

# Grove Church of England School

North Drive, Grove, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 7PW

## Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils in key stage 2 do not make strong enough progress in writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Teachers are often inaccurate in assessing the amount of progress pupils have made. They do not challenge pupils sufficiently and often provide work that is too easy or repetitive.
- Pupils do not have enough time to refine and redraft their writing. In mathematics, they rarely practise problem-solving skills.
- Leaders and teachers have not ensured that the curriculum is planned to enable those who are most able to make the best possible progress.
- Children in the early years do not get enough chances to develop their basic skills in writing and mathematics.
- Until very recently, those responsible for governance did not hold leaders fully to account. Governors did not check that the school's website was compliant with requirements.
- Subject leaders do not yet take a strong enough lead in ensuring that pupils make rapid progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not focused sufficiently on ensuring that all eligible pupils make good progress and attend well.
- The behaviour of a minority of pupils is still too problematic at lunchtime.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is steadily improving. The new headteacher has already addressed key areas, including improving pupils' behaviour in lessons. As a result, pupils now have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The school provides an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe and well looked after.
- Parents are very positive about the school. Almost all would recommend the school to another parent.

## Full report

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

- Increase the rates of progress in key stage 2, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that teachers accurately assess pupils' progress and then make effective use of that information to plan work that meets pupils' needs
  - ensuring that staff have high expectations of pupils and challenge them appropriately
  - giving pupils more opportunities to refine their writing
  - providing more problem-solving activities in mathematics and ensuring that there is less repetition of the same content in the different year groups
  - giving children in the early years more opportunities to practise their writing and mathematical skills so they are better prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of subject leaders so that they are more accountable for the progress of pupils within their areas of responsibility
  - carefully tracking pupil premium expenditure to ensure that the money is better used to improve the rates of attendance and outcomes of all disadvantaged pupils
  - improving the behaviour of a minority of pupils at lunchtime
  - ensuring that the curriculum is carefully adapted to enable the most able pupils to accelerate their progress
  - making sure that the website is compliant with the Department for Education's requirements for academy schools
  - ensuring that those responsible for governance have the skills to challenge school leaders effectively.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because rates of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and assessment are not consistently good in key stage 2.
- Senior leadership is new. The headteacher has only been in post for two terms. She has already made significant changes, such as improving behaviour in lessons. However, there has been insufficient time to implement all the necessary improvements for the school to be good.
- Subject leaders, some of whom are new in post, are not yet accountable enough for the progress of pupils within their areas of responsibility. They do not check that teachers are accurate when recording how much progress pupils have made. Consequently, pupils make inconsistent progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not well enough used to improve the outcomes of all eligible pupils. The school is acting quickly to rectify this situation. However, currently, while some disadvantaged pupils make exceptionally strong progress, others make relatively slow progress.
- The leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities and use of funding are effective because pupils receive appropriate additional interventions that support them well. However, the progress of some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is hampered by the broader issues affecting pupils' progress overall.
- The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils and effectively promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, for those who are most able, the curriculum has not been sufficiently adapted. This means that often most-able pupils cannot make the accelerated progress that they are capable of achieving. There are very few examples where teachers have provided additional, challenging work to help most-able pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils are given a clear awareness of British values. They say how much they enjoy learning about other cultures. Pupils show respect and tolerance to those who have faiths and beliefs that are different from their own.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and progress. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the range of trips that they had enjoyed and how this had enhanced their understanding of subjects such as history and geography. For example, pupils were able to talk knowledgeably about their visit to Stonehenge.
- All levels of leadership are determined to ensure that the school rapidly becomes good. Leaders have an accurate view of the school and have identified the main priorities that need improvement.
- Parents are supportive. They speak positively about the changes the new headteacher has implemented. They praise both teaching and office staff and say that the school responds quickly if they have any concerns. The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to another parent.

- Additional government funding to promote sport and physical education in primary schools is used successfully. Funding provides for both after-school activities and activities during lunchtimes. Participation rates in team sports such as football and netball have increased.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is developing. At the time of the inspection, recent changes had been made by the school to improve the quality of governance. This is because leaders recognised that governance needed to provide greater challenge and support. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these changes.
- Minutes of previous governing body meetings show a lack of understanding regarding where progress was strongest and weakest for all groups of pupils. Some responsibilities, such as monitoring the school's website, have been overlooked. Too often, governors have relied heavily on the information the headteacher has provided.
- Governors make sure that the school meets all the statutory requirements regarding safeguarding. They often attend training with staff to ensure that their own skills are kept up to date.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. Parents said that they are happy that the school does all it can to ensure that their children are well looked after. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive effective support.
- Policies and procedures regarding child protection are regularly updated. Staff are ever-vigilant and well trained to ensure the well-being of pupils.
- Staff are very aware of all the issues that can affect pupils. They ensure that even the youngest children understand about e-safety and how to protect themselves online.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Teaching is not consistently good in key stage 2. It does not enable all pupils to make effective progress. Staff do not have high enough expectations regarding what pupils can achieve.
- Assessment systems that track the amount of progress pupils make have only been recently introduced. Many teachers have not yet acquired the skills to be accurate in their judgements of pupils' progress. Consequently, teachers are often too generous and incorrectly record that pupils are making accelerated progress. Because of this, teachers often do not plan work that is of the right level of difficulty to fully challenge pupils and meet their different needs.
- The teaching of phonics has improved. Throughout key stage 1, pupils are making good progress in their understanding of letters and sounds. Older pupils, especially those who need to catch up, are carefully and effectively taught reading and

comprehension skills. All pupils are encouraged to read widely and often.

