

Inspection of Grange Primary School

Holmleigh Road, Tuffley, Grange Primary School, Gloucestershire GL4 0RW

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Considerable turbulence in staffing has slowed the pace of improvement. Despite this, leaders and governors are determined to get things back on track. Their recent work to improve the quality of education is taking hold well. However, some inconsistencies remain. Too few pupils gain the knowledge they need to be successful in all subjects.

Grange is a caring school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They say someone is always on hand if they need advice or guidance. This makes them feel safe. Pupils try hard to embody the school's values of 'be kind, honest, responsible and respectful' in all they do.

Most of the time, pupils behave well. They like earning 'BEST' points for showing the school's learning attitudes. Staff act quickly to re-engage anyone who loses focus in lessons. Pupils trust staff to resolve any issues, including about bullying.

Pupils benefit from experiences beyond the classroom to enhance their personal development. They enjoy important roles in school, such as house captains and school councillors. 'Grange rangers' take pride in helping younger pupils at playtime. Various clubs develop their talents and interests. The choir was a favourite as pupils performed at the 'Young Voices' concert.

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

School, and trust staff, have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have set out the content pupils need to learn and revisit in each subject, including in the early years. Where this is taught effectively, pupils make links between prior and current learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 can apply their knowledge of chronology to sequence events in history. However, there remains some variability in how teachers implement the curriculum. Consequently, pupils learn more in some units of work, subjects and phases than others.

Reading sits at the centre of the curriculum. Teachers read aloud to pupils each day. They select high-quality literature to expand pupils' vocabulary and enrich their general knowledge. For example, older pupils talk knowledgeably about war and refugees from a book they studied. Many say their teachers inspire them to read more by the books and poems they share in class.

Leaders have invested heavily in the early reading and mathematics programmes. These begin as soon as children start in Reception Year. Here, staff use stories and rhymes to help develop children's speaking and listening. Leaders check closely on how well pupils remember the sounds and numbers they are taught. Staff 'scoop' up pupils at risk of falling behind and provide extra practice. Leaders coach staff to make the teaching of reading even better. However, some adults do not have the expert knowledge they need to help the weakest readers catch up quickly. Consequently, too many pupils cannot read at an age-appropriate level.

Leaders identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. They follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Despite the strengths in the curriculum design, not all teachers adapt the curriculum well enough to meet pupils' needs. At times, pupils with SEND do not get the support they need to learn well across the curriculum, including in the early years. Leaders recognise this. All staff have received recent training to improve this aspect of their work further.

Most pupils' behaviour and attitudes are positive. However, some staff have not set up consistent routines, including in the early years. On occasions, this stops the flow of learning. Leaders realise that pupils' attendance is not good enough. They have introduced new systems to improve attendance, including persistent absence. However, it is too early to see any impact as a result of introducing these new systems.

Leaders help pupils to become responsible citizens. In assemblies and class discussions, pupils learn about social and moral issues. They are proud of the local charity work they do to help others. Pupils accept difference. As one said, 'We are kind and accepting of everyone, regardless of who they are.' Pupils use many strategies to manage their feelings and emotions. For example, they know how breathing 'calms you down and takes your mind off things'.

Teachers, including those new to the profession, speak highly of the school's leadership. They are proud to work at the school. Staff value the training they receive. Governors and trustees have an accurate understanding of the school. They ask the right questions to challenge leaders about the rate of improvement. Leaders and governors know what to do to secure further improvements.

Most parents agree that their children do well and are happy in school. However, some parents have mixed views about communication and support for pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are trained well to identify pupils who might be at risk of harm. Leaders act promptly to concerns about pupils' well-being. They seek help from external agencies for pupils who need it. Staff ensure that adults who work at the school are safe to do so.

Leaders use their knowledge of local risks to teach pupils how to stay safe. For example, pupils know how to be safe online and the dangers of drugs. They know who to talk to if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not have the expertise to help pupils learn to read. As a result, weaker readers struggle to develop secure phonics knowledge. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the knowledge they need to help pupils catch up with the expectations of the phonics programme.
- Not all teachers adapt the curriculum precisely enough for pupils, including those with SEND. This means that some pupils do not learn the curriculum as successfully as they could. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the expertise to adapt the curriculum and teaching so that pupils build knowledge securely across all subjects.
- Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of how well the curriculum is being implemented in some subjects. This means they cannot provide the targeted support and challenge precisely enough. Leaders need to have better oversight of how well pupils are learning so they can pinpoint where improvements are needed.
- The attendance of some pupils is too low. As a result, these pupils miss valuable learning. Leaders should continue to embed the new system and work with families to improve attendance, including persistent absenteeism.
- While many parents are positive about the school, a significant minority have mixed views. Some do not feel that communication is effective. Leaders and governors should continue to engage with parents so that they have greater confidence in the school's work.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	146311
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256572
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Sloan
Head of School	Beth Williams
Website	www.grangeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Phoenix Learning Alliance, a multi-academy trust in Gloucester. It joined the trust in September 2018.
- A new chair of trustees was appointed in October 2022.
- A trust school improvement lead took up the post in September 2022.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, assistant head of school, other school staff and three trustees. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive office, school improvement lead and trust-wide curriculum leads.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked more widely at documentation in art and design and personal, social and health education.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 5 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to trustees, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and responses to the staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

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