

# Grasvenor Avenue Infant School

Grasvenor Avenue, Barnet, Hertfordshire, EN5 2BY

## Inspection dates

24–25 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' progress from their starting points is not yet good in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is not consistently good. As a result, standards are not high enough, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress because they are not sufficiently challenged in lessons to achieve their very best.
- Sometimes, pupils do not make a brisk start to their learning in lessons because time is not effectively used.
- Not all teachers give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their work, or allow them the time to reflect on and respond to the comments in their books to deepen their understanding.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of the quality of work that pupils produce, so that it is always completed and presented neatly.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, do not focus sharply enough on the impact actions have on improving the quality of teaching and accelerating pupils' progress.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully embedded. They are not sufficiently involved in setting the schools' priorities, or checking on the quality of teaching to bring about improvements.
- Leaders do not ensure that parents have all the necessary information; including the way the school uses its additional funding to raise pupils' achievement.
- Attendance levels are below average

### The school has the following strengths

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and they have positive attitudes to learning. They are kept safe and are very well cared for.
- Staff are very supportive of the school's leadership, and the morale in the school is high.
- The school's work on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective.
- Most parents are positive about the work of the school, and all say that their children are safe.
- The teaching of phonics is good (linking letters and sounds) and is helping pupils to improve their reading.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in ten lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector also observed pupils at lunch times and attended an assembly.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils, representative of different groups. The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read, and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, middle managers, joint chairs of the Governing Body and a parent governor. A telephone conversation was held with the local authority's adviser to the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, including the school's information on how well pupils are doing, improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings and checks on the quality of teaching. The inspector also looked at records relating to behaviour, safety, attendance and safeguarding. In addition, the school's website was scrutinised.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work to see what progress they have made and to judge the quality of marking and feedback.
- The inspector took account of 44 responses received from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors also considered 20 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Grasvenor Avenue Infant School is of well below average size compared to the average primary school. It has one Reception class, two Year 1 classes and one Year 2 class.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups, with the largest group from a White British background.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to the disadvantaged pupils (those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of children with special educational needs support is well above average.
- Grasvenor Avenue Infant School converted to become an academy school on 4 September 2012. When its predecessor school, under the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The headteacher is also the interim executive headteacher of Underhill School and Children's Centre.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 to good or better so as to raise achievement by ensuring that:
  - most able pupils are given sufficiently challenging tasks in lessons so that they can achieve higher standards
  - teachers' marking of pupils' work includes guidance on how it can be improved, and that pupils are given time to reflect and respond to these comments to improve their work
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' work, so that it is completed and tidy
  - there is a brisk start to lessons, so that pupils do not waste any learning time.
- Improve pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills in all subjects and topics, and are given time to write at length
  - giving pupils the opportunities to use their mathematical skills in all subjects, and to solve practical problems and apply their mathematical skills.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that there is a sharper focus on the impact of school actions on improving the quality of teaching and accelerating pupils' progress
  - developing the role of middle managers so that they are fully involved in setting the priorities for the school, and checking the quality of teaching to bring about improvements
  - ensuring that parents are given clear information on the schools' website on the performance of pupils and the way the school uses its additional funding to raise achievement, particularly for the disadvantaged pupils.
  - Improving attendance by working closely with parents to make them aware of the importance of regular attendance in order that their children make good progress.

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 leadership and management

### requires improvement

- The leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not been able to ensure that the quality of teaching is good enough to enable pupils to make consistently good progress.
- The headteacher has introduced effective monitoring and targeting system for tracking pupils' progress. This is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result, the end of Key Stage 1 results have improved.
- The management of performance and training of teachers is helping them to improve the quality of their teaching, with an increasingly effective link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression.
- The school's development plan, however, does not have sufficient emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement. The school's self-evaluation does not focus closely enough on the progress different groups of pupils make across in Years 1 and 2. As a result, these strategic plans are not contributing to fast enough improvement.
- The role of middle leaders in checking the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make is not yet embedded. They are not sufficiently involved in setting the priorities for the school and evaluating their impact. As a result, they do not always know how well pupils are doing across the school or the school's main areas for development.
- The pupil premium funding is effectively used to narrow the attainment gaps for the disadvantaged pupils. There is effective small group and one-to-one support to ensure they achieve as least as well as their peers
- The primary sports funding is used well to offer a range of sporting activities for children. As a result, pupils' participation in sports is increasing, including in swimming, and teachers are improving their skills in teaching physical education.
- Subjects are well planned. There are themed and a good range of practical activities that capture pupils' interest, with effective use of classroom and outside learning areas in the school. Assemblies are vibrant and engaging, and provide pupils time for reflection and to appreciate and celebrate each other's achievements. This contributes greatly to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to learn about other cultures, and British values are effectively promoted. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to visit different places of worship to extend their understanding of religious diversity.
- There are good links with parents, and these are being further developed to improve attendance. Most of the parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire felt the school is well led and managed, and almost all staff responding to the staff questionnaire agree with them.
- The school meets the statutory requirements of safeguarding.
- The local authority has worked with leaders to improve attendance. As a result, attendance is improving although it remains below average.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are ambitious and want the very best for pupils. They know the schools' main strengths and areas for improvement. They have been effective in bringing about improvements in attendance. They have had training on the use of performance data, and know about the school's performance in comparison to other schools nationally. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and its impact on improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. However, they are not very secure on the impact of the sports funding. They have the appropriate expertise to ensure the efficient management of financial resources, and ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. Governors carry out the performance management of the headteacher, and know that teachers' performance is linked to pay. They know about the quality of teaching but have not yet been successful in challenging leaders to improve the quality of teaching too good to ensure pupils make consistently good progress.

