

Inspection of Grafham Grange School

Grafham, Bramley, Guildford, Surrey GU5 0LH

Inspection dates: 25–26 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy here. Staff take the time to understand the pupils' complex social, emotional and mental health needs. They use this knowledge effectively to build strong relationships with the pupils.

Pupils, with staff, have produced their own positive behaviour support plans. These personalised plans help staff to understand each pupil's needs. Staff use this information successfully. Incidents of poor behaviour have reduced, and pupils engage with their learning. Pupils in lessons, around the school and at break- and lunchtimes behave well. Pupils said that there is occasionally some bullying, but staff deal with it quickly.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils to achieve the best qualifications they can. The atmosphere in all classrooms visited was calm. Pupils join in with their lessons eagerly.

The school grounds are extensive and include a lake, woods and a football pitch. These facilities are used daily for activities, including fishing and camp craft. Pupils benefit from these opportunities as they help to develop their health and well-being.

All parents and carers who completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, agreed that the school keeps pupils safe and happy. One parent said, 'The staff make every child feel valued and respected regardless of their needs.'

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

The principal leads the school with drive and determination. Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils. Staff want pupils to access an academic education at a level appropriate to them, and tailored to their needs, with opportunities for vocational learning.

Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. All subjects have plans in place that build pupils' knowledge and skills over time. In mathematics, the carefully planned personalised curriculum has meant that pupils achieve the highest qualifications they can. In other subjects, the curriculum plans have only been introduced recently. The plans need time to embed so that over time, pupils know more and remember more.

Most pupils arrive at the school with low literacy levels. Pupils who need support have a learning intervention plan. This plan lists the strategies staff need to implement to help pupils to develop their literacy skills, for example by breaking down instructions for tasks. Staff use the plans effectively to help pupils to learn. Pupils are supported to develop their reading on an individual basis. This is because there is not currently a programme for reading that is followed by the whole school. Leaders have introduced a new whole-school approach to develop reading and they

have produced a plan to achieve this. Leaders need to ensure that the plan is implemented so that pupils build up the skills necessary to be confident readers.

On arrival at the school, pupils often do not have the emotional, social, communication and independence skills they need to be effective learners. Developing these skills is central to the work of the school. The therapy team works with staff and other professionals to put in place programmes to develop pupils' resilience and emotional well-being. Pupils benefit immensely from the variety of therapies on offer at the school, such as art therapy. As a result, pupils acquire the skills they need to be successful in the future.

Leaders have developed a 'needs-led' programme that takes place for part of the week. Some pupils spend this time improving their literacy or numeracy. For others, the time is used to develop their social, independence or leadership skills, for example with teaching pupils to become sports coaches. This curriculum really considers the needs of pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils have a personalised programme that is relevant to them. This ensures that pupils develop the skills they need for their future.

Staff support pupils' personal development well and help prepare them for adult life. Pupils attend a variety of work experience placements that are tailored to their individual interests and needs. This helps to prepare pupils to move on successfully to further education, training or apprenticeships.

Governors and trustees are highly skilled. They know the school well and bring the right mix of challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Thorough systems are in place for checking on the suitability and recruitment of staff.

Safeguarding training is comprehensive and up to date. Staff know what to do to raise concerns about a pupil and they follow the correct procedures diligently. Effective communication between parents, external agencies and the school ensures that any concerns are dealt with promptly.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and in the community. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors all confirmed that they feel safe at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum plans for all subjects are well thought out and sequenced. For several subjects, the plans were only introduced recently. Leaders need to

continue to embed the new curriculum, so that pupils know more and remember more in these subjects.

- Most pupils arrive at the school with poor literacy skills. Pupils are well supported to develop their writing skills. However, there is not a systematic approach to help pupils to catch up quickly with their reading. Leaders need to ensure that there is a whole-school approach that focuses on teaching pupils to become confident readers. This will help pupils to access fully all areas of the curriculum.

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	145383
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10127925
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	10 to 19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jay Mercer
Principal	Janet Tremble
Website	www.grafham-grange.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Grafham Grange School is a special school catering for boys who have social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have associated complex special educational needs, including autism spectrum disorder.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is part of the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the principal, senior leaders, the governing body and the deputy chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. Meetings were also held with other school leaders.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art, and personal, social, health and economic education. We met with subject leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. We visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- We reviewed safeguarding procedures in place at the school, including the single central record and child protection and safeguarding policies. We met with the designated leader for safeguarding.
- We took account of 14 responses recorded on Ofsted’s Parent View survey, including nine associated free-text comments.
- The views of staff were gathered through meetings with groups of staff and by taking account of the six responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire.
- We spoke to pupils in lessons and observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and during break- and lunchtimes. We met with the student leadership team.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including: the school’s self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; the curriculum; and minutes from the governors’ meetings.

Inspection team

Susan Conway, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Becky Greenhalgh

Ofsted Inspector

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