

Great Orton Primary School

Great Orton, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 6NA

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Ongoing turbulence in leadership has impacted on the quality of the education pupils receive.
- Leaders have not built on the successes of the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors have not acted quickly enough to ensure that outcomes across the school are consistently strong.
- The attainment of pupils leaving key stage 2 has been low in mathematics and reading for the previous three years.
- The teaching of mathematics and reading is beginning to improve. However, pupils are not making enough progress to reach their potential because teachers' expectations of pupils are not always high enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan activities that match pupils' needs in geography, history and science.
- Middle leaders are new to their roles. They have not had time to make effective checks on the quality of pupils' work across the curriculum.
- School leaders and governors have not ensured that plans to support disadvantaged pupils are in place.
- School leaders have no oversight of the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Teachers do not access regular high-quality professional development training.

The school has the following strengths

- Staff and governors have worked with parents and carers and the local authority to ensure that the school continues to operate during a significant period of turbulence in leadership.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school. They are polite and respectful, and they interact well with adults.
- Pupils feel safe and are cared for well.
- Attendance has improved and is now above the national average.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social skills is strong. Pupils leave school prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Effective approaches to the teaching of phonics are evident in key stage 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and thereby pupils' outcomes by:
 - ensuring that pupils make better progress in reading and mathematics
 - raising teachers' expectations of how highly pupils, especially the most able, should attain and how much progress they should make
 - ensuring that teachers match work to meet the needs of pupils
 - ensuring that teachers' assessments and planning build upon prior learning in geography, history and science, to challenge pupils to make better progress.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - making better checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum
 - strengthening the oversight of the provision for and outcomes of pupils with SEND, to ensure their better progress
 - ensuring that plans for the spending of the pupil premium funding are in place, which focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes in the teaching staff. This has led to an inconsistent quality of teaching and as a result, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have not improved. The substantive headteacher has been absent for two terms. This in turn has further compounded difficulties in continued leadership and management of this very small school.
- Governors are determined to ensure that the school moves back to a good position. They have been proactive in the absence of the substantive headteacher. They quickly sought the support of the local authority. An executive principal has supported the school for two half days each week to ensure that the school remains operational. As well as this, an associate headteacher from a local school has begun to work with the small number of teachers to improve teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- New leaders have formulated an improvement plan that is clear and measurable. Their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate. They recognise the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes have regressed since the previous inspection.
- A new assessment system has been introduced this year. This is beginning to enable leaders and teachers to have a more developed understanding of the progress pupils make over time.
- Additional funding has been used to broker additional adult support and to subsidise trips and activities for the small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school. However, leaders have not put in place detailed plans to ensure that the spending of the pupil premium is sharply focused on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- As there are only three classes, teachers take on a range of additional leadership roles. Until recently, most subject responsibilities were carried out by the substantive headteacher. Teachers have now stepped up and have taken leadership roles in English and mathematics. They have begun to attend training to develop their professional knowledge and understanding in these areas.
- The quality of monitoring activities undertaken by leaders is underdeveloped because these activities are not focused on bringing about rapid improvements in pupils' work across the curriculum. Leaders are beginning to work in close partnership with the associate headteacher to bring about improvements in teaching and learning.
- Leaders are effective in promoting pupils' understanding of the need for care and tolerance for others. Pupils know that everyone should be treated with respect. Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is catered for well.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that ensures that there is a focus on the development of skills over time. However, leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistent across the school. The inspector noted that often teachers struggle to cater for the wide age ranges in classes. As a result, many pupils complete similar work. The most able pupils are not challenged to reach their potential.

- Many enrichment activities ensure that pupils enjoy their learning. Trips and residential visits are planned well to ensure that pupils experience opportunities away from the rural setting of the school. For example, trips and visits to major cities enable pupils to further develop their understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. However, leaders are unsure if these pupils are reaching their potential because they do not make frequent checks on the quality of the support they receive.
- There are currently too few children in the early years on which to report. However, in recent years, the proportion of children who have left the early years with a good level of development has been above the national average.
- Many parents and carers are positive in their views of the school. They are supportive of the school and the work that staff and governors have done to ensure the continued day-to-day running of this small rural school in the absence of the substantive headteacher. Parents stated that pupils are well cared for in school.

