

Giffards Primary School

Queen Elizabeth Drive, Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 7TG

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a good and improving school. The headteacher provides strong leadership and she is supported well by an experienced and effective senior leadership team.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, and across a wide range of subjects.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of individual pupils and this helps them to make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, both in the classroom and during breaktimes. Very little learning time is lost as a result of disruptive behaviour.
- Assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet fully developed. Leaders do not have clear systems for tracking and monitoring the progress that pupils make.
- The early years provision is outstanding. From very low starting points, children make rapid progress during the Reception Year. The provision is extremely well led and managed and the quality of teaching in the early years classes is outstanding.
- Governors know the school well. They are effective in balancing the need to support the school with the requirement to hold leaders to account.
- Safeguarding is effective. There is very little bullying at the school and, when it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and effectively.
- The school's new feedback and marking policy is not yet fully established throughout the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics so that teachers and leaders are better able to track and monitor the progress pupils make.
- Ensure that the school's new marking and feedback policy is established fully throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's high expectations of both pupils and staff have ensured that this school is continuing to improve. She is deeply committed to the school and has created a stable and effective learning environment. As a result, the school is a place where pupils behave well and do their best.
- The headteacher is supported well by the senior leadership team. They are knowledgeable and experienced, and share the headteacher's vision for improving the school. They monitor the quality of teaching and learning frequently. Leaders take appropriate actions where necessary, such as providing support for colleagues, to ensure that teaching continues to improve.
- The school's other leaders understand their roles very well and are increasingly effective in fulfilling them. They monitor the quality of teaching regularly by, for example, looking at teachers' planning and scrutinising pupils' exercise books. Leaders identify what would improve the quality of teaching and discuss these areas for improvement with individual teachers. Leaders then ensure that they follow up on these points when they next monitor the quality of teaching.
- The school's curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. The school finds that its cross-curricular, topic-based approach works well and captures pupils' interest. Inspectors saw clearly that the curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a wide range of subjects. The school's curriculum focuses particularly well on developing pupils' speech and language skills. A very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities are provided for pupils, such as clubs for gymnastics, table tennis, singing, phonics and computers.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent effectively. Leaders have a clear plan for how the money will be spent and what they hope to achieve by spending it in this way. The school's emphasis has been on extending the opportunities that are available to pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- The pupil premium grant is spent effectively. Leaders have identified the key barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils. They have used the funding well to put suitable measures in place to address these barriers. Leaders have high expectations of what disadvantaged pupils should achieve. They monitor the effectiveness of the measures they put in place to support disadvantaged pupils and change them when they are not working well.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is led well and additional funds for this group of pupils are spent effectively. The school has changed its approach to teaching pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers now take more responsibility for ensuring that the provision in their own classrooms meets the needs of this group of pupils.
- The school promotes the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills very well. Pupils are taught how to be good citizens within modern British society. There is a strong focus on morality and on taking responsibility. This is a strength of the school.

- Parents are very largely supportive of the school and the vast majority would recommend it to others. Many parents chose to leave additional comments such as, 'My children love going to school and I am thrilled with their progress'.
- A small number of parents expressed concerns about communication between the school and home. Inspectors checked the way that the school communicates with parents and found it to be appropriate.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable and well informed. They know the school well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors understand their roles well. They strike a good balance between supporting the school and holding leaders to account. Minutes of governing body meetings show clearly that governors routinely ask challenging questions of the school's leaders in order to satisfy themselves that the quality of provision is continuing to improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record of pre-employment checks meets statutory requirements. The school takes a robust approach to ensuring that only suitable people are employed to work with children. The well-organised approach to recruiting staff ensures that all the necessary checks are made in a timely fashion.
- The school has a clear system for showing how much access visitors to the school are permitted. A yellow lanyard indicates someone who has been checked and has been cleared to move about the school unaccompanied. A red lanyard indicates someone who has been checked but needs to be accompanied by a member of the school staff. Pupils throughout the school know and understand this system. They are fully aware that should they see an unaccompanied person wearing a red lanyard they must alert an adult immediately.
- The designated safeguarding leads are well informed and highly committed to protecting the children in the school. They take prompt action, when necessary, in response to concerns that are reported to them. Detailed and appropriate records are kept of child protection concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan their teaching very well. They have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and how they expect to achieve it. Teachers ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and how they will know if they have been successful. They take account of pupils' individual starting points and this enables them to plan for the range of needs within each class.
- The quality of phonics teaching in the school is a strength. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to plan tasks that meet the needs of all the pupils in their class. Pupils are given plentiful opportunities to apply their phonics skills in order both

