

Grove Primary School

Caledonia Road, Wolverhampton, WV2 1HZ

Inspection dates

2–3 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils do not make enough progress and their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are too low. Consequently, their achievement is inadequate.
- Teaching is inadequate because assessments are not always accurate and the work set for pupils is not consistently challenging enough.
- Teachers do not check well enough in lessons that all pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils do not understand the targets set for them and so they do not know how well they are achieving.
- Teachers' marking and feedback do not consistently tell pupils how to improve their work.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in different subjects.
- Information about the progress of pupils is not used well enough to identify where they should be doing better. The targets set for pupils' progress are not high enough.
- Not all school leaders check on the quality of learning in their areas of responsibility. This means it is difficult for them to identify specific areas for improvement.
- The attendance of pupils has fallen this year and is now below average.
- The governing body does not have a clear understanding of how the school is performing compared with schools nationally.
- Governors are not involved in checking whether actions taken to improve the school are having a positive impact on the quality of learning for all pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning.
- Recent changes in teachers' planning are beginning to improve the quality of teaching.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive, and pupils feel safe.
- Most pupils are polite, courteous and have good attitudes towards their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They visited 15 lessons taught by 13 teachers. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors looked at the school's website and analysed responses to an inspection questionnaire from 25 staff. There were not enough responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for their views to be published, but inspectors took account of the latest survey of parents and carers conducted by the school.
- Inspectors read a wide range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and progress, and records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. The inspectors also read reports of reviews conducted by the local authority about the school's performance.

Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Hickerton

Additional Inspector

Nina Matharu

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Information about this school

- Grove Primary School is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals, and pupils from service families.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at various times during the year is significantly higher than is typical nationally.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were both new to post in September 2012. A new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in September 2012, and three new governors were appointed.
- The school does not meet 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, so that all pupils make good progress, by ensuring that:
 - assessments of pupils' progress are always accurate and are used more effectively to provide a high level of challenge in lessons
 - teachers regularly ask pupils questions in lessons to make them think hard, to check that all groups are making at least good progress, and to adapt teaching where they are not
 - pupils' targets in reading, writing and mathematics are understood and used by pupils to check how well they are doing
 - marking and feedback always tell pupils how to improve their work, and teachers give them opportunities to respond
 - teachers regularly plan opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - using information about pupils' progress more effectively to identify where improvements are needed and to set more challenging targets
 - making sure that all leaders effectively check the quality of learning in their areas of responsibility and use this information to improve the quality of teaching
 - analysing attendance information fully to identify where it needs to be improved and creating

plans to ensure that this happens

- involving the governing body more in checking how effectively plans to improve teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, and in developing stronger links with parents and carers.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils make inadequate progress in Years 1 to 6, and at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly below average.
- The lack of progress has meant that pupils have underachieved and there are too many gaps in their learning of basic reading, writing or numeracy skills. As a result they are not prepared well enough to move on to the next stage of their education.
- The progress of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is not good enough because they have not been sufficiently challenged in lessons. Pupils' progress is weak in English and is weaker still in mathematics. There are pockets of good progress where the pace of learning is quicker. For example, in one lesson pupils were using practical activities to explore what a verb meant and were quickly learning how to use them when writing poems.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not been receiving work that has been tailored to their needs, and so their progress has also been inadequate. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make particularly good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they receive good support. However, their progress in Years 1 to 6 is similar to that of other pupils.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium also make inadequate progress. The 2012 Year 6 national test results showed that their attainment was on average over one term behind others in the school in English, and nearly a term behind in mathematics.
- Current pupils who have been at the school since the beginning of a key stage are making better progress in English than those who have not, but much less so in mathematics. There have not been any checks to see how well pupils who are only in the school for a short time achieve while they attend.
- Children begin school with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected nationally for their age. They settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and begin to make good progress because they are engaged well in their learning. They make particularly good progress in their learning of phonics (the sounds that letters make). For example, in one lesson children built up simple words by speaking them, and then learned how to write these independently although. Despite their good progress, standards are still below average at the beginning of Year 1.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Assessments of the progress that pupils make have been inaccurate. Consequently work set for pupils lacks challenge.
- Pupils are given targets in English and mathematics. However, these are too complicated and many pupils do not understand them. As a result they see these as something that the teacher checks rather than something for them to use. This means there is limited motivation for pupils to work hard to achieve their targets. In some classes pupils are occasionally given the opportunity to assess their own learning in lessons, but this is not consistent throughout the school.

