

# Grove Vale Primary School

Monksfield Avenue, Great Barr, Birmingham, B43 6AL

**Inspection dates** 20–21 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make excellent progress in all subjects and learn exceptionally well. Standards are well-above-average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils behave impeccably at all times. Relationships are extremely positive and so pupils feel safe at all times and get on exceptionally well together.
- Outstanding teaching coupled with pupils' exemplary attitudes to learning ensures pupils' full concentration and involvement in lessons.
- Pupils and all adults who work in the classroom check pupils' learning continually and make immediate changes if they find the work is too hard or too easy.
- Adults and pupils have great respect for each other and so a positive atmosphere permeates the building. Pupils successfully 'embrace diversity and the world around them.'
- The school's leadership promotes the highest possible expectations for pupils' achievement. There has been a relentless drive to improve all aspects of the school's work, including the quality of teaching.
- The executive headteacher, head of school, deputy headteacher and governors complement each other extremely well and, with the whole-staff team, ensure all aspects of the school's work continue to improve.
- All staff constantly strive to improve what they do and share a vision that 'nothing less than all pupils reaching their potential' will do.
- The rich and relevant curriculum promotes pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and academic achievement highly effectively.
- Attendance is above average and pupils' excellent punctuality ensures a prompt start to the day.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons taught by 16 teachers. In addition, they made a number of short visits to lessons and extra-curricular activities including the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The inspectors heard a number of pupils read. They looked at past and current information about pupils' progress and pupils' work in books and on display.
- The inspectors looked at documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, the school's checks about what is going well, and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors met with small groups of pupils to talk about their learning and to find out what they thought about the school. Inspectors also met with staff, and with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspectors talked to parents informally at the start of the day. They took into account 21 responses shown in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and last year's parent survey carried out by the school.
- The inspectors took note of 25 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Catherine Beeks

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Grove Vale Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds with White British and Indian being the two largest groups.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care, and those who have a parent in the armed services.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs are all below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards (the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).
- The school does not make use of alternative provision off site.
- The school is federated with Holy Trinity CE Primary School with which it shares an executive headteacher, governing body and special educational needs coordinator.
- The breakfast and after school clubs are managed by the school.
- The onsite Little Valers preschool is managed separately and was not inspected with the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Display pupils' work and learning prompts and posters clearly in classrooms so that pupils can find them more easily during lessons to support their learning when they are working on their own.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress from their below-average starting points at the beginning of the Reception year to reach well-above-average levels by the end of Year 6 in a range of subjects. Standards continue to rise each year and about a quarter of pupils are on track to reach the higher level 6 in reading and mathematics this year.
- Outstanding progress in the Reception class in their personal social and emotional development promotes high levels of independence and ensures that every child develops quickly a 'love and enthusiasm for learning'. They all have a favourite place to learn and relish the opportunity to talk about this to adults.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress to reach well-above-average levels in their reading and mathematics and above-average levels in writing by the end of Year 6. Targeted teaching is enabling older pupils to reach the same well-above-average standards as other pupils across the school and nationally in writing this year. Younger pupils learn to speak English quickly and most catch up with their English speaking classmates by the end of Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar excellent progress. Every pupil's progress is checked at least weekly and if they are not making the expected progress, immediate support is put into place through individual and small group teaching. These pupils are not afraid to get stuck and so try new learning confidently.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium exceed expected progress to close any gaps in learning and to reach higher standards in English and mathematics than other pupils who receive this additional funding in the school and other such pupils nationally. Pupils from all minority ethnic backgrounds make excellent progress and reach at least national averages.
- Varied and daily opportunities to use and practise reading, writing and mathematics skills in a range of subjects boost pupils' ability to apply their learning when they work on their own. They read constantly throughout the day for pleasure and to find information for planning their learning and research and completing homework projects.
- Younger pupils have good phonics skills (knowing the names of letters and the sounds that they make) which they use to good effect to read on their own. If they read a word that they have not previously met, they ask an adult to explain what it means to help them develop good understanding too. More Year 1 pupils than nationally reached the expected level in the phonics check last year.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Much of the teaching across the school is outstanding and is always at least good. An outstanding aspect in all lessons is the positive atmosphere that promotes pupils' confidence to be able to have fun and as they say, 'it's okay to make mistakes as long as you learn from them.' Pupils are adventurous and confident learners and say, 'getting stuck is good because we are being challenged'.
- Teachers, learning support assistants and pupils are fully involved in checking learning. In every lesson, pupils know whether they will check each others' work by acting as a 'secret spy', be

given feedback by the adult working with their group or have their work checked in depth by the teacher. Teachers set follow-up tasks and ask questions that extend and consolidate learning successfully. Pupils know how well they are doing and precisely how to improve.