to read words and to spell them.

- The school has focused successfully on developing its assessment practice so that it now has a greater impact on the progress that pupils make. For example, teachers now use a system of immediate intervention to address pupils' misconceptions and difficulties in lessons. Teachers note which pupils have struggled in a lesson and then provide immediate support to address what they have found difficult.
- Teachers use questioning well both to check pupils' understanding and to encourage them to think more deeply. This is a particular strength in mathematics lessons. Teachers' skilled use of questions, targeted according to pupils' needs and abilities, encourages pupils to be more confident in using numbers.
- Teachers make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' writing across the range of subjects in the curriculum. They ensure that there is an equal focus on spelling and grammar whether pupils are writing in their English books or any other books. This approach is helping to raise standards.
- Teachers frequently reinforce 'the five Rs' (readiness, resourcefulness, resilience, responsibility and reflection) during lessons and throughout the school day. The school has found this approach to be very successful, for example, in encouraging pupils to 'have a go' or to persist with tasks that they find difficult.
- The school's new marking and feedback policy is not yet fully established. There is clear evidence that where the new system is being employed fully pupils' progress is more rapid as a result. Where the system is less well established fewer pupils, particularly the most able pupils, make rapid progress.
- The assessment of pupils' work and the tracking of their progress is not well developed in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe from bullying. They say that bullying rarely happens but when it does it is dealt with quickly by staff. One pupil commented that 'once they've been told off, they don't do it again!' Older pupils take on the role of 'anti-bullying ambassadors' to provide an additional level of support to pupils on the playground. They are clearly identifiable by their blue bibs and pupils say that they are a big help.
- Pupils are taught well about how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, they learn about firework safety, road safety and 'stranger danger'. The school also gives a high priority to teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe while using the internet. When discussing e-safety with the lead inspector, pupils said that they have been told to 'zip it, block it, flag it' to keep themselves safe. They clearly understood that this mnemonic is intended to remind them to keep their personal information private, to block anything that worries or upsets them and to tell an adult about any concerns.
- The school takes its responsibilities towards the social, emotional and mental health

needs of its pupils seriously. The school provides a good range of support for pupils, where necessary. A display on mental well-being in the school hall gives this important area a high focus.

- Pupils display good attitudes to learning. They like coming to school and enjoy the wide range of topics that they learn about. Pupils say that teachers make learning 'really fun'. This has a clear impact on both pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They display good manners and are keen to talk about their school.
- Pupils behave very well both in their classrooms and during less structured parts of the day. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions and very little time is lost in lessons as a result of disruptive behaviour.
- Incidents of bad behaviour, racism and bullying are recorded fully and are reported to governors when appropriate. Records show clearly that appropriate action is taken when incidents occur.
- Pupils attend school regularly and on time. Absences are monitored closely and effective action is taken when an individual pupil's level of absence causes concern. The school's leaders take an appropriately firm line to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by low attendance. Actions such as daily 'wake up' telephone calls and the purchase of alarm clocks for pupils have helped to improve both attendance and punctuality.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress at Giffards Primary School. The results of the 2016 national tests did not reflect the good progress that pupils make. The disappointing results were due to issues concerning the particular cohort of pupils rather than being symbolic of a deterioration in standards.
- The school's assessment information shows clearly that current pupils are making good progress throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, and conversations with pupils, confirm the accuracy of these assessments.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics from very low starting points. Results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have been broadly in line with the national average for the last three years. This good progress is clearly evident when looking at pupils' writing in their exercise books and when listening to them read.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress from their individual starting points. Expectations for this group of pupils are high and the progress that they make is tracked and monitored well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall. Pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs make particularly good progress. The needs of this group of pupils

are met well and their progress is monitored effectively by the special educational needs coordinator. Low-attaining pupils are given the support they need to catch up quickly.

