writing and mathematics are therefore sometimes missed.
- The attainment of disadvantaged children has been inconsistent in the early years. Leaders have not carefully evaluated the use of the pupil premium funding against its impact on children's outcomes. This has limited the progress which disadvantaged children make during their time in the early years.
- Teachers and adults provide a safe environment for children, while also encouraging children to be independent. Staff are suitably trained in paediatric first aid.
- Most children behave well. They listen carefully to adults' explanations and follow their instructions promptly. For example, all children wash their hands then line up sensibly before lunch.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust has provided support to the school from an early years specialist. The learning environment has improved as a result. Leaders have provided children with plenty of opportunities to develop their learning through both indoor and outdoor play.
- Children who speak English as an additional language make good progress, because they receive effective support and quickly develop the language skills they need to do well.
- All children receive a home visit before they start school in the early years. Parents contribute to children's learning journeys. This helps the school to have a full and accurate picture of each child's development.

## School details

Unique reference number	140327
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10017526

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Chair	Mr Wayne Norrie
Headteacher	Mrs Erica Holt
Telephone number	01604 715249
Website	<a href="http://www.greenoaksprimaryschool.org.uk">www.greenoaksprimaryschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@greenoaksprimaryacademy.org">admin@greenoaksprimaryacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Green Oaks Primary Academy is an average-sized school. It has a 30-place designated special provision unit for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder.
- The academy was established in January 2014. It is sponsored by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2015.
- One member of the senior leadership team and two middle leaders took up post in September 2016.
- Six teachers, including two colleagues new to teaching, took up post in September 2016.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. However, the proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are much higher than average.

- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes in the school. Some lessons were seen jointly with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and two representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors scrutinised in detail a range of pupils' books in a variety of subjects.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including the evaluation of its own performance and development plan, information on pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour, bullying and attendance records, safeguarding procedures, reviews of the pupil premium and sport funding and minutes of the meetings held between the senior education advisor from the trust and the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the school, including at break and lunchtimes. They spoke formally to two groups of pupils, and informally with others around the academy. One inspector listened to pupils reading.
- There were too few responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for inspectors to view. Inspectors spoke with parents before school and considered nine responses from parents to the Ofsted free text service.
- Eleven responses to the online pupil questionnaire and 16 responses to the online staff questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Sally Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heidi Malliff	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Nash	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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