

Griffin Primary School

Barham Road, Hull, HU9 4JL

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils in most year groups do not make good progress in reading and mathematics. As a result, they do not always achieve as well as they could.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- Some teachers do not use pupils' assessment information well enough to plan lessons that match their abilities.
- On occasions, teachers do not check pupils' understanding regularly and adjust plans accordingly during lessons.
- There are too many lessons where the expectations of what different groups of pupils should achieve are not high enough, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging reading activities to help them make the progress of which they are capable.
- Although leaders make frequent checks on the progress of different groups of pupils, the data gathered is not always used well enough to identify those who are at risk of not making the progress of which they are capable. Not all leaders have sufficiently developed skills to evaluate the quality of teaching accurately.
- The teaching of mathematics is not structured carefully enough to promote more rapid gains in pupils' learning.
- Although governors are supportive, they have not challenged the school well enough because they have not received sufficient information about the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. Teaching and progress are good.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 has improved year-on-year since 2011. The most recent results in national assessments are the best the school has had in the last five years.
- In 2013, the progress pupils made in writing was in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- In some classes marking and feedback inform pupils exactly what they need to do to improve.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in writing are average.
- Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe. They have good attitudes to learning and behave well around the school.
- The school works hard with parents to improve attendance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons of which two observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, five members of the governing body, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were also held with pupils at break times and lunchtimes.
- The number of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were too few to be accessed. Therefore, inspectors had discussions with parents at the beginning of the school day and held a formal meeting with eight parents during the second day of the inspection to ascertain their views of the school.
- Inspectors analysed 20 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and scrutinised the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, the school's improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Firth

Additional Inspector

David Tingle

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Griffin Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- In August 2012 Griffin changed from a Community to a Foundation school. It adopted a charitable Trust named the East Hull Cooperative Learning Trust.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those looked after by the local authority) is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching and raise attainment by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving especially in reading and mathematics
 - providing more well planned opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills with more challenging and purposeful activities
 - implementing a clear and planned programme of training to improve teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics and to ensure they have a clear understanding of the progress pupils need to make in developing their mathematical skills, ensuring teachers use information from assessments carefully so that the work set meets the needs and abilities of all pupils especially the middle attainers
 - regularly checking learning in lessons and reshaping activities so that pupils are continuously challenged and can move onto the next step in learning more quickly.
- Improve leadership at all levels, including governance by:
 - developing the skills of leaders at all levels in driving improvements in teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - checking the information collected about pupils' attainment and progress more effectively so that any potential underachievement is quickly identified and remedied
 - improving arrangements to check the performance of teachers so that they understand precisely what they need to do to improve their teaching
 - providing governors with sufficiently detailed information about pupils' progress to allow them to challenge the school more effectively
 - continuing to work with every parent to help them understand the importance of their child attending school every day and to improve attendance further.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of school and national data should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The majority of children start school with skills and knowledge well below that typical of their age, especially in communication, reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in all areas of learning and enter Year 1 with standards that are below average, rather than well below average, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Key Stage 1, standards have been consistently well below the national average for a number of years. However, since 2011 pupils' standards in writing and mathematics have been improving faster than those seen nationally and are now broadly in line with the national average. This improvement has not been seen in pupils' reading and as a result standards in reading remain well below average.
- At Key Stage 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved year-on-year since 2009. This is reflected in the most recent test results which are the best the school has had in the last five years and now meet the government floor standards of the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils make average progress in reading and mathematics. However, because of the low starting point on entry into Key Stage 2 this results in well below average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils do not make good progress in reading or mathematics because teachers do not always plan activities that appropriately match and develop their reading skills and mathematical understanding to pupils' needs. In writing, pupils make good progress and in 2013 the school was in the top 20% of schools nationally for the amount of progress they made. This resulted in pupils attaining average standards in writing.
- The school's internal data confirms that progress is continuing to accelerate. This is also confirmed by lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and listening to pupils read.
- Reading is a priority throughout the school and the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) is taught systematically. However, the proportion of six year olds who reach the standard expected in the phonics check is well below average. They nevertheless use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read difficult or unfamiliar words with confidence. As pupils move through the school they develop a love of reading. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'New stories take my imagination into new worlds.'
- The school promotes and checks that all pupils have equal opportunities. Different groups, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make similar levels of progress.
- The income received by the school to support pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is spent judiciously on a range of well considered interventions including one-to-one tuition and additional teaching assistants. As a result, although these pupils attain standards below that of their classmates they do make more rapid progress, especially in reading and writing. The gap in attainment between these two groups of pupils is therefore narrowing rapidly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies from year-to-year and requires improvement.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are helped to settle into school life by staff who have a thorough understanding of children's needs. The thoughtful use of space and resources help to create vibrant indoor and outdoor learning environments which capture children's imaginations. A particular strength is the focus all staff place on developing children's social, reading, speaking and listening skills.
- In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' books show that there is some good and outstanding teaching and that recently-appointed teachers have

brought new strengths that have added to the overall quality. However, there is not enough good or better teaching to enable pupils to make consistently good progress as they move up through the school. This is because there are too many lessons where the expectations of what different groups of pupils should achieve are not high enough, especially in reading and mathematics.

