

Temple Grove Academy

Friar's Way, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3UA

Inspection dates

4–5 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Early years provision		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Leaders and managers have not yet ensured that pupils make consistently good progress through the school. Middle leaders (those responsible for year groups or subjects) are not fully confident in their areas of responsibility.
- Pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, do not achieve well enough in mathematics and English, especially in their writing. In 2014, results in national tests for those pupils in Year 6 were below average.
- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Pupils are not always motivated to do their best, particularly the most able. The presentation of pupils' work is often too untidy.
- Funds earmarked to support disadvantaged pupils are not always being used to best effect in improving their achievement quickly.
- Governors have not yet been influential enough in helping the school to improve its overall effectiveness to good.
- Pupils' behaviour is not always good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Not all pupils have risen to the high expectations set by the headteacher and senior staff for high standards of behaviour.
- The early years provision requires improvement. The school does not yet make sure that children are fully prepared for their start in Year 1.
- Pupils who find learning more difficult sometimes make slow progress and the gaps between their achievements and others are too wide.

The school has the following strengths

- The new senior leadership team is starting to develop the confidence of staff to lead initiatives and teach more effectively. Early years provision is now being led more effectively.
- Pupils say they feel safe. Parents rightly believe that the school has improved since converting to an academy, particularly in the higher expectations being set for all.
- Pupils enjoy their range of responsibilities, such as membership of the school council and being class 'Eagles'.
- Good links with other schools locally are starting to help the school improve more quickly.
- The school uses additional sports funding effectively to increase the range of sporting activities in which pupils can take part.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school’s work, scrutinised information on pupils’ progress and looked at work in pupils’ books. They considered information about safeguarding, monitoring of teaching and behaviour management.
- Most of the inspection was spent observing pupils’ learning in classrooms. Inspectors observed 16 lessons. Inspectors also observed small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6 and talked to them about their learning in classes. They listened to others informally in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle managers, members of school staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors talked to small groups of pupils formally and others informally in lessons and on the playground.
- Inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by a number of parents who spoke informally at the beginning of the school day. The results of 26 questionnaires completed by staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Bryan Meyer	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The governing body manages an on-site Nursery. The school runs a breakfast club each morning.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children) is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average. Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The school works with a number of other primary schools and the Ark Academies Trust, which provides support for the school. A National Leader of Education is currently supporting the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school opened in January 2013 and officially converted to an academy on 1 September 2013, sponsored by Temple Grove Trust. When its predecessor school, Sherwood Park Community Primary, was last inspected, its overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. An interim headteacher led the school until November 2013 when the present headteacher started at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching to at least good by:
 - helping staff to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged and motivated by the tasks set, to boost their learning
 - ensuring that teaching helps pupils become more confident to apply their number skills in different situations, particularly in Years 3 to 6
 - ensuring that pupils in Years 1 to 6 present their work neatly when working in their books.
- Raise pupils' achievement through the school, ensuring that:
 - pupils' achievement over time is consistently good, to enable them to reach the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils develop accurate spelling and punctuation skills in their writing
 - pupils eligible for additional funding and those who find learning more difficult continue to improve their progress in all year groups
 - children's learning in the early years is extended more fully in all areas of their learning, particularly when using the outside areas.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, particularly in Years 3 to 6, by:
 - making sure that teaching fosters better attitudes to work and to each other.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - supporting those staff new to their middle leader roles so they can promote quicker improvements in their areas of responsibility
 - making sure that governors have more influence on improving the school's work, including in ensuring that the use of funding to support disadvantaged pupils results in them making more rapid progress.

