

# Grove School

Dawson Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B21 9HB

**Inspection dates** 18–19 September 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement.
- Their forensic analysis of attainment and progress helps to ensure that teachers know what to focus on to improve their own effectiveness and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils now perform better earlier in the school. Good progress ensures they go on to achieve high standards through to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good with staff thriving in a supportive environment. They value the way the school challenges their performance.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from very low starting points.
- Pupils are safe and behave well. They feel secure as they learn and play in an environment in which everyone is valued.
- The school's values are supported by the community it serves. This helps to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders are effective in developing their new curriculum and trying out ways of assessing pupils' performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes the work set does not take full account of the pupils' different ability levels, so they do not always reach the levels they are capable of.
- Occasionally teachers' questions fail to promote effective dialogue and thinking. They sometimes give pupils the answers too readily.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 26 lessons, three of which were observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and an experienced governor, staff and a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors were unable to take account of the online Parent View questionnaire as there were insufficient responses. However, they did receive recent parent survey information from the school, and also spoke with parents and carers.
- Views expressed in questionnaires returned by members of the school staff were considered.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, looking at a range of documentation. This included an examination of pupils' books from last year.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Bird	Additional Inspector
Terence Payne	Additional Inspector
Suha Ahmad	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Grove is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- More than three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Most pupils come from Asian or Asian British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported through a statement of special educational needs or the new education, health and care plan, is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, that is, those eligible for the pupil premium, is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to raise the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Recent staff changes include the appointment of three newly qualified teachers.
- The school manages a childcare facility before and after school.

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

- Improve teaching and achievement by making better use of performance information to ensure that:
  - teachers plan for greater challenge and demand pupils rise to that challenge
  - pupils are quickly moved on to harder challenges in lessons when they are ready.
- Improve the impact of teachers' questioning skills by ensuring that:
  - staff listen carefully to pupils' answers and suggestions, then probe their understanding
  - where appropriate, staff expect pupils to find solutions to questions themselves.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school very well. The system for managing the performance of teachers is effective. This provides teachers with an understanding of what they need to do to improve and supports them in their career progression.
- All leaders, including subject leaders, know how their role can help the school improve further. The governing body is kept up to speed with the performance of both staff and pupils. The local authority provides good support and challenge because it knows the school well and understands the barriers it faces.
- The school ensures that the curriculum is well suited to the pupils and prepares them for life in modern Britain. The whole school community engages in supporting the pupils to be tolerant and respectful. The school is moving towards a new curriculum, with its core values remaining at the heart of that work.
- The school is working appropriately towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels. Subject leaders have reflected on the way they previously assessed children's progress and are now trying out ideas to complement the new curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are familiar with safeguarding procedures. All relevant policies are kept up to date and reviewed in light of local and national guidance. The school identifies training needs and meets them, with all relevant staff and governors attending.
- The school has a clear strategy to support disadvantaged pupils. It makes effective use of pupil premium funding. This not only provides eligible pupils with additional support in their classroom learning, but also enables them to take part in out-of-school activities and attend visits to enrich their learning.
- The school has made effective use of primary school physical education and sport premium funding. It has used the funding to encourage more pupils to take part in sport. More pupils are now engaged in various physical activities: there were 68 clubs on offer last year. Recent data show a significant reduction in obesity for pupils attending the school.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve the standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school. Carefully selected programmes of work have led to pupils achieving better outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. These higher levels, coupled with continued strong progress, are leading to rising standards in Key Stage 2.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body works in partnership with the school leadership team. It understands the needs of the school as it is well informed by documents and presentations by leaders, as well as reports by its own members.
  - Governors support and challenge each other. There is an expectation that governors, other than chairs of committees, present reports to the full board. This ensures that all governors continue to develop an understanding of the work of the school and its impact on the pupils.
  - Governors are informed about teaching performance, with decisions about pay based on pupils' progress.
  - Governors are well informed about developments regarding the new curriculum. They understand the school community and support leaders in their work by ensuring that the school's values are at the centre of the developments.
  - The governing body understands how the school promotes tolerance of, and respect for, people of all faiths and those of no faith. Governors find time to talk with pupils to find out about their views on spirituality and how they consider the views of their peers.
  - The governing body ensures all statutory responsibilities are met, including those relating to safeguarding. It has clear lines of responsibility and this ensures all relevant policies and procedures are monitored and kept up to date.

