

Grove Wood Primary School

Grove Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8UA

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- All leaders, including governors, are effective in their roles. They provide clear, strategic direction and, as a result, Grove Wood provides an outstanding education for all children and pupils.
- The headteacher's inspiring and supportive leadership significantly contributes towards raising standards across the school.
- The governing body is highly skilled and knowledgeable. Governors challenge and support leadership effectively.
- The excellent care and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to make good, and better, progress from their different starting points.
- Leaders have developed an exciting and innovative curriculum which enables pupils to flourish and thrive. They are taught valuable life skills, preparing them well for secondary education.
- Well-planned provision for disadvantaged pupils ensures that they are making good progress and achieve broadly in line with other pupils nationally.
- Effective challenge in lessons ensures that the most able pupils make strong progress.
- Systems to track and assess pupils' progress are accurate and ensure that teachers plan activities to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's provision. Pupils live the school's values of 'strive, positivity, achieve, respect and kindness'.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff ensure that pupils' safety and well-being are a priority.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- The school's ethos is intrinsic to its everyday work. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school's aims and objectives.
- The early years provision is outstanding. Children develop skills to become confident, enthusiastic learners at an early age. They are prepared exceptionally well for primary school.
- Although improving, attendance for key groups is below average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Continue to improve achievement of disadvantaged pupils so that even more pupils reach the higher standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher leads the school exceptionally well. Since the school has become an academy, the headteacher, ably assisted by his deputy headteachers, has continued his drive to improve pupils' life opportunities with a clear and purposeful vision. This is shared by every member of the school community.
- Staff share the headteacher's commitment to high standards and inclusion. He is passionate about providing continued professional development for all staff. Staff are continually seeking ways to improve and develop their own practice. As a result, pupils benefit from high-quality teaching from skilled staff and so make outstanding progress in their learning and personal development.
- Leaders' expertise is widely used beyond the school. They work collaboratively with other local school leaders and with the local authority. Several teachers are specialist leaders in education and benefit from sharing experiences and best practice. They lead work on key areas of teaching and learning, and work with other school leaders to moderate assessment of pupils' work to verify its accuracy.
- The school's plan for improvement correctly identifies key priorities and is therefore an effective tool to further sustain the high standards set by the school.
- Leaders at all levels work very effectively together. They scrutinise work about pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching in detail, and use their evaluations well to inform key priorities and refine actions.
- The school provides an exciting curriculum for its pupils. Enrichment activities are provided regularly throughout the school year. Music is a key strength at the school. Pupils take part in music activities and projects with other schools and organisations. For example, pupils from Year 5 took part in a music workshop with The London Community Gospel Choir this year and performed in the Young Voices concert at The O2 arena. Additionally, the school provides a host of extra-curricular activities, and most pupils attend at least one. The range of after-school clubs is extensive and includes sewing, theatre and hockey as well as the more traditional activities. Pupils told inspectors that they value and enjoy all the school offers.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development exceptionally well. The school's core values and the staff's moral purpose permeate through the whole culture of the school. Pupils are very reflective about their learning, and the rich curriculum provides many opportunities to learn about the principles behind fundamental British Values. For example, pupils in Year 6 were writing their own manifestos prior to this year's general election. Pupils were able to talk confidently about the concerns they had about particular policies, and considered the views of political parties to help form their own opinions.
- The additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively to support good progress. Focused additional support and catch-up programmes ensure that these pupils make good progress in line with other pupils nationally.
- There is a strong vision to support the teaching of physical education. The impact of

the sports premium funding is clear. Funding ensures that staff benefit from professional development and pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting activities. A high proportion of pupils take part in extra-curricular clubs and there has been a huge increase in the number of intra-school competitions.

- School leaders and teachers are rigorous in checking every aspect of provision. Evidence is pulled together in a systematic way. Through regular meetings and updates, information and feedback are disseminated seamlessly between senior leaders, phase leaders, teachers and support staff. This ensures that all staff are fully informed, and all adults are working together toward the school's key priorities to secure good and better outcomes for pupils.
- Parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are overwhelmingly supportive of leaders' vision for inclusion and enrichment. Many parents wrote about how the school recognises and supports children's individual needs. One parent wrote, 'A truly fantastic school who recognise the students' individual needs'. Another said, 'Quite simple, "outstanding"; as a parent of two children going through the school I cannot speak highly enough of the positive effect that Grove Wood has had on my children.'
- The inclusion and the attendance leaders work collaboratively with other senior leaders to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the support they need. For some of these pupils, school attendance has been an issue. Leaders ensure that pupils are supported effectively to catch up on their return and make strong progress.
- The local authority values the work that school leaders do in partnership with local schools. This includes moderation for the county.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is highly effective. Governors have a wide range of useful skills which enable them to carry out their duties strategically and effectively.
- They understand the wide range of pupil performance information that they must check. They ensure that funding is allocated wisely and they check the impact of the spending.
- Governors receive detailed and regular reports from the headteacher, which provide them with helpful information as to how well the school is performing. Governing body minutes demonstrate that governors effectively provide challenge to leaders about pupils' achievement.
- Governors ensure that their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding are met. They keep their own safeguarding training under review and work well with school leaders to ensure that they are well informed of current safeguarding issues.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record of recruitment checks of staff is fully compliant with current requirements. All staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training and receive regular updates throughout the year.