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 may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not yet managed to secure consistently good teaching, pupils' achievement and good behaviour, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Soon after the school became an academy, there were a number of changes in staffing, particularly at senior level. The headteacher quickly identified the changes needed. Leaders' increased expectations of staff have helped to eliminate inadequate teaching. However, changes have not yet secured consistently good teaching, particularly in older age groups.
- Leaders responsible for subjects or year groups are comparatively new to their role. Some are not yet confident in knowing how to identify further weaknesses and drive improvements quickly.
- The recently established senior leadership team is helping to share responsibilities more evenly, including responsibility for early years and special educational needs. Plans to promote more rapid improvement are just starting to take effect, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The vast majority of staff said that they know the senior leaders' intentions for the academy's future and share these views.
- Despite difficulties involved in changing to an academy, many staff, pupils and parents testify to improvements in the academy's ethos and behaviour of pupils. However, raised expectations of staff and pupils alike are taking time to translate into consistently good teaching and pupils' behaviour. Most, but not all, parents are fully convinced of the improvements taking place.
- The range of subjects taught provides a framework for the teaching of basic skills. Enrichment activities help to extend the range of opportunities open to pupils. The early years provision has improved significantly over the past year, with new outdoor play equipment and resources. Other initiatives, such as their development of the 'Forest School' approach, (where pupils have lessons in the outside environment), are also proving popular. Topics such as Black history month, links with other schools and lessons that explore the faiths and beliefs of others are helping to prepare pupils adequately for life in modern Britain. British values, including respect for different faiths and cultures, are promoted across the school.
- The effective use of sports funding enables more pupils to participate in a wider range of sports activities including girls' football, multisport and judo. Specialist sports coaches provide additional expertise, which is proving useful for staff training, as well as providing more specialised teaching.
- Senior leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. These include checks on staff, having a number of clear safeguarding policies, vigilant site security and liaison with outside professionals.
- Staff do not tolerate discrimination of any sort and the school ensures equal opportunities are available for all pupils.
- Additional funds for disadvantaged pupils are used to provide art therapy activities, training for teaching assistants and other enrichment activities. However, these additional funds have not been used to good effect in accelerating pupils' progress more quickly to make up for past underachievement.
- The academy sponsor has effectively supported the school through its conversion to an academy. The recent help from a National Leader in Education is helping senior staff to identify the most urgent areas to work on. There are good links with a number of other schools locally and this is beginning to help in a number of ways, including staff training.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, many of whom are new to the role, have supported the school through its new beginnings but have not had enough influence in helping move the quality of the school's work to good. They are starting to establish better routines to check on how well the school is progressing. For example, governors now meet with subject leaders more regularly. Formal visits are planned to assess how well new initiatives are raising pupils' achievement. Although governors clearly understand the link between improvements to pupils' achievement and teachers' salary progression, they have not always been able to assess if improvements to teaching have been working. Governors are well aware of how the school's first set of results compare to others nationally and locally. They have identified that pupils entitled to additional funding do not yet make good enough progress. They have a secure awareness of the quality of teaching in the school. Governors have also been effective in ensuring that finances are now more secure, as the academy becomes more firmly established.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Many staff, pupils and parents indicate that behaviour has improved since the academy opened, but in reality, pupils' behaviour is still not consistently good.
- Children in Nursery and Reception, and pupils in Years 1 and 2, more readily conform to the school's higher expectations of behaviour. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not yet fully adjusted to the higher expectations set by the headteacher and senior staff for consistently good behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- Pupils say they like their school, enjoy being members of the school council and take their role as 'Temple Grove Eagles' seriously. Pupils enjoy these responsibilities. They are keen to point out that they had to apply and be interviewed for their job. They like these roles, although few pupils spoke about issues beyond the school that they might be concerned about or try to influence for the better. Pupils who attend the breakfast club say its enjoyable and helps them be ready for school.
- In lessons, many pupils knuckle down to their work quickly, but often there is some low-level disruption. This is often caused by pupils who lose interest in what is being taught, or get distracted by classmates.
- Displays of work around the school often present pupils' work to good effect. Within day-to-day activities however, pupils do not take enough care in the presentation of their work. Pupils, particularly those who are in Years 3 to 6, do not readily take pride in their written work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Most parents who responded to Parent View thought the same. All pupils interviewed or spoken with informally said that they feel safe, despite the extensive grounds, getting to know new staff and having different routines. They know what to do and who to go to if they feel unsafe in any way.
- The school ensures that pupils are fully aware of the dangers of social media and internet misuse as well as dangers posed in the local area, such as road and rail safety. Visitors to the school, such as police officers and fire fighters, also help to raise the pupils' awareness of how to keep safe in various situations. One visitor remarked how he felt that the school's ethos had improved.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not yet ensuring pupils make fast enough progress to make up for underachievement in the past. This is particularly true for the most able pupils, as teaching does not always ensure they are challenged to do their very best.
- Since becoming an academy, inadequate teaching has been largely eliminated. There are still times, however, when teachers do not have high enough expectations of the quantity and quality of pupils' work. While some pupils take pride in presenting their work, not all present their work with care.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for extra funding benefit from more individual teaching and support, following the school's first set of national results. However, along with other pupils, they are not always encouraged to learn effectively. They do not always use their mathematical or writing skills in different ways.
- In the Nursery and Reception, teachers develop good relationships with and between children. Activities in the new outside area are now easier to organise. However, staff do not always set tasks at the right level of difficulty to make sure that children make rapid progress.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes, such as instructions, descriptions or poems. However, teaching does not often demand pupils produce longer pieces of writing. Writing tasks are often relatively brief. Pupils know about full stops, commas, or capital letters, but teaching does not ensure pupils put theory into practice.
- Teachers remind pupils how to behave and treat others fairly to help promote their social, moral and cultural development. This is more successful with pupils in the Nursery to Year 2 age group. Older pupils are still reluctant at times to settle quickly to activities and to produce work of which they are proud.
- In response to the school's first set of national results last year, the school changed the way older pupils are taught basic skills. In Year 6, for example, English and mathematical work features highly in order to compensate for previous slow progress. These changes have been more successful for some than others, so pupils' progress in some classes is still slow. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) has improved, as reflected in pupils' improving reading confidence.