- Pupils read frequently and confidently. They enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about the texts they read. The school ensures that all pupils read regularly with an adult by providing additional support for those pupils who do not read at home.
- The school prepares pupils very well for each new stage of their educational careers. For example, in Year 6 every pupil has a job, such as being a librarian or a lunchtime monitor, that they are expected to carry out reliably. This encourages pupils to develop the additional responsibility they will need as they move on to secondary school.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They are provided with work that challenges them and encourages them to work at a deeper level. Teachers' high expectations mean that this group of pupils achieve well. The school's new approach to feedback and monitoring is not sufficiently well established and, as a result, it does not yet help the most able pupils to make the rapid progress they should.
- Until now, the school's leaders have rightly focused on developing assessment in English and mathematics. As a result, assessment in other subjects is less well developed and systems to track the progress that pupils make are in their infancy. Scrutiny of pupils' exercise books and conversations with pupils show that pupils are making good progress across a wide range of subjects.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children enter school with skills and abilities that are well below those that are typical of their age. They make rapid progress during their time in the early years. The proportion who achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is consistently just above the national average.
- Leadership of early years is extremely strong. The early years leader has a very clear vision for how the provision is to develop and very high expectations of both staff and children. The early years leader has identified fully the provision's strengths and what could still be developed.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff manage children's behaviour consistently. As a result, they learn the school's rules very quickly and follow them well. Staff take advantage of opportunities to teach children to manage risks themselves. For example, during the inspection children used umbrellas sensibly and independently when they wanted to go outside to play in the rain.
- The early years environment is vibrant and exciting, both inside and outside. Staff plan excellent opportunities for children's development across all the areas of learning in the early years curriculum.
- The quality of teaching in early years is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants work extremely effectively together. Teachers ensure that teaching assistants are properly informed about planning so that they know what each activity is intended to achieve. The quality of assessment is very strong and this enables staff to plan highly effectively to meet the needs of individual children.

- The school has a very detailed and well-developed approach to supporting children and their parents when they first join the school. Over several weeks, children are invited to spend time in school, before they start, so that they become familiar with the staff and the setting. They are encouraged to borrow items from the school's 'toy library' as another way of increasing their link with the school. This enables staff to identify and begin to address individual children's particular needs before they start school.
- Relationships with parents are developed well and they are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning. Parents contribute to their child's initial assessment when they join school and continue to share in their child's learning journey as the year progresses.

School details

Unique reference number	140720
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	10023364

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 school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Bentley
Headteacher	Nichola Haslam
Telephone number	01375 672138
Website	www.giffardsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk
Email address	admin@giffardsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 April 2014. It is a member of The Inspirational Learning Trust but operates as a stand-alone academy, managed by its own governing body.
- The school is much bigger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in every year group, from Year R to Year 6, and there are currently three classes in Year 1. Children join early years, full time, in the September after their fourth birthday.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education. The chair of the governing body is a

national leader of governance.

- The school meets current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. Inspectors observed parts of 25 lessons, some jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked closely at the work in pupils' exercise books. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documents including assessment information.
- Inspectors checked the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other documentation concerned with the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, a group of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the day and with parents before school in the morning. The lead inspector spoke with an educational adviser, appointed by the school, on the telephone.
- Inspectors took into account 75 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 70 additional comments. Inspectors also considered nine responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Cornish	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Mandy Short	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Webb	Her Majesty's Inspector

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