- Procedures for ensuring that children are safe are effective. Systems are clear and all staff have a good understanding of their role in keeping children safe. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' files, including those subject to child protection, demonstrates that record-keeping is detailed and robust.
- The designated safeguarding leaders know when to access early help services. The school works successfully with external agencies to provide timely support for pupils. The excellent pastoral care provided by the school ensures that the appropriate support is in place to help vulnerable pupils and families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have created a very positive learning culture. They set high expectations and pupils respond well. Pupils enjoy challenge and accept that making mistakes is part of the learning process. They are taught to reflect on their work and acknowledge that success is achieved through perseverance. Teachers pitch work at a suitably high level, which ensures that pupils make rapid progress from their starting points.
- In mathematics, teachers make sure that pupils develop a deep understanding of key concepts and skills. They plan purposeful activities that test out pupils' application, which is particularly effective for the most able pupils. For example, in one lesson pupils were given a gross salary figure and asked to calculate net salary after deducting national insurance and tax. They then needed to budget for buying a property, taking into account the cost of mortgage repayments and other utility bills.
- Leaders ensure that the progress of pupils who are disadvantaged and/or have significant medical needs is not affected by their low attendance. Effective catch-up lessons, specifically for these pupils, ensure that they make good and better progress from their different starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are well supported by the excellent curriculum, with activities that are matched to meet their specific needs. Additional funding is used well. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to extra-curricular and enrichment activities and are provided with any additional support they need. As a result, they make good and, in some cases, very rapid progress from their starting points and achieve in line with pupils nationally.
- Subjects such as history, geography and art are taught well across all year groups. The school's chosen themed curriculum and teachers' ability to plan activities which engage and motivate pupils ensure that lessons provide pupils with opportunities to link their learning across different subjects. Consequently, pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Pupils are taught to reflect on their learning, which they do regularly in lessons. For instance, they reflect on past events and about people with historical importance. Pupils are encouraged to ask pertinent questions to deepen and further their understanding. When learning about Christopher Columbus, for example, a Year 2 pupil asked if there was anywhere left to explore, they then considered that they could be space explorers. In this same lesson, as well as learning about exploration, pupils studied the work of an Italian artist which led to an art lesson where pupils studied texture and learned about specific techniques.

- The science subject leader has ensured that pupils have access to a wide range of scientific experiences. Science week this year was a huge success, where a variety of activities sparked pupils' curiosity as they took part in exciting workshops. Pupils have opportunities to extend their science learning further through extra-curricular activities. For example, in one such club pupils learn to build a kit car which they race at Goodwood. Pupils' work demonstrates that they acquire good scientific knowledge and skills.
- The school's curriculum prepares pupils to be confident, resilient and to take risks. Pupils develop good skills in the performing arts, resulting in increased confidence and self-esteem, preparing them well for secondary school. There are many opportunities for pupils to perform in front of audiences, whether in sporting competitions, music or drama. Inspectors observed pupils singing in the choir and rehearsing lines while preparing for the summer performance. Further opportunities for pupils to learn about the technical aspects of theatre, for example back stage lighting and sound, enables pupils to get involved at all levels.
- Additional adults are skilful and well placed to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the progress they should. Adults support teachers well and value the training they receive. The inclusion leader closely monitors and tracks the progress of pupils and precisely matches the support to pupils' individual needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- Although attainment in reading was above average in 2016, leaders recognised that a small number of pupils did not make the progress they should from their starting points at the end of Year 2. Leaders are focusing on reading as a priority and have implemented actions to encourage a 'love of reading' to develop pupils' comprehension and inference skills. The school's latest achievement information shows that good and better progress is being made across the school in reading and pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on track to achieve above national expectations at the end of this academic year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders plan pupils' transition to secondary school well. The school arranges extra visits to secondary school, prior to the start of the academic year, for the most vulnerable pupils, minimising anxiety. Additionally, nursery schools that feed into the school receive valuable information from the school's early years team to help them prepare children for transition into Reception.
- The school's rainbow room and lunchtime club give pupils who find less structured times of the day challenging a supportive environment where nurture and care are at hand. Pupils leave the rainbow room ready to learn.
- The school's 'SPARK' values, of 'strive, positivity, achieve, respect and kindness', are central to the school's ethos. These are modelled by adults and demonstrated in the way pupils behave during lessons and during other times of the day. During the inspection, a professional athlete talked to the pupils about his journey to success

through hard work and determination.