- In the best lessons, no time is wasted. Teachers' introductions are brief and focused and their explanations are clear and precise. Pupils engage enthusiastically in activities which are well matched to their needs. They are supported by teachers and teaching assistants who use questioning effectively to identify and correct pupils' misconceptions. They check regularly on pupils' progress and adjust activities to ensure they make rapid progress and that pupils' learning is never put on hold.
- In some lessons, the information of what pupils know, understand and can do is not always used well enough when planning lessons or planning activities that are at the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities.
- Not all teachers check learning sufficiently well during lessons to reshape activities so that the level of challenge consistently promotes good progress.
- The sequence of teaching mathematical skills is not always structured carefully enough. This results in gaps in some pupils' understanding because activities for some are too difficult whilst for others are too easy.
- Reading for pleasure is promoted throughout the school. However, in some lessons pupils are prevented from achieving all that they are capable of because teachers do not provide enough time for pupils to engage in a wide or challenging enough range of reading activities through which they can apply and develop their reading skills.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and consistently give guidance to pupils on how they can improve. In the best practice, pupils are encouraged to respond to teachers' marking and they say that they benefit from the feedback, especially when teachers set fun activities to consolidate and extend their learning or spend time with them to work through any errors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils of all ages show consistent and positive attitudes to learning. They are proud when they recognise their successes. They work well in groups and listen to others' ideas respectfully. They are keen to learn from each other and find their schoolwork interesting. There are no disruptions to learning.
- Pupils say behaviour is good and that it has improved. Staff questionnaires and discussions with parents show that they agree with this view.
- Pupils know about bullying, how to avoid it and also the different forms it can take. They say incidents of bullying are rare. It is not an issue because they are confident that if it did happen it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils speak confidently about how to deal with their worries and concerns, saying that their teachers are 'like our parents and give us lots of care to keep us happy and safe.' Pupils are carefully nurtured as individuals and those with behavioural difficulties learn how to regulate their own conduct. The school rejects all forms of discrimination.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors know how to keep safe in and around the school. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet and the dangers posed by social media sites.
- The headteacher and attendance support staff work hard to improve communication between home and school. They have worked tirelessly to resolve any difficulties for those parents whose circumstances could adversely affect their child's performance at school. As a result attendance has improved from below average in the last academic year to broadly average at the time of the inspection. However, despite the school's best endeavours, there are still some parents who do not recognise the importance of regular school attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in the school are not yet consistently good.
- Following a period of considerable difficulties and changes in staffing, there is now an established team which shares an ambition to secure improvement. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of this because new staff have been in post for only a short time.
- Responsibilities are shared among leaders at all levels. They are involved in checking the performance of teachers. However, some leaders lack sufficient skills to evaluate the quality of teaching accurately. As a result, their evaluations are occasionally over generous. This leads to targets for improvement for some teachers which are not always sufficiently precise about exactly what they need to do to improve their teaching. Performance appraisal arrangements are becoming more secure and staff are now held more rigorously to account, by governors too, for the progress pupils make in their classes.
- School leaders make frequent checks on the progress of different groups of pupils. However, the data gathered is not always used well enough to identify those who are at risk of not making the progress they should. This prevents them from reaching the level of attainment of which they are capable.
- The local authority has had only limited opportunities to provide guidance and support for the school.
- Membership of the East Hull Cooperative Learning Trust has increased the opportunities the school has to share and benefit from good and outstanding practice in a wide and different range of schools.
- The curriculum is imaginative. It rightly focuses on the importance of reading, writing and mathematics which are carefully threaded through the topics for each year group. However, the sequence of teaching mathematical skills is not always structured carefully enough to ensure pupils make more rapid gains in their learning.
- A range of opportunities for pupils to participate in music, art, drama and sports clubs enriches their lives and enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to engage in exciting and imaginative enterprise projects and these further enhance their personal development and confidence.
- Although pupils already have numerous opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports, the school is using the Primary School Sports Funding to train teachers in coaching skills and to increase opportunities for pupils throughout the school. As a result, more pupils access a wider variety of after-school activities.
- Relationships with parents are good and the school is well respected. Parents enjoy attending the class and celebration assemblies although very few attend parent workshops designed to help them to support their children's learning at home.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The committed governing body is increasingly aware of the school's need to improve. They make regular visits to the school and findings are reported back to the full governing body. However, governors do not have a good enough understanding of the school's data to compare the school's performance with that of all schools nationally to enable them to challenge the school and hold leaders and staff to account. Finances are well managed and governors are able to account for the way extra funding such as the pupil premium and Primary School Sport funding is spent, and its impact on pupils' performance. Safeguarding and child protection have a high priority and governors ensure that statutory requirements are met.

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	117914
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	425999

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	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Burnitt
Headteacher	Janet Adamson
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2011
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