

Griffydam Primary School

Top Road, Griffydam, Coalville, LE67 8HU

Inspection dates 19–20 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils make marked progress in their learning across Key Stage 2. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2012 were above average.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 has improved and almost all pupils in the school have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics since September.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in all subjects and some are making outstanding progress in mathematics.
- Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are provided with plenty of opportunities for them to develop their skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good and underpins all the school does.
- Teaching is good because teachers usually plan work that is well matched to the different abilities in the mixed age classes and ask questions that make pupils think carefully about their learning.
- Pupils are given plenty of opportunity in lessons to talk about their learning and deepen their understanding.
- The headteacher and senior leaders ensure that pupils' progress is tracked regularly and often to make sure no-one falls behind.
- Changes to the behaviour policy means that behaviour has improved since September and pupils agree that it is good. They are well looked after and are, therefore, safe in school.
- The governing body has robust plans in place for the school's future development including its leadership.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Occasionally all pupils start the lesson with similar work which is too easy for more-able pupils.
- Marking in mathematics books does not give pupils the same clear guidance on how to improve as that in English books.
- Senior leaders, other than the headteacher, do not have a complete picture of how well pupils are being taught across the whole school.
- New arrangements to improve how important skills and knowledge in different subjects are taught have not yet made a difference.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, seven of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, including senior leaders, two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspector took account of 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), individual communications from parents, school parent and pupil questionnaires and 11 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at: information from the school's checks on its performance; school improvement plans; analysis and tracking of pupils' progress; leaders' records of classroom observations; safeguarding arrangements; and records of governing body meetings. She also sampled pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent in the armed services, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 learn in mixed-age classes with two year groups in each class.
- No pupils are taught in alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school went through turbulent times during the last academic year. An interim executive headteacher has been leading the school since September 2012.
- Most governors joined the governing body within the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding through ensuring:
 - work is always well-matched to pupils' abilities right from the start of a lesson
 - marking in mathematics books gives pupils clear guidance as to the next steps in their learning and they are routinely given the opportunity to respond.
- Strengthen leadership and management through ensuring:
 - senior leaders have the opportunity to regularly check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress across the whole school
 - the new plans for teaching subjects are fully implemented and that their impact is checked to make sure that lessons always provide pupils with the opportunities to build systematically on previous learning and develop new skills, especially in mixed age classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They start school with skills at least expected for their age and many leave with those above expectations. This is because they have a good range of activities, both indoors and outside, to develop and learn new skills.
- Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012 were broadly average. Improved progress since September, however, means that pupils in Year 2 are on track to attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.
- The results of the national screening check on how well pupils know the sounds that letters make (phonics) in Year 1 were above average. Pupils are able to read unfamiliar words by using their phonic skills. For example, a pupil in Year 1 was able to sound out unfamiliar names in his story about an animal race while a Year 2 pupil read a well-known story book fluently and with obvious enjoyment.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average in Key Stage 2. Most pupils are working between two and three terms ahead of their expected level in mathematics and reading and a term ahead in writing. Girls typically achieve higher standards than boys, especially in Years 3, 4 and 5 but the gap between boys' and girls' achievement is closing rapidly in most subjects across the school.
- All disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress. Their needs are identified quickly and support is well planned. Well briefed additional adults in the classroom support in a sensitive and unobtrusive way.
- Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress. The additional funding has been spent on staff who give carefully planned support for small groups of pupils to ensure that they do not fall behind in their learning. The progress and attainment of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic backgrounds is as good as other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good range of activities for children. They show good levels of independence through choosing their own activities. At other times adults direct their learning while still encouraging them to do things for themselves. During the inspection children enjoyed planting bulbs. Adult questioning helped them identify letter sounds and read the names of the flowers they were hoping to grow.
- Work is usually well matched to the abilities of pupils. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils were learning about persuasive writing. While younger pupils talked about why they enjoyed different books, older and more-able pupils identified adjectives that were particularly effective in persuading someone to read a certain book. Occasionally, however, in some classes all pupils start with a similar task which is too easy for more-able pupils.
- Teachers question pupils to check their understanding and also develop their learning. Pupils are given opportunities to talk to each other about their work and to explain their ideas. For example, some Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to explain how that they had sorted cards into

