

# Inspection of The Grove School

The Grove, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5ED

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The Grove is a caring and inclusive school with an ethos of compassion and understanding. The school is ambitious and expects all pupils to do their very best. Pupils and staff have positive relationships. Pupils are keen to learn.

Pupils are kind and polite. They treat each other with respect, reflecting the school's values and ethos. Pupils know that if they need support there are trusted staff who are ready to help them. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

The 'Grove 100' provides all pupils, regardless of background, with character building experiences. Pupils also benefit from the 'Junior and Mini Duke' scheme, which celebrates pupils' involvement in extra-curricular activities. Pupils talk with pride of their involvement in the local community in events, such as the celebration of Elizabethan life.

School council members take their responsibilities seriously. They understand that they are role models for other pupils. Older pupils are proud of their roles as sports leaders. They are keen to support younger pupils in playground games.

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

The school has made significant changes to the curriculum, including a new phonics programme. The phonics curriculum is implemented well. The teaching of phonics is standardised across the school. Staff are well trained. The books pupils read match their reading ability. This means pupils progress well in their reading. The school has placed reading at the heart of its curriculum. As a result, pupils enjoy reading. They also learn about the diversity of society through the books they read.

The curriculum in core subjects is well planned and sequenced. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. For example, in mathematics pupils learn new knowledge and concepts confidently. As a result, pupils achieve well in the subjects tested at the end of key stage 2.

In the wider curriculum, the school has identified the essential knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to remember. Staff receive up-to-date training in the subjects they teach. Pupils are enthusiastic about what they have learned. However, in some subjects in the wider curriculum, misconceptions are not addressed as quickly as they could be. Assessment is not always used effectively to check what pupils know and can do. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge as securely as in the core subjects.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. The school has developed an ambitious early years curriculum with learning activities that capture children's interests. Staff quickly develop positive relationships with children. They have high expectations for children's development and behaviour. Many children sustain their

attention. As a result, most children are confident to explore learning purposefully through their play. Children learn to be independent from an early age. At the end of Reception, children are well prepared for a smooth transition into Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The school has effective processes in place to identify pupils with SEND at an early stage. This means the school swiftly provides personalised targets for pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the full curriculum and work well alongside their peers.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school and feel a sense of belonging. Pupils mostly behave well and follow school rules. The school views attendance as a high priority. The school has effective systems in place to track and analyse attendance. This means attendance continues to be a strength of the school.

Pupils have some understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils appreciate the need for the rule of law. As part of their roles within the school council, pupils value the opportunity to vote. Pupils understand different beliefs, religions and cultures.

Governors provide effective support for the school. They understand the school strengths and areas for development. This means governors are effective at holding school leaders to account by asking pertinent questions. The school supports the well-being of staff. Staff feel listened to and are fully supportive of the school.

The school knows that communication with the wider community has not always been effective. This means that parents and carers do not always feel that their views are listened to and valued.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum assessment is not effective. Assessment is not used well to identify where pupils have misconceptions in their learning. This means the curriculum does not always ensure pupils build their knowledge effectively. The school must ensure that assessment is used effectively in all subjects.
- There is not a clear and successful approach to communicating with parents. As a result, some parents do not feel listened to or well informed about their child's education. Leaders need to communicate more effectively with parents, so that they know about and understand the work the school is doing with their children.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113234
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267869
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	307
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ian Stewart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hilary Priest
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk">www.the-grove-primary.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 July 2010, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspectors

discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Thomson

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Tustain

Ofsted Inspector

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