

# Grasvenor Avenue Infant School

Grasvenor Avenue, Barnet, Hertfordshire EN5 2BY

## Inspection dates

13–14 September 2016

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b>          |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b>          |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b>          |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b>          |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b>          |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- A visionary head of school and executive headteacher lead this school effectively. Together with support from the local authority and governing body, they have improved teaching and outcomes since the last inspection.
- Governors have made sure that leadership has had a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. They have ensured that the school has made rapid improvements.
- All staff take excellent care of the pupils within an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Teachers know the pupils very well. They are effective in delivering exciting lessons that capture the interest of all groups of pupils, so pupils do well.
- Good provision in the early years means that children progress rapidly and are well prepared for Year 1. This is particularly true in respect of reading.
- Provision is carefully matched for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which means they make good progress.
- Pupils show very caring and mature relationships with each other, as well as with adults at the school. They want to learn as much as they can, try very hard and behave well.
- Parents are confident that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that they make good progress.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve the effectiveness of the teaching of writing so that by the end of key stage 1 pupils are able to:
  - revise and practise correct letter formation frequently
  - adopt a neat joined style as soon as they can form letters so that they can be read easily
  - pay close attention to punctuation and use it correctly in different forms of writing.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have a good understanding of the type of work that interests the pupils at the school the best. This means that teachers can tailor the exact teaching focus of work depending on the pupils' interests. This approach has been helpful in improving the standard of work and progress at the school, which gives the pupils memorable experiences. Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to help ensure good support for the small number of disadvantaged pupils at the school.
- All staff take on leadership roles. They are ambitious for pupils, and there is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These opportunities are carried into all areas of the school's curriculum, which is planned into themes that interest pupils. The school's wider curriculum, such as trips, visits, clubs and visitors, goes a long way to support pupils' academic progress and personal development.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of British values, including democracy, through activities such as holding class elections to create the school council. Through assemblies, lessons and the wider curriculum, pupils gain a good knowledge of other cultures and ways of living. All of this contributes to pupils leaving the school with a good foundation for life in modern Britain.
- The school staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The strong focus on improving the quality of teaching has had a dramatic impact on the pupils' progress and has ensured that they now achieve well.
- Both the head of school and executive headteacher hold the respect of the staff, and motivation within the staff group is high. Without exception, all staff work effectively for the pupils at the school.
- The primary physical education and sport premium grant is well spent. The majority of the money is used to pay for swimming lessons for all pupils on a weekly basis. A specialist teacher of dance has also been used to provide enriching work for pupils in key stage 1. The daily 'park run' sessions have helped to ensure that pupils remain fit and healthy so their attendance is good. This further helps their progress with work.
- The school has received helpful support and challenge from the local authority. Since the previous inspection, local authority staff have paid more frequent visits to the school to provide advice and consultancy support. This has given leaders clear messages about the improvement they have made and how to ensure that all pupils achieve well.

### Governance of the school

- Governance is highly effective at the school. This is because:
  - governors have held senior leaders to account in terms of outcomes for pupils and have undertaken forensic enquiry into standards backed up by first-hand evidence
  - governors know the school well – they have helped to establish an aspirational culture at the school so that it becomes a popular and first-choice school to serve

