

Grove Primary School

Pickersleigh Grove, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 2LU

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have brought about clear improvements to the quality of teaching. They have also raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils are now making better rates of progress and attainment has risen.
- Funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils now make progress that is similar to that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in their writing. Strong teaching successfully helps pupils to understand how to write in a range of different ways. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills in other subjects.
- As teaching has improved, children make a strong start to their schooling in the Nursery and Reception classes. Each day, children's learning is promoted by interesting tasks set within a stimulating environment.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff provide a high level of care for pupils. As a result, pupils feel very safe and are happy at school. This helps pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy an interesting and broad curriculum. They make good progress across a range of subjects, which they approach with much interest.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are lower attainers achieve particularly well.
- Most pupils make good progress in mathematics but pupils are not routinely pushed to think deeply about their work, and problem-solving activities are limited. As a result, too few pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics.
- A smaller proportion of pupils than can be found nationally attain high standards by the end of key stage 2. This is because some of the work set is not sufficiently challenging.
- The expectations of what pupils should achieve in phonics in the early years and key stage 1 are not consistently high.
- Governors challenge leaders about improvements, but sometimes rely too much on the headteacher's views. They did not ensure that the school's website met government requirements at the time of the inspection.
- Attendance has improved considerably, but some pupils are still absent too frequently, particularly boys.
- Some parents lack confidence in the work of the school's leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further by:
 - setting more challenging tasks for pupils so that a greater proportion reach high standards by the end of key stage 2
 - providing harder work in mathematics and more frequent opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems
 - ensuring that all staff in Year 1 and the early years have high expectations of the standards children can reach in phonics.
- Strengthen the work of leaders and governors by:
 - improving communication and engagement with parents
 - ensuring governors make better checks on school development and offer a more rigorous challenge to senior leaders
 - making sure that the school's website meets specified requirements
 - building on recent improvements to raise the attendance of pupils who are frequently absent, particularly boys.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The headteacher is well supported by capable senior leaders. Leaders' work has brought about important improvements to teaching, particularly in the early years and in key stage 2. Leaders have ensured that staff have higher expectations of the standards that pupils should reach. As a result, pupils, particularly in these parts of the school, make much faster progress.
- Leaders have also improved the teaching of writing in key stage 2. These improvements are helping pupils to write more skilfully and produce writing that is interesting to read. As a result, pupils make better progress in writing. These improvements are a particular success.
- A focus on the need to speed up the progress of lower-attaining pupils has been successful. Leaders have ensured that improved teaching and the effective work of teaching assistants provide better support for this group.
- Leaders have developed good relationships with staff. As a result, morale is high and staff share leaders' ambition to do the best for the pupils. Staff say that they enjoy working at the school and have confidence in the work of leaders. Leaders have also ensured that the school is a happy place for pupils to learn. This positive atmosphere plays an important role in the school's success.
- Additional funding to help disadvantaged pupils is well spent and monitored. This year, leaders have further improved their plans so that they carefully identify reasons why some disadvantaged pupils might not be achieving as well as they could. Plans provide well-judged support to help individuals. Clear targets have been set for pupils. Targets are regularly checked and action is taken if required. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Funding for pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities is used successfully. Funding is targeted to the individual needs of pupils and to help them achieve well in lessons through the provision of extra help. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Funding for the physical education and sport premium is used to provide a range of activities that promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils enjoy the additional coaching and opportunities to swim that they receive. However, leaders and governors have not fully evaluated the impact of this funding.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of subjects that they study and the after-school clubs, which they enthusiastically attend. The different subjects of the curriculum provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills. For example, pupils have produced interesting writing about Romulus and Remus in Ancient Rome and written investigations in science. These good opportunities are an important reason why pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in writing. Work in other subjects is also good. During art lessons pupils produced an attractive autumn gallery. Pupils are also learning French.
- Leaders make careful checks on the work of staff. This, along with the professional development that staff receive, has helped to improve teaching and speed up

progress. There are occasions when leaders do not sharply focus on areas to improve teaching or advise teachers clearly enough on the specific aspects that they need to develop in their work. Nonetheless, arrangements for the appraisal of teachers have supported improved teaching and outcomes across the school.

- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This occurs through the wide range of subjects across the curriculum and assemblies. For example, pupils have opportunities to learn about becoming 'eco-warriors' and, as a result, are starting to understand the value of living in a sustainable way.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have an understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils talked about their enjoyment of recently celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday and learning about her role in British life. They talked with interest about the American presidential elections and democracy.
- The views of parents are mixed. Some parents have a positive opinion of the school. These parents speak highly of leaders and the staff team, greatly valuing the work they do. However, half of those who responded to Ofsted's Parent View by the end of the inspection would not recommend the school. The views of the parents to whom inspectors spoke were also mixed.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective; governors show a high level of commitment to improving the school and are rightly proud of its growing success. They have agreed plans that have improved the school's premises and resources. Careful management of the budget has ensured that money is well spent.
- Through focused monthly meetings, governors have developed a good understanding of the school's performance. They have become more challenging and better at holding the headteacher to account through improved performance management arrangements and general questioning of senior leaders.
- Governors want to improve their effectiveness and have recently reviewed their skills to ensure that they can carry out their role successfully. As a result they attend training and have also appointed new governors to help, along with training, to cover any gaps in expertise.
- Governors have carefully checked plans for disadvantaged pupils put forward by senior leaders. They have also kept a close eye on safeguarding arrangements to ensure that they are effective.
- Governors recognise that the school's relationship with too many parents is a negative one. They are seeking ways to improve it and resolve differences.
- Sometimes governors rely too much on the views of the headteacher, rather than checking the school's performance more thoroughly to ensure that it improves at a fast enough rate. Governors have not ensured that the school's website meets government requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff are trained and know how to deal with any incidents that may arise. Recruitment procedures include checks to see if staff are suitable to work with children. The school works well with other agencies such as social services to provide support for pupils who are experiencing difficulties. Pupils know who to talk to if they

feel unsafe and learn in lessons about how to keep themselves safe, including when they are using the internet. Pupils report with confidence that staff will help them if they have any difficulties.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved. Most teaching is now strong.
- The teaching of writing is particularly effective. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about their writing as they plan it, and then provide clear guidance, as pupils write, on the quality of their writing by suggesting how it can be improved. Pupils then respond well to this and use these tips to make their writing better.
- Teaching helps lower-attaining pupils to make good progress. This is because the tasks given to these pupils are well explained and are set at the right level. Teaching assistants provide valuable guidance and help to lower-attaining pupils as they work.
- Teachers use lesson time effectively. They provide helpful explanations and instructions, and also make sure pupils practise their skills and develop their knowledge.
- Teachers give good feedback during lessons most of the time. Teachers' marking is in line with the school's policy and pupils respond well to their teacher's comments. This has a positive impact on their progress. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that the school's marking policy is consistently applied.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the different subjects they teach and this makes a positive contribution to the progress pupils make. Questioning is well used to make pupils think, and helps teachers to check pupils' understanding.
- Homework is set and helps reinforce learning that has taken place in lessons. Pupils value this but not all parents are clear about the amount of homework that should be set for each year group.
- Teachers have established good relationships with their pupils and this plays an important part in helping pupils to make good progress. Classrooms are positive places and pupils want to learn.
- Some teaching does not challenge pupils. As a result, not enough pupils make the accelerated rates of progress required to reach higher standards. In such cases, the tasks that teachers set are too easy and teachers' expectations of these pupils are too low.
- In mathematics, the work set can fail to challenge some pupils. Pupils complete calculations and tasks that they can comfortably do rather than deepening their understanding through reasoning and problem-solving tasks. Such more challenging tasks are found infrequently in pupils' books. As a result, some middle-attaining pupils do not make fast enough progress and too few reach the higher standard in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and happy at school. They talk about how they feel safe and value the work that staff do to make sure they feel this way.
- Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety. They talk confidently, and with much knowledge, about how to keep safe online. Pupils are very aware of the possible dangers that exist when using such technology.
- Pupils value the quiet room that the school has provided at playtimes. This has proven particularly helpful for pupils who find social times difficult to manage.
- Pupils are respectful and show great pride in their school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in school. Grove Primary is a calm, safe and positive place. Pupils behave well during playtimes and enjoy the range of activities available to them.
- Pupils think that behaviour is good in school and that any incidents are fairly dealt with by teachers.
- In most lessons pupils show positive attitudes. Occasionally, a few pupils call out and teachers have to provide pupils with guidance on how to learn well.
- Attendance has risen considerably since the last inspection. Leaders have used a range of approaches to promote better attendance. Pupils look forward to winning class awards for the best attendance, such as a cuddly toy rabbit for the younger children, or for older ones, a trophy. Leaders have raised the previous low rates of attendance of disadvantaged pupils by making good use of pupil premium funding. In their plans, leaders rightly recognised that poor attendance was a barrier to the learning of many disadvantaged pupils.
- Though improving, the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent remains too high; this is particularly the case for boys.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils now make good progress from their different starting points throughout the school. Progress is evident in the quality of work in pupils' books, and from the results of national end of key stage tests and teacher assessments.
- Pupils in key stage 2 made strong rates of progress in writing in national assessments in both 2016 and 2015 due to good teaching and opportunities to write across the curriculum. Progress was also strong in reading in 2015. In mathematics, pupils make slower but secure progress. In unvalidated results for 2016 the number of pupils in key stage 2 who reach the expected standard was in line with the national average in writing, and just below in reading and mathematics.
- Some pupils, including a few of the most able in key stage 2, do not achieve as well as they should. This is because they are not being challenged enough by their teachers. The slower progress they make from their starting points means that too few pupils reach the higher standard by the end of the key stage.