- Pupils are very positive about their learning. One pupil expressed the views of many when he said, 'Staff support us with our learning and teachers work hard to find different ways to help us understand.'
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils, particularly with those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide additional help and support both in and out of lessons.
- Teaching in some subjects is more effective. This is because teachers plan lessons that are interesting and challenging. For example, in science, pupils engage well with the opportunities teachers provide for them to conduct experiments and record their findings.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- While overall attendance is in line with the national average, the attendance of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This has a negative impact on the progress these pupils make, as well as affecting their understanding of what it is like to be a successful learner. The school is starting to address this issue, but as yet has had limited success.
- Staff are very caring and meet pupils' emotional needs well. In both lessons and assemblies, pupils are encouraged to think about how they are feeling and to report any worries or concerns. Pupils say that their teachers are very friendly and understanding.
- Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily. They understand about the different food groups. They enjoy tending the vegetable plot in the summertime.
- The before- and after-school clubs are well attended. Pupils enjoy the chance to play and chat with their friends in a warm and safe environment.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The behaviour in the playground of a minority of pupils is not always appropriate. Despite recent improvements, the behaviour of a few pupils is not good enough.
- Pupils say that behaviour has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher. In lessons, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning. Pupils settle quickly to tasks and listen carefully to what the teacher has to say. They were proud to show their work and explain to inspectors what they were learning.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They say that they would go to an adult if they had any concerns. They are confident that any issues would be quickly sorted out. Pupils know about the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils in key stage 2, from their different starting points, make inconsistent progress.
- In writing, progress is often slow because pupils do not refine and improve what they have written.
- In mathematics, progress is often not fast enough because pupils are sometimes provided with work that they already know and understand. For example, pupils' books in Years 3, 4 and 5 showed that they had revisited the same mathematical concepts without any further deepening of knowledge. Pupils have very few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve everyday problems.
- Over time, pupils make better progress in reading across the school. Most are developing proficient reading skills. The dip in results in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year has now been addressed by leaders. School information indicates an improvement for this year.
- Results in 2016 in key stage 1 show that the proportions of pupils who attained the expected standard were higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils who exceeded the standard were higher than average in reading and similar to average in writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6 last year, results show that pupils' progress and the proportions of pupils who attained the expected standard were below the national average. Consequently, these pupils were not well prepared for their next stage of education. This is because this cohort of pupils had received several years of weaker teaching. Leaders have already started to address this issue. However, for those in the current Year 6, work seen in books indicates that pupils still have a way to catch up to meet age-related expectations, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Across the school, disadvantaged pupils, including the very few most-able disadvantaged, are making inconsistent progress. This is because the additional pupil premium funding has not been used to target the development of specific knowledge and skills for these pupils. There were too few pupils in 2016 who were disadvantaged to report their progress and outcomes without identifying them.
- Those pupils who are the most able, in the different year groups currently in the school, are making inconsistent progress. However, in key stage 2 in 2016, the percentage reaching the expected and higher than expected standard was in line and often above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by staff. Many of these pupils make good progress. One of the reasons for this is that individual sessions are effective in developing pupils' confidence in their abilities.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that children are well enough prepared for their learning in Year 1. This is because during their Reception Year, children have not been given enough chances to practise their basic skills in mathematics and writing.

- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving an overall good level of development when they leave Reception is broadly in line with that found nationally. However, the proportion of children working at expected levels in writing and in shape, space and measure in mathematics is lower than average.
- Leaders recognised, several months ago, that additional support to improve practice in the early years was required. Since then, staff have made good use of the external advice provided.
- Teachers' planning has improved as a result of better assessment of children's needs. Planning now uses children's interests, enabling them to make more rapid progress.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is appropriately used to improve their progress and outcomes.
- Parents are pleased with how their children are progressing in the early years. They say that many of the activities provided have sparked their children's imagination.
- Children behave well. They are encouraged to develop their social skills effectively and take turns when using equipment. They treat each other with respect. Relationships between adults and children are very positive.
- The school's large and well-equipped outdoor environment enables children to explore a variety of different areas of learning. Handmade bug hotels and the mud kitchen enable children to develop an appreciation of nature.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff are fully aware of all recent guidance regarding safeguarding. They have close links with external agencies and are vigilant in ensuring that policies and procedures are correctly followed.

## School details

Unique reference number	140474
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10024541

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Jean Holderness
Headteacher	Susan Gould
Telephone number	01235 769867
Website	<a href="http://www.groveprimary.org">www.groveprimary.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head.3228@grove.oxon.sch.uk">head.3228@grove.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the anti-bullying strategy and the accessibility plan on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about: the address and telephone number of the academy trust; the annual reports and accounts; the funding agreement; and the memorandum of association.
- In December 2013, after its last inspection, the school converted to become an academy. It is part of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, which is a multi-academy trust established by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.

- From October 2015 to April 2016, there was some staffing turbulence and the school was led by several interim leaders. The new headteacher took up her post in April 2016. A new chair of the governing body has recently been appointed.
- Most pupils are White British and the proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds is low.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club. The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school met the government's current floor standards, which are the government's minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress, in 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. There were 10 lessons and part-lessons visited, many of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, and representatives from the governing body and the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at work in books and listened to some pupils reading. Inspectors considered the 54 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. There were also informal discussions with pupils at breaktime regarding what it was like to be a pupil at this school.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The views expressed by members of staff in eight online questionnaires were considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation and policies, including the school's improvement plan. Information about the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was considered, along with documents about pupils' current attainment and progress. Documents checking the quality of teaching and learning and records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding were also examined.

## Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Parfoot	Ofsted Inspector

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