

The Grove Primary School

Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2NB

Inspection dates

23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good teaching helps all pupils, regardless of their abilities or background, to make good progress over time in English and mathematics, particularly in reading.
- This means that from low starting points, all groups of pupils are reaching national average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those new to English and pupils supported by the pupil premium, make good progress because adults give them extra help to learn the skills they need.
- Pupils say that they feel safe, secure and well looked after in school and their parents and carers agree. Behaviour is good and pupils are keen and interested to learn in lessons.
- Pupils' attendance has much improved since the previous inspection so that it is now average.
- Teaching is improving because leaders are giving teachers accurate feedback after watching them teach and providing them with useful training that helps them to improve their teaching skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' standards in writing and mathematics are not as good as those in reading.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching to make sure that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills when learning about other subjects are not yet fully established.
- Time for pupils to respond to teachers' marking of their work is inconsistent across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons and one assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. In addition, the lead inspector talked with a representative of the local authority, and a representative of the Cambridgeshire Racial Equality and Diversity Service.
- Inspectors talked with pupils, listened to them read and observed them at play during break times.
- The school's safeguarding policies, improvement plans, governing body meeting notes and records of pupils' behaviour were reviewed. In addition, inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in their books, and at records of their progress.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and replies from 39 staff questionnaires. The views of parents and carers were sought at the start of the school day as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Vreta Bagilhole

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Grove Primary School is an average-sized primary school. It has expanded since September 2012 and class groups have been reorganised to accommodate the increase in numbers of pupils. No alternative or off-site provision is used by the school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, speaking 17 different languages. Four in ten pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A well-above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to the school. The funding is based on the number of children looked after, from Forces families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils who require extra help and are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above-average.
- The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times during the year is well above that normally found.
- The 'Pit Stop' before- and after-school clubs, managed by the governing body, operate on the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding and thereby raise attainment in writing and mathematics by making certain that all staff:
 - build on the successful approach to using pupils' speaking and listening skills as a way of organising their ideas before writing
 - strengthen the imaginative, stimulating experiences that inspire pupils to write
 - extend opportunities for pupils to use their skills in mathematics when learning about other subjects
 - give pupils more time to respond to teachers' marking of their work so they can practise and improve their skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills below those expected for their age. Although children make good progress in their Reception Year, their reading, writing and communication skills remain lower than expected by the time they enter Year 1. Standards in English and mathematics have improved over the past three years and are now average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are broadly average overall. The Year 6 pupils who took their national tests in 2012 were, on average, about a term ahead for their age. Pupils' attainment in reading is improving. This is because the youngest children are systematically being taught the links between letters and the sounds they make. Older pupils are taught specific reading skills regularly as they move through the school. Those who need additional help in reading are taught in dedicated sessions every day, free from distractions, for an intensive period. This successfully helps pupils to read and understand more effectively.
- Pupils from all backgrounds make good progress during their time at the school. An increasing proportion of pupils are making more than nationally-expected progress in English by the end of Year 6. Work in pupils' books indicates that they are making good progress in reading and mathematics. However, their achievement in writing is not as strong. This is mainly due to the fact that many pupils are at a very early stage of learning English and more emphasis is placed on speaking and listening skills prior to those of writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who arrive at the school unable to speak English, make good progress. This is because of the extra support they receive from adults in lessons which addresses specific gaps in their knowledge and skills. Adults model language well. They are skilled in helping all pupils to learn and practise new words and phrases.
- Pupils new to the school are welcomed. They are paired with other children who help them to make new friends and learn the school's routines. Assessments of pupils' particular needs and abilities are made at an early stage to ensure that they get the support they need. Most make progress similar to that of their peers.
- Additional funding received by the school in the form of the pupil premium has been used well to maintain small class sizes so pupils can get extra teacher-time. In addition, it has provided additional adult support in lessons, music tuition, access to residential trips and to the before- and after-school clubs. Consequently, these pupils are reaching higher levels than similar pupils nationally, except in writing. Attainment gaps between these and other pupils in the school are closing by the end of Year 6 in English and in mathematics.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching ensures that all pupils, including those who need extra help, make good progress and achieve well over time. Adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage promote children's language skills particularly well. During snack time, for example, children take turns to explain which is their favourite fruit or vegetable, and why. Adults help children to learn new words and use them in correct sentences.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour and

this means that learning proceeds at a brisk pace. They plan stimulating activities for pupils that inspire them to write. For example, in Year 5, pupils made rapid gains in learning because the teacher used drama extremely well to bring a book's character to life, providing pupils with a deeper understanding of the character's feelings. Such effective activities for stimulating writing are not consistently offered to pupils across the school. Teachers use 'talk partners' effectively to allow pupils the chance to discuss their ideas with each other. This shared working, used consistently well across the school, is enabling pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills as well as organise their ideas before writing.

- Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can already do to plan the next steps in their learning. As a result, the work that they set for them is closely matched to their needs and abilities. Other adults are used well to support individual pupils and in small group work. Those pupils who are more able are provided with more demanding work which makes them think for themselves. Pupils who need extra help are provided with activities that are broken down into small, manageable steps.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is positive. On the whole, it indicates what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Teachers ask questions and set examples for pupils to develop their thinking further. However, they are not always given enough time to respond to the teachers' marking before the next lesson. Consequently, opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills are limited. Work in pupils' books indicates that teachers are enabling them to use their communication, reading and writing skills in learning about other subjects. Opportunities to use mathematical skills are more limited.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say, and parents and carers agree, that they feel safe and are well cared for at the school and childcare provision. They say that bullying, for example, name-calling, happens only rarely. The Key Stage 2 'Friendship Team' are known to all pupils and help them to sort out any minor problems. Teachers help pupils to keep themselves safe, for example, in the dark on occasions such as 'Halloween', on the internet and by not talking to strangers.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They have a thorough understanding of the school's systems for promoting good behaviour and are clear about its rewards and sanctions. They say that it is working well. The overwhelming majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally, a few pupils become restless and go off-task and this limits their learning.
- Typically, pupils are polite and well mannered as they move around the school. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and say that it helps them to develop good skills for later life. For example, Year 6 pupils look after the younger children at break times and bilingual pupils act as interpreters for other adults and children.
- Pupils' attendance has improved to average levels because of rigorously applied policies and procedures. Pupils are happy to come to school and told inspectors, 'We learn a lot at this school. We love it!' The before- and after-school 'Pit Stop' clubs provide good opportunities for pupils to develop social skills in meeting and making friends, sharing snacks and playing together. The before-school club has helped pupils to arrive at school on time.

The leadership and management are good

- Led by a determined and committed headteacher, the school is moving forward at a brisk pace.

She has secured a cohesive team, all focused on raising pupils' achievement. Staff morale is high. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Leaders, including the governing body, have taken decisive steps to tackle weak teaching. They are clear about what the school does well and what it needs to do next to secure further improvement. They are fully aware that recent improvements must be sustained to raise attainment to above average in writing and mathematics, so that it equals that of reading.

- Teaching is good and improving because the systems in place to improve it are robust. Leaders give teachers precise feedback on their teaching skills and actively seek good quality training to help them improve their skills. Teachers are set goals to ensure that they increase their effectiveness. Leaders, including governors, make sure that those members of staff who achieve their targets are awarded pay increases.
- Leaders are fully committed to equality of opportunity and take prompt action to tackle any form of discrimination. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are meticulous. Teachers meet regularly with leaders to look carefully at the progress their pupils are making and discuss ways in which those in danger of falling behind can be supported.
- Parents and carers are positive about the work of the school. Effective partnership working with support agencies for pupils new to English and for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable ensure that they get the support that they need. A range of volunteers from the local community add richness and cultural diversity to what the school offers.
- The school offers a range of subjects and activities that is enriched by clubs, visits and visitors. Lessons stimulate pupils' curiosity and widen their horizons. For example, in Year 6, pupils enthusiastically investigate the speed at which paper falls in different forms and with different weights attached. Pupils enjoy experiencing the music of the gamelan, a collection of Indonesian musical instruments. Such activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school over time, particularly in supporting the school's leaders and in improving teaching.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have effectively supported the school's leaders in securing improvements to its performance over time. They ensure that the national safeguarding requirements are fully met and manage the childcare provision effectively. Members of the governing body bring a range of skills and expertise to the school. They have a good knowledge of how well pupils are doing in relation to other pupils nationally and challenge the school on its performance. Governors are fully involved in the management of teaching and its effectiveness on pupils' learning. They ensure good teachers are rewarded and support leaders in tackling weak teaching. Governors have effectively managed the reorganisation of teaching groups due to the recent increase in numbers of pupils and made the decision to maintain small class groups to give pupils more teacher time. Governors manage the school's finances well, including the spending of the pupil premium. They are aware that its use is making a positive difference to pupils' attendance and progress. Governors benefit from undertaking training opportunities and regular visits to school so that they are able to make well-informed decisions.

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	110668
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	401142

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Ball
Headteacher	Valerie Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2010
Telephone number	01223 577017
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