- In key stage 1, pupils made good progress in all subjects by the end of Year 2 to reach attainment that was broadly average in terms of the proportion reaching the expected and greater depth standards. However, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics assessment fell back sharply in 2016. This was partly because teachers' expectations were too low. This is now being addressed.
- Due to improved teaching in the early years, children make a good start to their schooling. The standards that they now reach are much higher than they were in 2015 due to a rise in the proportion of children developing better literacy and numeracy skills by the end of the Reception Year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are lower attainers achieve particularly well in the school.
- Pupils enjoy reading and talk with interest and understanding about what they have read. Records and conversations with pupils show that they read regularly. Both the most and least able pupils make good progress in reading. Strong support helps the least able to do particularly well.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well due to effective leadership of this area. The progress of this group of pupils, including that of the most able disadvantaged pupils, matches that of other pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enjoy the calm and stimulating early years provision. They are very interested in the range of activities, and the well-presented and carefully arranged learning environments that staff have worked hard to create. The curriculum they receive is broad and well planned. Children play both inside and outdoors with interest and enjoyment, and make good progress as a result. The children enjoyed learning about bonfire night, fireworks and Diwali in a theme which developed their skills and understanding in a wide range of areas.
- Children are benefiting from the staff's increasing focus on developing their literacy skills, which is important given their low starting points in this area. This is also supported through an emphasis on developing talk, and children's understanding and use of language. The children, for example, visit a 'talking tent' to develop their language and communication skills.
- Children are encouraged to interact well with one another so they develop good social skills. In the early years children grow in confidence and behave very well. Staff guide and support children well with gentle and sensitive reminders that contribute strongly to the good progress they make. Staff are watchful over the well-being of the children in their care. As a result, the children feel safe and are very happy in their play and learning.
- Staff keep an eye on the children's progress and use their observations well to ensure that tasks are set at the right level for individuals most of the time. Progress is recorded in 'proud books' that provide an ongoing record of the milestones that each child is making. These are clearly annotated, provide a useful summary of progress and point to the next steps in learning that staff should plan for.
- Parents are made to feel welcome, and commented on this to inspectors. They are given opportunities to find out about their children's learning and attend 'biscuit

mornings' when they can look, with their child, at the 'proud books'. However, there are only a few examples of where parents have made contributions to these records to share their child's achievements at home.

- The progress that children make in the early years has accelerated. The proportion that reached a good level of development by the end of Reception rose in 2016 to just below the national average. This is a result of the improvement in the number of children who reached the expected standard in literacy and numeracy compared to 2015. The 2016 results, and the progress seen in the 'proud books', show that pupils are now making largely good progress from starting points that are below those typical for their age.
- Leaders have a mostly accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision. They have put in place changes which have successfully led to improvements that ensure children make a stronger start to school life.
- Children's skills in phonics have improved but are still not high enough. The teaching of phonics has been less consistent and expectations not always high enough. This, in particular, holds back the writing of some children. Leaders are aware of this, and are taking action to make improvements by ensuring more systematic teaching.

School details

Unique reference number	135067
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10012421

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Smith
Headteacher	Mark Ridlinton
Telephone number	01684 572 516
Website	www.groveprimarymalvern.co.uk/
Email address	office@groveprimary.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication on its website of information about the physical education and sport premium, governor interests and any governor roles held in other schools, recent key stage 2 results and the school's admission arrangements. The school was addressing these gaps during the inspection.
- Grove Primary is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very small.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 19 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils and talked to many more at different times during the inspection.
- The inspectors also considered a range of documentation. This included assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's check and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed, the school development plans and minutes of the governing body meetings.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and all senior leaders. The lead inspector also spoke to members of the governing body and an adviser who has provided support for the school on behalf of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the free text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start and end of the school day, and looked at two parent surveys conducted by the school. Inspectors considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jonathan Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Ashley	Ofsted Inspector

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