groups of equivalent measures while others described their method for completing magic squares using algebra.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. This may be through small group support, or in one-to-one preparation for a lesson to ensure that they will understand any special words that are likely to be used.
- Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium are supported in small groups or individually as required. The staff know all pupils well and provide sensitive support both in and out of lessons.
- Marking in literacy books is thorough. Teachers give pupils good guidance as to what they need to do to improve, and pupils respond to their comments. Marking in mathematics books is less helpful as it is generally linked to correcting work already completed rather than how pupils can move on in their learning.
- Homework is set regularly. Pupils say that it is most useful when it is linked to the work they are doing in lessons. They are particularly enthusiastic about the creative homework and say it really makes them want to learn.
- Teachers model respect for each other through the calm and polite way they speak to pupils. Pupils respond positively to teachers' thanks for their hard work and co-operate well in group activities. For example Year 3 and 4 pupils worked together programming computerised cars to draw geometric shapes. The suspense while they watched to see if their programme worked was rewarded with delight at the results, even when they had to modify their instructions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that behaviour has improved since September. This is because the Golden Rules introduced are fair and expectations of teachers are higher. One pupil said, 'We shouldn't need rewards to work hard, that is to be expected'. They feel that the star and awards systems work well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say that there has been some bullying in the past but it is very rare now. Pupils who experienced bullying were very clear that it had been resolved and they feel happy and safe at school. All pupils spoken to during the inspection felt that any problems were dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Older pupils take a responsible attitude to looking after younger ones. At lunch time older pupils supervise the dining tables and help younger pupils with their meal. During the inspection, one older boy sensitively supported a younger one, modelling polite behaviour and ensuring that he ate his lunch sensibly.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations. They can talk about safety on the road and fire safety. Older pupils have a good idea about how to stay safe when using the internet and appreciate that they are protected from accessing any unsuitable web sites in school.
- Parents who expressed their views say that their children are happy at school. This is reflected in the excellent attendance record. Attendance has been above average over the past three years, and continues to be above average this year.

The leadership and management are good

- On taking up post, the interim headteacher quickly identified actions which needed to be taken to improve the school. For example, he supported senior leaders in using progress data to regularly check how well pupils are doing. This means that any pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and helped.
 - The headteacher and senior leaders are very clear about what the school needs to do to improve further. Areas for improvement have been identified and actions taken to close any gaps in achievement. Recent planning of the subjects pupils are taught aims to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes will develop new skills and new knowledge each year building systematically on previous learning. The new plans have not yet had time to make a difference to pupils' learning.
 - Teachers' performance is judged against how much progress their pupils make and how well they fulfil their different roles in the school. A new appraisal system has been put in place so that targets are used appropriately to measure whether promotion up the pay scale is justified by the results achieved. Senior leaders, other than the headteacher, have not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons in all areas of the school in order to gain a full picture of the quality of teaching.
 - The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Assemblies give pupils the opportunity to discuss such subjects as why it is 'good to be me', developing an appreciation of self-worth and respect for others. Links with a school in Rwanda and a newly formed link with a multi-ethnic school in Leicester give pupils the opportunity to discuss and appreciate different cultures and beliefs.
 - The local authority has provided good support for the school during its recent turbulent times. It has worked with Key Stage 1 staff to raise standards and has advised the governing body about the appointment of a new headteacher.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Although most members of the governing body are relatively new in post, they have a good range of experience and expertise. They worked closely with the senior leaders through difficult times last academic year and are very supportive of the school. Governors have investigated different types of leadership models and have ensured that robust plans are in place to appoint a new headteacher. Regular visits to the school are meticulously recorded. Through looking at school data, questioning the headteacher and visiting the school, governors have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are progressing. They ask searching questions which challenge the headteacher and senior leaders, holding them to account for school improvement. The school's finances are well managed and governors check the effectiveness of pupil premium spending. They are aware that the funding goes into pupils' direct learning through small group and individual support.
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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	119918
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	403413

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Lankaster
Headteacher	Alex Smythe
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2007
Telephone number	01530 222281
Fax number	01530 222281
Email address	office@griffydam.leics.sch.uk

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