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of the governing body has been appointed, together with many new governors. This has strengthened the skills and knowledge of the governing body.
- Governors have been quick to broker appropriate support from the local authority in the absence of the substantive headteacher.
- Governors are involved in the day-to-day running of this small school. For example, they operate a walking bus to and from school each day for parents. Many governors come into school each day to support teachers in classes.
- Governors have asked school leaders challenging questions about why pupils' outcomes have been less good since the previous inspection. Despite their efforts, governors have failed to ensure that the arrangements for the oversight of the use of the pupil premium funding have been effectively put into place.
- Governors have ensured that the physical education (PE) and sports funding has been used appropriately. They understand the impact of the spending and the experiences and opportunities provided for pupils. For example, pupils have competed in swimming, football and golf competitions. The PE funding was used well to enable the pupils to experience wheelchair basketball during a coaching session with a world championship level player.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The associate principal and two members of the teaching staff share the role of designated safeguarding lead. All checks on the suitability of adults to work in school have been completed. The school site is secure, and leaders manage risks well.

- Records of safeguarding concerns are detailed. The school works with several partner agencies, including children’s social care, school health, speech and language services and several national charities.
- Records of leaders’ actions indicate that vulnerable pupils and their families receive timely and relevant support.
- Staff have received training in basic awareness of safeguarding and ‘Prevent’ training, to help them spot potential signs of radicalisation.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and remain vigilant in their duties.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching over time in mathematics and reading has not consolidated pupils’ learning. This is because expectations are not consistently high enough. A high turnover in the teaching staff has led to an inconsistent delivery of the four-year rolling curriculum programme.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving. This is because teachers have engaged successfully with the local authority and a local mathematics hub to seek advice. Teachers are now planning sequences of lessons that build on prior learning. However, this work is in its infancy and the impact of this improved teaching is beginning to show in pupils’ books, but it is not yet evident in pupils’ outcomes over time.
- The teaching of writing has been the strongest aspect of teaching for several years. Teachers plan interesting lessons and pupils have opportunities to write across a wide range of genres. Teachers ensure that pupils’ handwriting and presentation are neat. Pupils in key stage 1 benefit from effective prompts to enable them to apply with care spelling, handwriting and punctuation. However, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for pupils to make stronger progress, including the most able.
- Most pupils read fluently. Teachers are now applying effective strategies which are embedded into their daily practice, to provide pupils with opportunities to read across the curriculum. Teachers are skilled in drawing out pupils’ understanding of different texts. However, pupils are not routinely challenged in their reading to make better progress.
- The teaching of phonics is securing good outcomes for pupils in key stage 1. Pupils apply well their knowledge of phonics and spelling to their written work.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers have not used effectively assessment information or planned well enough to develop pupils’ skills and knowledge. For example, in geography, history and science, pupils’ skills are limited because teachers do not build well upon prior learning. Too often, pupils are left to challenge themselves rather than completing more demanding tasks.
- Teachers have recently begun to visit other schools in the locality to work alongside other teachers. They have begun to look at samples of work from pupils in other schools. This is helping them improve their own planning and assessments. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this on pupils’ outcomes.

- Teachers and teaching assistants have secure relationships with pupils that lead to calm learning environments. Adults take great care to celebrate pupils' work in colourful and vibrant displays around the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy attending school and they speak highly of the staff. Pupils know that adults will listen to them and help them if they are worried or upset.
- Pupils treat one another with respect. In lessons, they listened to one another and cooperated well in class and while at play. Positive relationships existed between pupils and staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Older pupils have a developing understanding of the need to be resilient. They are aware they need to try hard with their learning and not give up.
- Pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe while online is good. They are aware of the potential risks involved. Pupils spoke about the dangers of speaking to strangers while playing computer games online. They knew not to share personal details.
- Pupils enjoy learning and they appreciate the many exciting trips and visits that enrich the curriculum. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about a trip to a science centre to learn about robotics, and a trip to a museum to experience a living history day as part of their school anniversary topic.
- Pupils relish the many sporting activities they are offered. They enjoy competing in a range of sports. Pupils have an awareness of why exercise is beneficial to developing healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils have a good understanding of equality. They know that each person should be treated with respect. Their understanding of different faiths is evident throughout the curriculum. Pupils have explored Islam, both in religious education lessons and through the exploration of geometric patterns found in Islamic art.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a calm and harmonious learning environment.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, while moving around school and while at play. Pupils are responsive to instructions. They work hard in lessons and take pride in their work.
- Pupils settle to their work quickly. Routines for moving between rooms are well established; as a result, little learning time is lost.
- Leaders keep detailed records of the small number of incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils said that bullying and name-calling are rare but when they do happen their teachers are fair.
- Attendance improved significantly by the end of 2018. This improvement has continued