- A notable strength of the governing body is its engagement with the school to ensure it uses funding effectively. A clear strategy to make best use of pupil premium funding has resulted in this group of pupils making similar rates of progress to other pupils in the school. It has used sports funding to ensure more pupils take up and enjoy sporting activities.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils display good conduct around the school. During play times, they welcome the effective supervision by staff. Parents, staff and pupils agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils work and play well together. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and are happy to talk about issues involving making the right choices. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute greatly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils regularly display positive attitudes to their learning. Where this is best, pupils are expected to think for themselves and tackle tasks without adults leading them. Occasionally, some pupils can lose interest when they are given work that is too easy for them or they are not expected to think for themselves.
- Attendance has improved over recent years. It is now in line with the national average. There is no difference in attendance rates for boys and girls. Attendance of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than for similar pupils nationally. This is because pupils enjoy coming to school.
- At various times of the school day, pupils demonstrate their understanding of what tolerance means. For example, in history lessons, pupils collaborate and reflect on each other's opinions. The secure school environment, which continually promotes the school's values of mutual respect and trust, supports pupils in developing this understanding. They are very respectful of each other and of their school environment.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are safe and feel safe as the clear safeguarding arrangements are adhered to by all staff.
- Pupils talk about bullying, understanding what it is and how it can be tackled when it occurs. They value the school's approach, stating that any issues are dealt with quickly and effectively. Most parents agree that their children are safe in school and that behaviour is good. Specific incidents, including racial comments, are appropriately logged, with actions followed through without delay.
- The school is committed to ensuring that discrimination does not occur. It uses the information from behaviour logs to ensure any issues that do arise are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Recently, better teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language has led to these pupils being able to enjoy more challenging work. Pupils are aware of this, with one commenting that becoming more confident with the English language has enabled him to tackle, and be successful in, the harder work.
- Pupils generally benefit from teachers skilfully asking questions. However this is inconsistent through the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers listened to children read words then helped them say the sounds correctly as opposed to just saying it for them. In Year 6, very able mathematicians were presented with high-level problems to solve, and they made accelerated progress as the teacher posed questions which enabled the pupils to think about their own ideas and suggestions.
- Teachers value the way their performance is managed. They understand how the process supports them in developing their skills further. A good example is how the school works with newly qualified teachers. The school employs them earlier than it needs to, which gives more time to be mentored by school leaders. This helps them understand what the profession and the school expect of them.

- Relationships between teachers and the pupils are strong. Effective dialogue can be seen in lessons and in the marking of work. Marking is most effective when clear improvement points are given and pupils are encouraged to practise new skills.
- Well-organised classrooms, with all staff knowing what they need to do, enable pupils to make good progress. Classroom staff plan and work effectively as a team. Adults who work with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs know how to enable them to develop specific skills. In some lessons, progress for these pupils is outstanding.
- Parents and carers welcome the partnership with the school. They work with the school to seek the best ways to support their children in early reading. They also show a clear understanding of how homework supports their children's learning.
- Pupils now acquire better literacy skills earlier in the school. Teachers' planning does not always take enough account of these higher skills, so they do not always give pupils sufficiently challenging work or move them on quickly enough to accelerate their progress.
- Pupils do not always make rapid progress in lessons as they are not consistently expected to think about their own ideas. Staff do not always consider and probe pupils' suggestions. Where pupils are challenged to think things through for themselves, they make better progress in their learning.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Children joining the school in the Nursery have skills which are well below those expected for their age. This has been the case for many years. They now make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, leaving Reception with skills broadly in line with national averages, although weaker in reading and writing than in other aspects of learning. Pupils then make strong progress through to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Due to better progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils are now better equipped to tackle more challenging work in Key Stage 2. As a result, while lower starting points in previous years meant that they have left Key Stage 2 with below-average standards, attainment in each year group has now improved.
- A notable strength of the school is how well it provides for disadvantaged pupils. In 2013, the Year 6 published test results showed that pupils supported by the pupil premium performed as well as their classmates in all aspects of English, and were a half a term ahead in mathematics. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were two terms behind in reading, one term behind in writing and grammar, and one and a half terms ahead in mathematics. Current data show that gaps in school remain narrow, with standards rising both for this group and for all pupils.
- Progress in writing is strong across the school. Pupils make at least good progress through Key Stage 2. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils. The curriculum encourages pupils to write in all subjects. This enables them to practise their writing skills in different situations.
- Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 have improved over the past three years. They are now in line with the national average. Rates of progress in mathematics are similar to writing. The school is rightly proud of the achievements of the most able pupils, with 17 pupils in 2013 and 16 in 2014 achieving standards well above those expected by the end of Year 6.
- Reading standards are more varied. Pupils are secure in their understanding and use of phonics (letters and the sounds they make), demonstrating this when reading aloud. However, they are less secure in their understanding of the books they read. The school is aware of this and is taking suitable action to improve achievement in reading.

- The most able pupils achieve well in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This group benefit from very challenging work, especially in mathematics, ensuring they reach high standards.
- The current progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is strong. Provision for these pupils is led and managed well, so that individual pupils' specific learning needs are quickly identified. Clear action plans are drawn up for teaching and support staff to follow. Pupils' work is monitored and evaluations are shared with parents and relevant staff. Subsequent work is then adapted accordingly.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. There is a clear system for identifying children's needs early in the school year, which involves listening to the views of parents and carers. Working with local pre-school providers ensures these assessments are accurate.
- Leaders know how well different groups of children are doing. All groups make good progress, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, even though some of the most able children speak English as an additional language and struggle to demonstrate their abilities.
- The staff team constantly think about how to make the teaching better. They are aware of the areas of learning the children find most challenging, and consider how to address this by sharing observations and planning together.
- A clear sense of tolerance and respect is evident through the school. Effective provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can be seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Strong relationships between staff and children are an important factor here.
- Occasionally, staff do not develop children's thinking and understanding further. Where the questioning has most impact on children's learning it probes their understanding, and where appropriate expects them to come up with answers themselves.

## 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>	103392
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	448247

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	708
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Satnam Chumber
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pamela Matty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 May 2010
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