- Throughout the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to approach tasks with positivity and an open mind and are encouraged to use the phrase 'I can't do this yet'. One child was heard reminding another who was saying he could not do something, 'Where's your mindset?' A number of parents commented about this on Parent View; for example, 'The message of I might not be able to do something "yet" has been very positive for my two children.'
- The school encourages pupils to consider those less fortunate. Over the school year, pupils take part and raise money for many charities.
- Pupils enjoy school and have extremely positive attitudes to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils do not recognise bullying as being an issue at the school. The anti-bullying council, with a representative from each class, is on hand to sort out any friendship and minor playtime issues.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and engage in their learning. The virtual absence of any low-level disruption in lessons ensures that learning time is maximised.
- Staff and pupils are proud of their school and ensure that the extensive school environment is inviting and well maintained. Pupils and staff ensure that walkways and classrooms are kept tidy and clean.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong, and respect is mutual. Adults actively model the school's values of good learning behaviours, and act as excellent role models.
- Attendance is above national average. Leaders are working with vulnerable families to ensure that measures are in place to improve attendance for their children.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils across the school make rapid progress from their starting points. In 2016, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2 exceeded national figures. Current pupils are on track to attain similar standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of this academic year and to make good and better progress from their starting points.
- Pupils achieve well in all subjects. This is due to the well-planned, rich and varied curriculum, along with purposeful teaching and learning activities. Starting in Reception through to Year 6, pupils develop a thirst for knowledge. Consequently, pupils acquire skills which encourage an enquiring mind, leading to a deeper understanding.
- The most able pupils are sufficiently challenged and make good and better progress. In 2016, a higher-than-average proportion of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieved the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils' assessment information, and pupils' work, shows that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, will achieve similarly this academic year.

- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points. This is because teachers, rightly, have high expectations and carefully plan support that is focused on the individual needs of the pupils.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children in the Reception classes make outstanding progress from their starting points. They settle quickly into their new environment, due to careful planning and a focus on children's individual needs. One parent commented: 'I thought the information and settling-in sessions in Reception were fantastic. My son settled into school amazingly and his progression was much faster than expected.'
- Leaders' precise focus on early intervention has had a positive impact on the progress of disadvantaged children, including the most able disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Ensuring that information about the needs of these groups of children is received early has meant that the school is able to match support precisely to the needs of the children, ensuring they make as much progress as they should.
- The teaching and application of phonics weaves seamlessly into children's reading and writing. Activities planned for children involve reading instructions, and children use their phonic knowledge well to read and sound out unfamiliar words. Children are encouraged to write regularly and respond well, producing a good standard of writing.
- The school ensures that there are many opportunities for parents and carers to be involved with their children's learning. Parents are invited to interactive phonics workshops. This enables parents to be fully informed about their children's learning, so that they can effectively support their children at home. The school provides plenty of information on the website, giving parents many ideas for home-learning.
- Adults in the early years team are highly skilled and use questioning to ascertain what children already know. Adults complete detailed observations of children's learning, which informs children's next steps.
- Teachers plan well-thought-out activities to support children's naturally inquiring minds and to enable them to explore ideas for themselves. For example, while racing toy vehicles down a ramp, children considered the change to the vehicle's speed if the ramp's surface was changed to one which was shiny and smooth. They correctly suggested that the vehicle would go faster.
- Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world in interesting and inspiring ways. For example, in one class the role play area represented passport control and security. Children checked in with their suitcase after handing in their passport and selecting their destination. They then continued through the security gate where another child would alert security with a whistle as they passed through. Children worked collaboratively, knowing their roles in the activity.
- Parents speak highly about the information sharing and preparation for full-time school for their children. Leaders ensure that they are aware of children's individual needs well in advance of them starting Reception. One parent commented, 'My younger son is due to start Reception in September and the school has already had meetings with myself

and are working very closely with his pre-school and other professionals on this transition.'

- Assessment in the early years is rigorous and accurate. Leaders and all adults who work with the children know the children well and plan activities to meet the needs of all individuals. The school's assessment information shows that a high proportion of children are on track to attain a good level of development. Children are happy and confident in the early years; by the time children leave Reception they are ready for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	141052
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10031423

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 trust
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	634
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Guy Blakesley
Headteacher	Richard Green
Telephone number	01268 743445
Website	www.groveswoodprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@groveswood.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school converted to academy status in July 2014. Grove Wood Primary School is currently the only school in the multi-academy trust.
- This is a larger than average primary school. There are three classes in each year group.
- The majority of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional pupil premium funding and the proportion joining or leaving the school part way through the school year are lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning across all classes.
- Some observations of learning were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team held meetings with governors, a representative from the local authority, and school staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, information on pupils' attainment and progress and records of behaviour and safety. They also looked at the monitoring of teaching and the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and the school's website.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their learning and subjects they particularly enjoyed at school.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made regarding the recruitment of new staff.
- An inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoy.
- The lead inspector took account 127 responses to the online parental questionnaire, Parent View, and 60 text responses from parents.
- The questionnaires completed by 41 members of staff and 200 pupils were also considered.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Warboys	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cloke	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector

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