the local community

- the work of the governors has ensured that outcomes for pupils have improved markedly since the previous inspection.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has very thorough procedures to check that pupils are well looked after while at school. This stretches beyond the school gate through the highly effective use of a family liaison officer who creates a bridge between home and school.
- A very strong culture of safety exists in the school, where key staff engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders to ensure that all pupils are supported and safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching at the school has improved.
- Teachers are reflective and professional. They have high expectations of the quality of work they expect from pupils in all subjects. Pupils remain focused on their learning because teachers remind them to try hard to do their best work.
- Pupils benefit from teachers and other adults working with them in small groups. This means that the adults can keep a close eye on their achievements and ensure that everyone does well.
- Teachers and other staff judiciously assess pupils' work so that pupils receive accurate feedback on how well they have done and what they could do to make further improvements. Pupils respond favourably to this and they feel encouraged to work hard.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. The school has placed a love of reading high on its list of priorities, which has resulted in pupils becoming avid readers who enjoy reading both in school and at home.
- Teaching is good because teachers make the lessons challenging and interesting for pupils. For example, in Year 2 the pupils were preparing to answer an email they had received from the head of school, who was asking for their help in choosing a holiday destination. Pupils were organised into small groups, with each focusing on one possible destination that included places with which they had a personal connection.
- Though writing is mostly well taught, the specific skill of handwriting lags behind for many pupils. As a result, some pupils are held back in their learning because insufficient attention has been placed on this area. Similarly, some of the older pupils tend to rely on a limited range of punctuation to enliven their writing.
- The high number of very competent support staff, both in classes and occupying other positions in the school, make an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents speak very positively about the school and its staff. One comment was typical when a parent said, 'the teachers did a very good job in helping my child settle in to school well'.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know where to turn should they need help. Through the hard work of staff at the school, pupils show great confidence and awareness about how to be successful learners.
- Leaders have strengthened the support available to pupils through the employment of a family liaison officer. This staff member has worked effectively with parents and external agencies to not only improve attendance but also ensure that all staff take good care of the pupils.
- The staff actively promote positive messages about suitable responses to bullying. Pupils understand that bullying can come in many forms and that it is not tolerated at Grasvenor Avenue.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident, friendly and curious learners. They conduct themselves very well in lessons and around the school. Many show high levels of self-discipline and feel that this culture permeates the school.
- At the time of the inspection, there was no disruption of learning due to poor behaviour and pupils said it is always like this. They are very skilled at working in small groups, which they do frequently, and this has helped them make good progress.
- Levels of attendance have risen over recent years. It is now broadly in line with the national average. This is due to a number of strategies, such as the popular 'walking bus', the work of the family liaison officer and a robust approach taken by the governing body.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Published data shows that standards of reading, writing and mathematics have risen from pupils' starting points since the last inspection. This is because of improvements to the quality of teaching, which are now firmly established. School-held assessment information for pupils currently in the school shows they are making strong progress in the core subjects, and this was corroborated through work scrutiny during the inspection.
- Work across many areas of the school curriculum has improved, such as in the pupils' 'Topic Books', which hold work of a good standard, with many opportunities for pupils to find out about aspects of science, religion and the arts.
- Unpublished data for pupils who left the school in 2016 shows very good results in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 1, which are likely to be above the national average. Due to weaknesses recognised by the school in the teaching of

handwriting and punctuation in Year 1 and Year 2, writing results were disappointing. Leaders and teachers understand their context well and have taken immediate action to improve this area.

- Pupils develop a good understanding of the way letters link to the sounds they make (phonics) because this early reading skill is taught well. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the Year 1 national phonics screening check is now well above the national average.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because the staff working with them pitch work which is at the right ability and have created close, caring working relationships.
- Teachers prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education when they leave the school at the end of Year 2. This situation has improved due to the development of regular checks made by the head of school on pupils' progress throughout their time at the school.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- When children join the school in the early years, their skills and knowledge are typical for their age. Using information from their home backgrounds, the school quickly engages the enthusiasm and interests of the children in order to plan work and interesting activities that they will enjoy. Children get off to a good start with their education.
- Children make at least typical progress and many make progress that is better than this from their starting points. This includes children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able.
- Children are very well prepared for the demands made on them in Year 1. They have already developed a positive attitude to school life and love coming to school. The parents echo this view.
- The teaching of early reading and writing skills gets all children off to a good start. Displays of children's work show that within the class children can produce longer pieces of written work and have developed a thirst for knowledge. Across all areas of learning, the quality of teaching is good and teachers are keen for children to succeed.
- The class is well resourced and there is a strong feeling of teamwork across the staff. The room is adjacent to a very well-structured outside space where children can explore nature, engage in role-play and work on large construction apparatus.
- School records, discussions with pupils, staff and parents all agree that behaviour within this key stage is at least good. Children are highly responsive to adults and each other. They start to develop a good understanding of how to keep safe and to respect each other's differences. Safeguarding is effective.
- The head of school has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision due to her expertise in this key stage. As a result, she has helped to guide spending decisions to improve the outside facilities such as a garden area and shelter.
- Parents value the close partnership approach adopted by the school, particularly the

use of an online method of providing information on what the children achieve on a daily basis. The teachers have plans to expand this further and create more opportunities for parents to take an active role in the daily work of the Reception class.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 138649   |
| Local authority         | Barnet   |
| Inspection number       | 10011876 |

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

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Infant   |
| School category                     | Academy converter  |
| Age range of pupils                 | 5 to 7   |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 87   |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Chair                               | Peter de Naeyer  |
| Executive headteacher               | Jack Newton  |
| Head of school                      | Jo Porter  |
| Telephone number                    | 020 8449 6053  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.grasvenorinfantschool.org.uk/">www.grasvenorinfantschool.org.uk/</a>     |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:head@grasvenoravenue.barnetmail.net">head@grasvenoravenue.barnetmail.net</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 23 September 2014  |

## Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- Pupils at the school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds; the majority are from White British backgrounds. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in samples of lessons in Year 1 and Year 2 throughout the inspection, several of which were visited jointly with the head of school.
- At the time of the inspection, the Reception children had not yet started at the school.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records of pupils' behaviour, safety and attendance. He also scrutinised information on individual pupils' progress and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspector met with pupils and teachers. A meeting was held with five members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through 25 responses to the online Ofsted Parent View survey, as well as informal discussions, which were held with parents of pupils at the school on both days of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin, Lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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