- Teachers and learning assistants constantly check learning as it is happening and give pupils further challenge if the work is too easy or extra support if it is too difficult. Pupils value this support and recognise that rather than giving them the answer, teachers help them to complete research projects, carry out scientific investigations and solve problems in mathematics for themselves.
- Step-by-step guidance is given to pupils at the start of lessons and used to check learning at the end. These are often displayed around the room for pupils' easy reference. Occasionally, these prompts are not displayed clearly enough to support pupils when they work on their own and so some have to for an adult's help before being able to continue with their learning.
- Learning logs are used highly effectively to promote family learning at home. Teachers present homework tasks through questions that invite pupils to use their enquiry and creative thinking skills to answer them in a number of different ways. This is evident in the range of imaginative homework projects created each week by pupils across all year groups.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils are excited by their learning and relish the opportunities they are given. Pupils are fully involved in planning topics and so lessons build highly effectively on what they already know and can do and what they want to find out. Pupils say, 'we are team school although it is okay to work on your own too if you want'.
- Attitudes to learning are exemplary and make a considerable contribution to pupils' outstanding progress and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have great respect for each others' views, beliefs and cultures.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable at all times. Adults are always around to look after them for safety purposes but all activities including playtimes and lunchtimes happen without interruption and incident. Pupils take great care not to let their games impinge on the safety of others, making sure to stay within the designated areas for football and skipping.
- Pupils have considerable opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. Older pupils enjoy acting as play buddies for younger children and help them to create their own games at playtimes. The School Council and Eco-committee involve pupils fully in school self-evaluation and review while pupil consultations allow them to assess their own learning and deciding on next steps.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know what to do in an emergency. They are fully aware of the rules for using the internet and follow them consistently when researching for information. All staff and nearly all parents are unreservedly positive about pupils' behaviour and safety. Pupils insist that 'bullying doesn't happen here'. They have an astute understanding of the different types of bullying and know what to do if they ever did have a concern.
- Attendance has improved well over the last three years and is above average. Pupils are punctual and lessons get off to a prompt start.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The whole staff and governors have been involved in implementing action plans based on a vision of 'what do we want a Year 6 pupil to be like'. This has established extremely high expectations for pupils' personal and academic achievements for the last three years and has been a key driver in moving the school from good to outstanding.
- The executive headteacher, head of school, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher each has a particular set of skills and responsibility for focussing on different year groups and subjects and ensure planned improvement is happening at the same rapid pace across the school. They meet at least weekly to check each other's work and the quality of teaching and its effectiveness. Immediate steps are taken to tackle any weaknesses picked up.
- Equal opportunities are promoted exceptionally well. Every teacher and learning support assistant is involved in planning targeted interventions to ensure every pupil makes the challenging one and a half points progress every term across all subjects. Anything less triggers interventions and support that ensure pupils catch up and so sustain this rapid rate of progress across all year groups. The shared values and deep respect staff and pupils have for each other promote the school's exceptionally positive racial harmony.
- All staff with a leadership responsibility are fully involved in school improvement planning. As a result, they all know in detail not only how well pupils in their classes are doing, but also across the year group and school. Teachers have willingly embraced the school's arrangements for the management of their performance and are not satisfied with their own performance unless pupils reach their full potential. As a result, teaching continues to improve.
- The curriculum is extremely well planned to support pupils' learning in a wide range of subjects and to promote excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Extra-curricular activities broaden pupils' experiences and give them excellent opportunity to work in teams. The breakfast and after school clubs are extremely well managed and always provide a positive and active place for pupils at the start and end of the day.
- Pupil premium funds are used highly effectively to ensure the full involvement of pupils eligible in school life. The funding of free breakfast club places has resulted in excellent improvement to attendance and punctuality for those pupils. Governors ask searching questions about the information they receive about the progress of these pupils to check that the extra funding is making the planned difference to pupils' achievement.
- The local authority gives the school good support through leading training for staff and governors and supporting the performance management process. Joint training events within the Federation have enabled staff to share what is working well in order to improve teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is extremely clear about the school's success and is constantly looking where further improvements can be made. Governors have used what they have learned from training events and their comprehensive knowledge of pupils' progress to inform an in-depth evaluation of the school's procedures and the implementation of focused action plans for further improvement. All statutory requirements including those relating to safeguarding are met. Full involvement in checking staff performance informs decisions about pay and training needs.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103972
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	402932

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pauline Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Leivers (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 January 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 3574319
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 3582199
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@grovevale.sandwell.sch.uk



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