- Teachers do not use questions carefully enough to make all pupils think hard. They do not regularly check in lessons that all groups of pupils are making at least good progress. This means teachers do not always intervene when they should. In particular, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not making enough progress because their targets have been too vague and the additional support provided for them has not been clearly focused. This is now beginning to improve.
- Marking is carried out regularly and pupils receive written feedback, including encouragement for them to work hard. However, teachers do not consistently tell pupils how to improve their work. Pupils' books show that they have few opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.
- Inspectors found too many gaps in pupils' basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the skills that they learn in English and mathematics lessons are not routinely practised when they are working in other subjects.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. There is a particularly clear focus on communicating through speaking and listening and the early stages of learning to read.
- Pupils have positive relationships with staff and are keen to learn. They are always told what they are going to learn and what they need to do to be successful. Planning for lessons has improved by identifying the levels at which pupils are working. This enables teachers to plan activities that will better meet their needs. As a result, the quality of teaching in some classes is beginning to rise.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Most pupils have a positive attitude to their work and enjoy learning. However, when the quality of teaching is not good a few pupils can become disengaged and there is sometimes some low-level disruption of learning.
- Staff say that the behaviour of pupils is good, but they recognise that some pupils have particular behavioural difficulties. Nevertheless, staff manage these well and so all pupils say that they feel safe. Behaviour around the school is positive, and pupils are polite and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and say that it is very rare in school. They are confident that staff will deal successfully with any issues. In the school's survey of parents and carers a small proportion did not feel that the behaviour of pupils was good.
- The attendance of pupils has fallen this year and is now below average. Staff have identified some possible reasons for this but have not yet analysed the information in sufficient depth to target how it could be improved. A home/school liaison officer intervenes to support pupils with the poorest attendance. The school plans to introduce rewards for pupils to encourage them to improve their attendance.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- Senior leaders and managers have not been checking the quality of teaching or pupils' progress rigorously enough, and so both have declined since the last inspection. The school's own view of its effectiveness is too generous.
- A new system to track the progress of pupils has been introduced this year and this is beginning

to give the school some helpful information. However, it is not yet being used carefully enough to pinpoint specific areas for improvement. The targets set for the pupils' expected progress are not high enough.

- The leadership of subjects, including English and mathematics, has not been a focus for the school until this year. Staff are keen to take on new responsibilities, but they are still learning how to check the learning in their subjects effectively so they can clearly identify specific areas for development.
- Leaders have targeted pupil premium funding to support relevant pupils through additional help and guidance and one-to-one adult support. The school has recognised that this has had some impact for particular pupils, but overall the progress they have made this year as a group has not been significantly different from the progress made by other pupils.
- The good quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been maintained and the new headteacher and deputy headteacher have already made some improvements in other areas this year. There is now an agreed format for planning lessons that is securely based on the levels that pupils are working at. As a result, teaching is beginning to improve.
- Leaders have introduced focused support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and these pupils are starting to make better progress. Meetings have been established to discuss the progress of all pupils, although it is too early to assess their impact.
- The school cares well for its pupils and takes effective steps to ensure there is no discrimination. National safeguarding requirements are met. In particular, the school's policy and procedures for child protection are of high quality. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's overall effectiveness. It has provided support this year through regular visits from an adviser, and has arranged support from another local school. There are signs that this is beginning to have a positive impact.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body does not have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and is not fully aware of how pupils are achieving when compared with pupils nationally. It has identified the need for training in this area. Governors are informed of what the school is doing to improve and are very supportive of the school's leadership. However, the governing body is not involved enough in checking whether the school's actions to improve teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Consequently it is not able to challenge the school well enough. The governing body adequately manages the school's finances, including looking carefully at the management of teachers' performance and agreeing any pay increases. It is informed about the ways in which the pupil premium is being spent but does not know what impact this is having on pupils' learning. The governing body does not actively promote productive partnerships between home and school.

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	104352
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	412497

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Hamilton
Headteacher	Matthew Dews
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2010
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