

# Grovelands Primary School

Terrace Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 2EB

## Inspection dates

5–6 July 2017

<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	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has had a number of organisational and leadership changes. The current head of school has led the school with drive and vision supported well by other leaders.
- The new leadership team has acted decisively to remedy the fall in pupils' outcomes in 2016 so that pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
- Governance has not been immune from changes either and recent skilful appointments mean they have refocused on ensuring good-quality education for the pupils.
- Teaching and learning are good and improving because senior leaders make effective checks and provide useful training.
- The early years provides high-quality experiences so children succeed. They are taught well and the setting is well led and managed.
- Pupils apply themselves well to their work in class and behave sensibly at lunchtime and breaktimes, they are well mannered, polite, and eager to talk about what they are learning.
- Pupils are safe and secure. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and staff are thoroughly familiar with the school's reporting procedures.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is encouraged effectively through a range of memorable activities and visits.
- The school has worked productively to improve the attendance of a few groups and individual pupils who were absent too frequently.
- The school is successfully tackling the barriers that pupils who are disadvantaged face. Their performance is improving rapidly but some are not challenged to reach the highest standards in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers are not consistent in using assessment to focus pupils on reaching the highest standards that they are capable of.
- Middle leaders are improving their subjects well but the new system for tracking pupils' achievements is not completely understood by everyone in the school.

## Full report

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

- Further develop assessment procedures so that middle leaders and staff use the tracking system more effectively and challenge each other when pupils fall behind.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further by:
  - checking that pupils' understanding is systematically assessed during lessons, so that any misconceptions are promptly addressed and the learning for the most able is moved on quickly
  - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils' progress continues to improve so that those who have the capacity reach the higher standards in writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has experienced some changes recently but senior leaders, led very effectively by the head of school, have worked together closely and taken robust action to ensure that pupils' outcomes are now good.
- Since the start of the academic year, the achievement of pupils has improved rapidly. Leaders quickly recognised the reasons for the fall in standards and progress in 2016 and have acted assertively to ensure that expectations now match the depth of knowledge required in the Year 2 assessments.
- Senior leaders have effectively improved the impact of teaching on improving pupils' learning. As a result, pupils talk about chances to solve problems in mathematics lessons, and opportunities to write lengthy pieces in other subjects of the curriculum and to reflect and talk about their learning. School leaders are not complacent. They are enthusiastic to improve this even further, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Clearer procedures for managing the work of teachers hold them to account for the progress of pupils in their classes. This has been effective in stimulating staff, who are motivated to achieve more challenging targets. Staff, including those new to the profession, are positive about the opportunities to develop their own knowledge and skills.
- Leaders make inventive use of funding to diminish the differences in the progress of disadvantaged pupils. They are ambitious for the progress that this group of pupils can make, and ensure that support is given where learners fall behind. Occasionally, pupils are not challenged to do even better.
- The curriculum is well planned through appropriately thought-out themes which are delivered alongside carefully planned visits and experiences. As a result, pupils in Year 3 are able to compare places of worship and reflect on, for example, the idea of a raised platform in a mosque (a mimbar), linking it to a pulpit in a church because they had visited a church. These opportunities are supplemented well by a range of popular extra-curricular activities including those supported by good use of sports funding to enable pupils to take part in inter-school competition.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils display a good awareness of other faiths. Pupils show a good understanding of British values. They are respectful of others' differences, views and opinions. This understanding is supported by memorable activities such as transforming their classroom into a debating chamber to help them understand how Parliament discusses different ideas. In early years, the hatching of a duckling, in the middle of a lesson, presented an outstanding opportunity for pupils to reflect on the wonder of new life.
- Leaders and staff work supportively with parents. This is evident in the positive responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the improvement in the attendance of groups of pupils.
- Senior leaders have overhauled the school's assessment and tracking systems. However, this is not fully embedded and so middle leaders do not completely understand the information that would assist them in identifying areas for

improvements in their subjects.

