

Inspection of The Grove School

Newcastle Road, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 1HF

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

The Grove School is welcoming, inclusive and friendly. Staff strive to ensure all pupils develop 'a mindset to succeed', in line with their school motto. Leaders in the school are making many changes, particularly with regard to the curriculum and behaviour.

The vast majority of pupils are polite, courteous and work hard. However, a significant minority of pupils' behaviour is not good enough. Some pupils talk about some lessons being disrupted. Some teachers do not challenge this behaviour consistently. Leaders are aware of this. Leaders have recently introduced a new behaviour policy.

Leaders have high expectations for what they want pupils to achieve. They have reviewed the curriculum and have ambitious plans in place for what they want pupils to know, do and understand. They know about the areas that need further development and are taking steps to do so. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, enjoy a good quality of education. Students value the personalised support and opportunities that a small sixth form presents.

Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum and a wide choice of options in key stage 4. The personal, social and health education programme encourages their personal development. The careers programme raises pupils' aspirations and highlights the benefits of further and higher education.

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

Leaders, supported by the multi-academy trust, have made significant changes to the curriculum. There are clear subject plans that identify what they want pupils to know, do and understand in each subject. Subject leaders have carefully selected content to build on the primary curriculum. In most subjects, including in the sixth form, the learning that pupils encounter builds on the things they already know. Leaders and staff use assessment strategies well in most subjects, such as history, mathematics and sport. This allows staff to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. However, in other subjects, such as English and science, teachers do not consistently check what pupils already know. Teachers sometimes move on too quickly and gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding remain.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND and engage effectively with parents. Plans that identify pupils' learning needs are shared with staff. However, some staff do not always use these precisely enough to adapt their lessons. As a result, pupils with SEND do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable.

A minority of pupils do not consistently meet leaders' and teachers' expectations for behaviour. Pupils' learning is sometimes hindered by poor behaviour. Leaders are aware of this and have put in place further plans to address the behaviour of these pupils. For example, a new behaviour policy has recently been introduced. However, sometimes teachers do not consistently apply it. Most pupils are proud to attend the Grove School. They know that it is a safe place and all can name a trusted adult who will look after them and help them with any concerns they may have.

Leaders have ensured that support is in place for pupils who find reading more difficult. There is some impact of the success of this support. Leaders have begun to prioritise reading across the curriculum and reading for pleasure.

Pupils learn about issues that will prepare them to be positive citizens through their 'discovery curriculum'. Leaders are very keen for pupils to understand local, national and international issues through a range of experiences and opportunities. Pupils appreciate diversity and tolerance. They speak positively about respecting other people and equality. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and consent. Pupils benefit from an increasing range of extra-curricular activities such as 'voice box' and sporting events. Pupils say that they would like a wider range of these opportunities. Leaders agree, and are expanding their enrichment programme.

The careers programme is well planned and pupils receive high quality, impartial advice so that they are well informed for their next steps in education and training. Students in the sixth form value the advice and guidance they receive about their future plans. They are fully involved in the life of the school and act as important role models for younger pupils. For example, they act as mentors and provide support with reading.

Leaders, including governors, have a clear view of their future priorities for the school. They have made significant strides to ensure the school is fully staffed with subject specialists. Staff feel that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff are overwhelmingly proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. All staff know their responsibilities in being vigilant to any signs that pupils may be at risk. Staff receive regular, timely training and safeguarding briefings. Leaders are very well-informed about the safeguarding risks of the local area. They work tirelessly with local community groups and the police to address these risks.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about important safeguarding topics, such as the risks of using social media and staying safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not implemented consistently in a minority of lessons. Teachers sometimes move on too quickly, without ensuring that the important knowledge has been secured. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff systematically check pupils' understanding so that pupils are secure in their subsequent learning.
- Some staff do not consistently use the information they have about pupils with SEND to adapt their lessons. This means that sometimes pupils with SEND do not receive the appropriate support to keep up with their peers and their progress slows. Leaders should ensure that teachers make appropriate changes to their teaching to support pupils with SEND.
- Some teachers are not consistently applying the school's behaviour policy by addressing poor behaviour in lessons. As a result, low-level disruption in some classrooms has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that the behaviour policy is implemented consistently so that pupils demonstrate good behaviour in all lessons.

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	146580
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10268181
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	847
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	69
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alex Fry
Headteacher	Sonia Taylor
Website	www.groveschoolmarketdrayton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, talked to teachers, and spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at their work.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders and staff, and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. They reviewed the single central record and checked the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors looked at school documentation, behaviour logs, attendance records and destination statistics.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and members of the local governing body, as well as reviewing minutes of local governing body meetings.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire and additional written comments from parents. They looked at the survey returns completed by staff.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and personal development programme with leaders.

Inspection team

Neil Warner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walters	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector

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