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

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school, and are very welcoming, friendly and courteous.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good. They engage well with each other, follow instructions and are keen to learn. They are eager to share their learning with adults. They apply themselves well even when the teaching is relatively unchallenging.
- Pupils say that bullying, name-calling or discrimination is rare, and that children are kind to each other. They have the confidence in the staff to deal with poor behaviour effectively. Any incident of poor behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Although the school's system for recording unacceptable behaviour is not always sharp enough to identify any patterns of behaviour over time, it does show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. There have been no exclusions of pupils since the academy opened.
- Lunch time is very orderly and pupils socialise well with each. They show respect for the school's environment, and are careful to scrape off any left-over food into a waste bin and put their used cutlery in an appropriate place.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because a few pupils occasionally lose concentration and become unsettled when work set is not challenging enough. Some pupils do not always make sure that their work is well presented in their books.
- Attendance is below average, but it is improving. Good attendance is celebrated, and links with parents and external agencies to improve attendance are strengthening. Punctuality is also improving.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and very well cared for at school by staff. Pupils say that they can easily approach a member of staff if they have any concerns about their safety.
- Pupils are effectively taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know about road and fire safety and have done some work on keeping themselves safe when using the internet. They know about different types of bullying.
- All staff who completed the questionnaire and all parents responding to Parent View say that pupils are safe in the school. Almost all agree that behaviour is good.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well
- The most able pupils are not always challenged enough by ensuring tasks set for them extend their ideas and encourage them to think more deeply. In some lessons, the most able pupils who complete their work do not always move on to a harder task quickly enough. As a result, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Relationships are strong and pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They respond well to the opportunities they are given to use both the classroom and outdoor learning environment to support their learning. For example, In Year 1 pupils learnt the names of different shapes in the classroom and went out into the playground to look for the different shapes.
- The presentation of some pupils' work is poor, including their handwriting, and some pupils fail to complete their work. However, this is not always picked up and commented on by teachers because their expectations of pupils' work are not always high enough. As a result, the work in pupils' books continues to be untidy, and this hinders the progress they make. However, there are examples of effective marking and good presentation of pupils' work, but this practise is not embedded across the school.
- Teachers do not always give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work. When teachers do make comments on pupils' work in books, pupils do not have enough time to respond to teachers' comments to correct and improve their work.
- Often learning time is wasted because pupils do not start their learning quickly enough, and some are not too sure about what they should be learning.
- Teaching assistants work effectively in classrooms to support pupils' learning, including the learning of those who are disabled or have special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- Another positive feature of teaching is the effective use of questioning by both teachers and teaching assistants to test pupils' understanding and further their understanding.

**The achievement of pupils****requires improvement**

- The achievement of pupils, while improving, is not yet consistently good. In 2013, at the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below average, including at higher levels (Level 3).
- In 2014, school information shows that results improved in all subjects, including at Level 3. Attainment in writing and mathematics was weaker than in reading. In writing, pupils do not always write at length both in English and other subject areas to improve their writing skills. In mathematics, pupils do not always use their mathematical skills in all subjects, or apply their mathematical skills to solve simple practical problems.
- The school's own information shows that pupils do not make consistently good progress from their starting points, particularly the most able pupils who are not always challenged sufficiently to achieve their very best.
- In the national phonics (linking letters and sound) check at the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level is higher than the national figure. This is giving them a greater confidence in their reading and helping them to improve their skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make broadly the same rate of progress as their peers
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language interact well with their peers, and have good opportunities in lessons for speaking and listening and to extend their vocabulary. This helps them to do as well as their classmates.
- In 2013, disadvantaged pupils did better than their classmates and similar pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. The current school information shows that their progress is very similar to their peers. This demonstrates the school's effective commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling any discrimination.

**The early years provision****is good**

- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The strong relationships and effective communication with parents, including home visits by staff, ensures that children's entry into Reception is smooth and effective.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are good, both indoor and outdoor. They are well cared for and kept safe, and safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements.
- The quality of teaching is good and adults provide good support to help children make good progress with their learning. Different groups of children make similar progress, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- Children demonstrate that they are able to collaborate well with each other and make their own decisions. For example, they show confidence in choosing the activities that they want to engage in, either indoor or outdoor and display a 'have-a-go' attitude. For example, children continued to paint outside even though it was raining, and were eager to talk about the colours they can make by mixing different paints.
- Children are encouraged to use information technology to support their learning. For example, they are able to interact with pictures on the wall using ipads to make them come alive! Children begin Reception with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age. By the end of Reception, they make good progress and begin Year 1 at a level that is broadly average for their age. Attainment is strongest in physical development, personal, social and emotional development and communication and language. Attainment in writing is low because opportunities are sometimes missed for mark-making to develop their early writing skills.

## 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>	138649
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	443748

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Ruckman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jack Newton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8449 6053
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