into the current academic year. Leaders have eradicated the previously high rate of persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- There are very few pupils in each year group. As a result, it is difficult to make comparisons between pupils from different year groups and with pupils nationally because the proportion represented by one pupil can vary significantly from year to year. However, over the past three years, few pupils have reached the expected standards in mathematics and reading by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils have not made good progress because teachers' expectations of what they are capable of have been too low. Teachers have not challenged pupils well enough to make good progress.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new assessment system to help them monitor pupils' progress. Information provided by the school indicates pupils are making better progress in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books shows a renewed approach to the teaching of mathematics. Pupils are now beginning to make better progress because teaching is more focused on developing the application of prior learning. However, the most able pupils are not routinely sufficiently challenged to reach the higher standards.
- Pupils' writing is generally of a good standard. They apply their spelling well and take pride in their work. Pupils write across a range of interesting topics and genres. For example, pupils in key stage 2 have completed some interesting narratives and scientific explanations. Pupils in key stage 1 have written some exciting pieces about meerkats, as part of a wider topic on Africa. However, teachers do not expect enough from pupils. The work set is not sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to make better progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They have a good knowledge of a range of contemporary authors. They enjoy their daily reading sessions. Most current pupils are making good progress. However, some pupils are underachieving because teaching over time has not challenged them enough.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable because the provision for them lacks rigour.
- The very small proportion of pupils with SEND makes good progress. However, because leaders have not checked on the quality of the extra support these pupils receive, they do not know if these pupils are reaching their potential.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standards in the end of Year 1 national phonics screening check has been in line with the national average for several years. Teachers ensure that there is good transference of pupils' phonics skills to their reading and writing in key stage 1.
- The broad curriculum is enabling pupils to develop their knowledge of the world around them. Pupils enjoyed their recent history topic about the 165th anniversary of the school. They enjoyed visiting a living history museum. They recounted their conversations with actors playing characters from the past. Work in science covers a

range of interesting topics. Pupils have many opportunities to write about different aspects of science: they write facts about space and instructions for experiments. However, pupils are not routinely provided with the challenge to enable them to make better progress.

- Although there are too few pupils in the early years on whom to report, children leaving the early years since the previous inspection have made good progress. Historically, most children leaving the early years have achieved a good level of development.

School details

Unique reference number	112110
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10087876

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Laura Throp
Headteacher	Mr Jamie Robertson
Telephone number	01228 711602
Website	www.greatorton.cumbria.sch.uk
Email address	head@greatorton.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2018

Information about this school

- The school is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- In the absence of the substantive headteacher, the school is supported by an executive principal for one day per week and an associate headteacher on behalf of the local authority.
- An experienced headteacher has very recently taken up the role of acting headteacher in the absence of the substantive headteacher.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British, and all speak English as their first language.
- There are too few children in the early years on which to report.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- A new chair of the governing body has been appointed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the acting headteacher, the executive principal, the associate adviser and a local authority general adviser.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector, together with the acting headteacher, observed pupils' learning across the school.
- The inspector looked at pupils' current work from across the curriculum.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and spoke with them about the culture of reading within the school.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and while they were at play.
- The inspector examined a wide range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. He also examined records of monitoring activities and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the single central record.
- The inspector spoke with parents; he considered the 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted online questionnaire, and the 15 free-text responses. The inspector considered the 43 responses to the pupils' survey and eight responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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