

Inspection of a good school: Grove House Infant and Nursery School

Gilpins Ride, Littlefields, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1BJ

Inspection dates:

29 January 2020

Outcome

Grove House Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and are enthusiastic about attending. They enjoy their lessons and learn well, particularly in reading and mathematics. Children in the early years have exciting opportunities for learning. They settle quickly and are happy in school.

The kind and caring pupils are a credit to the Grove House community. Pupils behave very well. They are polite and friendly towards each other and to the adults who work with them. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. All parents who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to others. They said that leaders and teachers are approachable. Parents are confident that staff will always respond to questions or concerns. Parents believe that teachers know their children very well.

Teachers expect pupils to work hard. Pupils listen carefully in their lessons and try to do their best. Pupils told us about the importance of not giving up and trying harder. They enjoy visits, such as trips to the beach, the rural life museum and Norwich Castle. The whole school took part in the high school's remembrance event, where they sang and led prayers. These memorable experiences deepen pupils' understanding of their classroom topics.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

School leaders see curriculum development work as an ongoing process. Teachers have adjusted their curriculum plans to make sure that pupils develop the right knowledge and skills for their age, in different subjects. In history, for example, pupils have been learning about space exploration and the first moon landing. They can confidently recall important dates and facts. They have been thinking about astronauts like Neil Armstrong as 'historical heroes' and have written letters to Tim Peake.

Assessment across the curriculum is being developed. In some areas, this work is at an earlier stage than others. There are times when opportunities to stretch the most able pupils or correct misunderstandings are not identified. In some subjects, teachers do not

regularly check on pupils' understanding. This means that the curriculum is less well matched to the needs of all learners and does not always build on what they already know.

A key feature of the school's curriculum is its focus on teaching pupils to become effective learners. The school does this by using characters, known as 'superheroes', linked to key skills such as resilience, independence and creativity. In the early years, for example, the children talked about being independent, saying, 'We're grown up, we can read and write and get dressed on our own!' This is an important aspect of the school's work. It is regularly celebrated in assemblies and contributes strongly to pupils' personal development.

Early reading skills are taught effectively. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they join the school. From early on, they take home books that match the sounds they know. This allows children to practise their developing reading skills. Leaders have outlined what letters and sounds pupils should know by the end of each year. In Key Stage 1, pupils use their phonics knowledge to become fluent readers. They develop their comprehension skills well and can summarise what they have read.

Leaders have worked closely with the local junior school to develop their mathematics curriculum. The sequence of learning is well organised and ambitious. Staff have agreed an approach to teaching in mathematics that supports pupils' learning well. Teachers make sure that pupils practise and develop mathematical skills using a range of methods. Classrooms are well equipped with apparatus that helps pupils to understand their calculations. Pupils assess their own work and teachers are becoming more consistent in identifying pupils' next steps for learning. Most pupils make strong progress. However, in some books the presentation of pupils' work is not of a high enough standard.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are receiving strong support. Teachers and support staff adapt work and provide additional sessions so that pupils with SEND can make strong progress. Disadvantaged pupils are also well supported. Their individual learning needs are well understood and learning progress is tracked carefully.

The early years curriculum is exciting and engaging. As a result, children love learning new things and trying new activities. The curriculum is planned around a wide range of books and children have many opportunities to be creative and develop their imaginations. For example, in their new topic, Reception children wrote about their discovery of a dragon's egg in the school grounds. Children talk freely about what they are learning and what they can do. Relationships between the children and their teachers are strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders make sure that all staff understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding. Staff are fully aware of the importance of this issue and they are appropriately trained. As a result, staff are vigilant and notice possible signs of abuse and neglect. They know what to do if they believe that a pupil may be at risk of harm. The

school's safeguarding team works well with other agencies to keep pupils safe. Leaders check thoroughly to make sure adults are suitable to work in school.

Pupils feel safe in school. They understand rules that are designed to keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The opportunities for challenging and stretching the most able pupils are not always taken. This is because assessment across the school is inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that their systems for checking pupils' understanding are robust and consistently applied. This will enable teachers to identify what pupils know so that they plan more precisely to meet the needs of the most able learners.
- In mathematics pupils do not take enough care with the presentation of their work. This can lead to misunderstandings developing in later learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers' expectations for presentation in this subject are consistently high and that pupils take more care to do their best.
- In subjects where leaders have not developed a clear system of assessment, teachers do not systematically check on what pupils have learned. Work to develop assessment should be prioritised so that teachers will have a better view of what pupils know and can do, and use this information to support future learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Grove House Nursery and Infant Community School, to be good on 11–12 December 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144314
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10121413
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Jones
Headteacher	Sarah Charman (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.grovehouseinfant.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Grove House is a smaller-than-average-size school. The school is federated with Kings Park Infant School. The schools share an executive headteacher and governing body. Teaching staff share curriculum responsibilities between both sites.
- Grove House Infant and Nursery School converted to become an academy on 1 March 2017. When its predecessor school, Grove House Nursery and Infant Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school was a founder member of the Unity Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

- We visited all classes and were joined by the headteacher and curriculum leaders for some of these visits.
- We took account of the views expressed in 24 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 12 free-text comments from parents.
- We met with: the headteacher, two governors, two representatives of the multi-academy trust, parents in the playground and school staff. We looked at the

school's self-evaluation as well as a number of key school planning policies and curriculum statements.

- We considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection and safeguarding.
- We met with groups of pupils, observed them at playtimes and lunchtimes, and listened to them read their books.
- Responses from 26 pupils and 12 staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaires were considered.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, mathematics and history. In each subject, we visited lessons, scrutinised the work in pupils' books, and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

James Richards, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sally Garrett

Ofsted Inspector

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