- The local authority has provided light touch support which has been welcomed by the school, following the leadership changes.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are proactive. While changes within the governing body have occurred recently, the resulting vacancies have been strengthened well by the appointment of skilled and experienced governors from another local school. They have ensured that governors challenge and support leaders effectively, asking probing questions about issues such as the recent reasons for underperformance, funding and the school's effectiveness. They have a sound awareness of how well different pupil groups are doing.
- Governors understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. They are well informed, and diligently check on the implementation of the child protection policy to check its effectiveness.
- Governors have reinforced the arrangements for the management of the performance of staff and have supported leaders in setting higher expectations within the school. They manage the performance of the head of school rigorously by setting challenging targets for improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The leadership of safeguarding is clear about the school's policies and systems so that these are understood by all. All staff are trained about a wide range of issues and receive frequent updates from members of the in-school team, for example on the dangers of online abuse. Adults are suitably checked before they are allowed to work with children, with the result that the culture within the school is one which cares for each pupil.
- There is good partnership working with other agencies, and school leaders are tenacious in championing the needs of pupils.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They display a good awareness of how to keep safe online. They make good connections between their school's values and the more extreme views they hear about in the news.

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

**Good**

- Good relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils engage well in lessons and time is used productively.
- In mathematics, the expectation that pupils will apply their skills with greater independence is an integral part of their learning. Pupils talk about their thinking and this helps them to understand how, for example, you multiply mixed-number fractions. They are given sufficient time to practise their skills.

- Senior leaders are aware of the pupils who need support to catch up. Well-organised support and the effective use of teaching assistants provide pupils with opportunities to go back over their learning and to ensure that they have access to practical equipment when needed.
- Reading is strong across the school with a good basis in the effective teaching of phonics. Pupils enter the school with language skills that are lower than those typical for their age. They make good progress, reading with increasing fluency by the end of key stage 1, and with greater understanding and expression as they move through key stage 2. Pupils read confidently from their chosen books to the inspection team.
- Leaders have provided staff with appropriate support and training, so that they can ensure that the teaching of writing begins to match the quality of reading. There are good opportunities for pupils to write in their topic book so that, for example, by Year 5 they can write extensively about the very odd cures for the plague suggested by doctors in the past. They clearly enjoyed graphically describing the range of symptoms which made up a diagnosis of plague!
- Pupils understand the importance of their homework and this helps to consolidate their understanding. Parents are generally happy about the work set and the information they receive from school. Almost all are confident that their children make progress, and that the school cares for them and provides attention to the needs of their child.
- The approach to assessing pupils and then moving them onto more complex work by teachers, however, is not consistent. Opportunities are sometimes missed to review tasks and expectations in lessons. As a result, the work in a few books, particularly for the most able pupils, shows unnecessary repetition when pupils are not challenged fully.

## 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 interested, and have positive attitudes to their learning. They show a willingness to share their thoughts with each other. For example, pupils in Year 3 were seen working extremely sensibly in groups, sharing their ideas, and drawing Venn diagrams to record the body changes that they can and cannot control as they grow up.
- Pupils take pride in being part of the school. The recent work done by staff to reinforce the values of the school has had a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of learning as well as their progress. Pupils understand what it means to be a successful learner and make good use of their 'brains, book, board, buddy, boss' system to remind them what to do when stuck.
- Pupils have a good awareness of other faiths. Displays promote British values in the work of the school, and the curriculum themes, including debating and comparisons with different countries, help pupils' cultural and social skills develop well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm. They know with certainty that if they approach a member of staff with a problem, it will be taken seriously. As one pupil

