

Inspection of a good school: Grove School

Dawson Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, West Midlands B21 9HB

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 October 2023

Outcome

Grove School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school. Pupils arrive with smiles on their faces, and they are greeted with a smile in return. The immaculately well-kept school buildings and stunning grounds provide an 'oasis in the city'. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and well cared for in school because they are. The kindness that everyone shows to each other is evident in all aspects of school life. Pupils say 'everyone is kind with their actions and words.'

Staff are committed to ensuring all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve their very best. This commitment and determination ensure that all pupils achieve their best from very different starting points. Pupils settle to learning very well, including the youngest children in the early years.

Pupils behave sensibly at all times of the day. As pupils say, 'there are reminders everywhere'. They listen carefully to their teachers and follow the well-established school rules consistently. Pupils relish learning new things. They can focus well during lessons because they are not disrupted from doing so by others.

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

Pupils get off to an excellent start with learning to read. All staff are skilful teachers of phonics. Any gaps in pupils' reading are identified carefully and teaching closely matches their needs. Some pupils need extra support to keep up. These pupils are identified without delay. Targeted interventions allow them to catch up as quickly as they can. All pupils read books that carefully match the sounds they know. This supports them to read accurately and fluently. The school has carefully selected high-quality texts for pupils to listen to and study as part of other curriculum areas. Pupils talk about these with enthusiasm. The whole school is dedicated to showcasing a huge collection of exciting and varied books and novels. Pupils say they love to read these and do so regularly.

The school has recently introduced a new approach to teaching mathematics. This is supporting pupils to know and remember important facts that enable them to find

answers to more difficult problems with ease. Many other curriculum areas have been designed well. The school recognises that assessment in a small number of subjects does not yet replicate the precise approaches to assessment in other subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.

The school's approach to pupils with SEND is impressive. They are identified quickly. All staff know the needs of these pupils exceptionally well. They do everything they can to ensure these are met. Very careful and precise target-setting enables these pupils to make the progress they are capable of.

Children in the early years achieve very well. They are excited by carefully planned activities. This starts in the Nursery classes. Children show excellent levels of concentration and independence. The 'Handsworth beach' is a wonderful addition to the outdoor area. It supports the school's focus on language development as well as many other areas of learning.

The school has many approaches to developing responsible citizens of today and the future. Pupils learn not to discriminate against others, such as by race, religion, or gender. They have a deep understanding of tolerance and respect. They say, 'All pupils and teachers respect each other here.' Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to be young leaders, including being school councillors, attendance ambassadors, digital leaders or peer mediators. Many classes have a class pet that the pupils have responsibility for caring for. Pupils talk excitedly about being pet ambassadors. They are particularly proud of Aristotle the axolotl. There is a wide variety of clubs for pupils to enjoy. Some examples include chess, arts club, bhangra dancing, and djembe drumming. All of these, alongside a wide variety of trips and residentials, enhance pupils' enjoyment outside of the classroom.

Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep safe. This includes when online or when in their local community. The school successfully encourages pupils to think about others who are not as fortunate as themselves. They recognise the difference they can make by caring for others.

Leaders at all levels, including governors, are inspiring. They work exceptionally well in the best interests of pupils. The school's approach to how they work with parents and carers is a strength. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They recognise the quality of education, care and support the school provides. All staff are committed and proud members of the Grove family. This joined-up approach helps the school to be the happy, successful and warm place it is.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment approaches to check that pupils fully understand what they have been taught have not been fully developed in some subjects. This sometimes prevents pupils from building their knowledge securely on what they already know, as staff do not identify gaps in their learning. The school should ensure that effective assessment strategies in all subjects support pupils' next steps in 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103392
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10290525
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	651
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kamran Arshad
Headteacher	Justine Baker
Website	www.grove.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average primary school.
- This school does not have a breakfast club or after-school care.
- This school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and design and technology. 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 at samples of pupils' work in a range of subjects including writing, reading, history, and art and geography.
- The lead inspector spoke to governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about pupils' safety.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. In addition, they took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Keri Baylis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Ogden

Ofsted Inspector

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