- Projects, such as work connected to Remembrance celebrations, help extend pupils' writing skills, but these are at an early stage and teaching does not always ensure pupils write at length or neatly within all subjects.
- The help given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is increasingly effective in helping them learn. They are being better supported in a variety of ways to increase the pace of their progress.
- Those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. They are helped to settle in quickly, aided by additional adults in class.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and helpfully in most cases, but comments do not always pick up upon weaknesses in presentation, so pupils do not readily improve.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because pupils do not make rapid enough progress across the school.
- Pupils' ability to write confidently using accurate spelling and a wide vocabulary is inconsistent. More opportunities to write help boost pupils' enthusiasm, but some are still reluctant to write at length. Pupils respond to questions from teachers or visitors, but some do not always talk clearly or at length, particularly when talking about their learning.
- Pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, are accurate in their number and calculation work and know how to solve simple word-based number problems. However, they are not confident in using their number skills in a variety of ways to help solve more complex problems or investigations.
- Pupils who are most able do not consistently learn well. In last year's national tests, fewer than average reached the higher levels, particularly those in Year 6. This reflected their past underachievement.
- Disadvantaged pupils, supported through additional funding, made slower progress in reading, writing and mathematics compared to other pupils. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were around a year and a half behind other pupils nationally and a year behind others in the school. However, current pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are improving in most, but not all, year groups. Gaps between these pupils and those nationally are narrowing, as the school focuses more directly on their needs.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Over time, they have not made the rapid gains needed to make up for their low starting points and past underachievement. However, this is beginning to change for the better as their pace of learning is now increasing.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected levels in the phonics screening check last year was higher than the national average. This reflects increased efforts to boost pupils' confidence in Years 1 and 2 to read unfamiliar words. Older and younger pupils alike generally read fluently. Older pupils are able to discuss different authors' styles.
- Children in the early years sometimes make good progress from lower than typically expected starting points for their age, but not consistently so. Children's learning is not always extended, however, so they do not always make good progress.
- The few pupils at the early stage of learning or speaking English as an additional language are supported appropriately within lessons. They usually keep pace with classmates, but like others, their progress varies.
- Pupils say they enjoy the extra range of sporting activities available, provided by the availability of extra government funds. This has widened the range of activities available and the number of pupils attending different sporting activities. The use of specialist sports coaches helps pupils to extend and practise more difficult skills effectively.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because, despite some better resources and more settled staffing, children do not yet achieve well. This means they are not fully prepared for their start in Year 1.
- Significant improvements to the outside area adjacent to classrooms are helping to provide children with a wider variety of activities, including those which develop their physical abilities. However, the outside area tends to provide more effectively for their physical needs, rather than their language, writing or number skills.

- Teaching ensures that children are safe and happy, and develop good levels of social skills. Teaching requires improvement, however, because children are not always fully stretched in their learning. For example, while children enjoyed acting as pirates in one class, few could say why or what they wanted to do while in the role. In another outdoor activity, the class motor car garage provided some children with the opportunity to take on various roles. In reality, they did not fully explore the opportunities that this activity provided to extend their imaginative, physical, speaking and early writing skills. Children lose interest in some activities, as teaching does not always ensure that these are planned to best effect.
- The teaching of early reading and writing skills is largely effective and children readily talk about the books they like to look at in the book corner.
- Children generally behave well and relate easily to each other. They readily share equipment and take turns so that everybody can use the new equipment in the outside area. Children's welfare is high profile and staff are trained in appropriate first aid routines.
- The leadership of this provision has improved recently and is now good. Priorities have been identified and significant improvements made in equipment and resources. The senior leader has a clear view of what needs to be done. She sets high expectations for improvements in terms of children's achievement and the quality of teaching. These are starting to take effect.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139052
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	447847

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Denoon Duncan
Headteacher	Sam Linton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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