noted: 'People in school are kind to me, help me, and teachers keep watch and look after us always.' Pupils know about different types of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying. They say that bullying rarely happens, but that teachers tackle any problems, should they arise, effectively.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and show good manners towards adults. Their conduct around school is good. They respond to teachers' instructions well, saying that teachers are enthusiastic, and this 'makes lessons really good'.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour system of traffic lights and say that it works well. Pupils behave thoughtfully in class.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. The attendance of a few pupils from vulnerable groups had been lower than other pupils nationally and they were more likely to be persistently absent. However, effective work by leaders has improved this and, consequently, attendance overall is now average.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The school experienced a decline in standards in the 2016 assessments for pupils in Year 2. Currently, pupils across the school are making strong progress because of the swift actions taken by the head of school to remedy the weaknesses in last year's outcomes. The work seen in a range of pupils' books and the latest test information supports this.
- The school does not yet have pupils who have reached the end of key stage 2. However, their current outcomes are beginning to reflect well on their progress towards the standards expected for the end of this phase of education. These oldest pupils in the school display a maturity towards their learning and awareness that prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- The focus on children's speech and language in the early years means that children are well prepared for Year 1 because they can form most letter sounds correctly. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check increased again in 2016. By the end of Year 2 last year, all pupils reached the expected standard, including all the pupils who had special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Disadvantaged pupils make better progress due to a renewed focus on effective support. The funding available for these pupils has been reviewed to provide better support for pupils' learning. The impact is not fully seen in the number reaching the higher standards in their writing and mathematics work.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make valuable progress from their starting points. Their work is carefully assisted at times and this support enables them to achieve effectively.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership of the early years is very effective. The leader and her team understand the strengths and areas for development in provision, and constantly work to improve the experience that children have in the setting. Together with the on-site children's centre, they promptly identify children who need extra support when they enter the provision, and plan accordingly, addressing children's needs, particularly in speech and language issues.
- Children regularly enter the Nursery with skills that are below those that are typical for their age but by the time they start in Reception their attainment is almost at age-related expectations. The good provision enables children to continue to learn well and, as a result, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development in the current Reception Year is above the 2016 national average. This represents good progress from children's starting points and ensures that a majority of them are ready for Year 1.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding to ensure that they address any barriers children have to their learning. Disadvantaged children make good progress because leaders provide effective support for them if they fall behind in their learning, enhancing their speech and language development well.
- In Nursery, children develop independence by following clear routines. Staff model positive relationships and they make learning fun so that children's learning moves on at a brisk pace. Children are kept fully focused on their activities and as a result they behave well. Children work independently and creatively, for example forming letters in chalk and using stencils to paint letters. Children are clear about the expectations that staff have of them about sharing and using resources. They talk sensibly with each other, listen carefully during singing and take part enthusiastically in counting activities at circle time.
- Teachers plan exciting activities for children in Reception and they provide good opportunities for exploring and learning. For example, children enthusiastically use big chalk to write sentences from picture cards in the play area. One boy, having proudly written 'the big dog', was encouraged to add a capital letter and a full stop. Mathematical challenges involving halving were available both inside and outside the classroom, including, for example, finding half of the cars sunk in the water trough. The incubating duck eggs stimulated huge amounts of discussion, and children's knowledge of the gestation cycle of ducks was very detailed as a result.
- Safeguarding is effective and all the statutory welfare requirements are met. Children show through their behaviour that they are happy in the setting and feel safe. They are confident, and content to talk to each other, to adults and to visitors. They behave well and listen carefully to adults.
- Parents are positive about the early years provision. They appreciate leaders being proactive in engaging with them as their children start school. Staff encourage parents to be involved with their child's education, through a range of events and regular updates.

## School details

Unique reference number	125056
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10032486

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Foster
Head of School	Andy Hayes
Telephone number	01932 227816
Website	<a href="http://www.grovelands.surrey.sch.uk">www.grovelands.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@grovelands.surrey.sch.uk">head@grovelands.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Grovelands Primary School is changing its age range to become a primary school. It has not yet completed this change and so does not currently have pupils in Year 6.
- A federation with a local school with shared leadership posts and governance arrangements has recently ended.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is the same as most other primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is



average, as are the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

- A separately registered after-school club runs on the school site.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in every class. This included observations made jointly with senior leaders to observe the work of classes from Nursery to Year 5.
- Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work across the curriculum and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally in groups and informally around school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and considered the views of 117 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons, at lunchtime and when pupils were moving in and around the school.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including school policies, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records, reviewed safeguarding documentation and considered how this related to daily practice.

## Inspection team

David Cousins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Parfoot	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Benn	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Beswick	Ofsted Inspector

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