

Inspection of Grange School

Shobnall Close, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 2HU

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Rebecca Cox. This school is part of Central Co-operative Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Simcox, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Trevor Sutcliffe.

What is it like to attend this school?

Grange school is a special place. The staff who work there place the pupils at the centre of all they do. Pupils are aware of the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe'. Most pupils demonstrate these when they are learning and interacting with others.

Leaders at all levels have high expectations for all, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has made positive changes to the curriculum and to the way teachers teach to enable all pupils to succeed.

Pupils are happy and get on well together. 'Kind koala', 'helpful hedgehog' and 'learning lion' help promote expected behaviours throughout the school day. Most children reflect these attitudes and enjoy the rewards they receive for showing them. The school provides effective support for pupils who require extra help to achieve these.

The members of the school council help leaders to decide on the clubs and activities that are available for pupils. As a result, pupils value the opportunities they have. Pupils enjoy trips to a local farm, 'careers week' and Mothers' Day events, as well as the chance to attend sporting clubs.

Parents are very positive about the school. The school ensures that pupils are happy and safe. Parents with whom inspectors spoke reinforced this positive view.

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

School leaders have benefited from support provided by the trust. As a result, in most subjects there is an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum. In the core subjects, training for teachers has enabled them to develop their subject expertise. However, teachers' delivery is less secure in a few areas of the curriculum. In these subjects, teachers are not always confident enough to adapt how they teach the knowledge and skills that they want pupils to know. This means that in some subjects, some pupils' knowledge and skills are less developed and they do not know and remember more over time.

The school has successfully developed assessment systems within the core subjects. This enables teachers to know when key concepts have been properly learned and identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Leaders are continuing to refine the curriculum and assessment within a small number of subjects in order to ensure that pupils are taught the essential aspects of the curriculum to help them build on their prior learning. This is also intended to support teachers to be able to address any misconceptions and close any gaps in knowledge and understanding.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. Prompts and scaffolds provide support when needed. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified as quickly and accurately as possible due to the rigorous systems in place. External agencies provide specialist

support and training, as well as engaging with parents. Some pupils follow an adapted curriculum and receive effective support from staff.

The school waste no time in helping the youngest children learn to read. Skilful staff deliver a highly structured reading curriculum across the school. This teaches pupils the sounds they need to know so they can read their well-matched reading books. Some less confident readers are still developing their fluency and receive intensive help to catch up. Pupils enjoy hearing their teachers read and listen in awe. Children in Nursery and Reception love the chance to vote on the class story for the day.

The school recognises that more needs to be done to improve pupils' writing skills, which were hindered due to them not attending school regularly throughout the pandemic. Leaders have reviewed the writing curriculum and identified that pupils need to further develop their technical and creative writing. The new writing curriculum is still in the early stages but appropriately builds on the phonics that pupils have developed within their reading. It is well sequenced and designed to make sure they learn the important knowledge and skills they need to learn.

Children get off to a strong start within the Nursery and Reception classes. A well-thought-out curriculum enables the children to achieve the knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for next steps. Learning is based around children's interests as well as the essential aspects that leaders have identified that they need to know and remember. Children enjoy the inviting activities within the classroom and in the outdoor area.

Leaders place a high priority on making sure that all pupils attend school regularly. They have implemented a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. This has had some success. Work with families to help them understand what their children are missing out on, as well as rewards for children, has led to a reduction in absence. The school is working with some parents to further improve the attendance of pupils whose attendance still needs to improve.

Behaviour is mostly calm within lessons and around school at lunchtime. There are positive relationships between adults and pupils. Most pupils engage well in their learning. Parents appreciate the high-quality pastoral support for their children and families.

Pupils are taught about different cultures. They understand the school values and these encourage them to be successful learners. They enjoy the sporting clubs they get to attend that help keep them active and healthy. Pupils learn to be tolerant and respectful of other people, and model these values well.

Leaders at all levels are highly ambitious for the school. They have a shared passion to build on their progress in improving the school and providing the best for the pupils and community they serve. Members of the trust and local governing board carry out their duties effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, assessment is not yet fully embedded. This means that teachers do not always identify gaps in learning. The school should further develop assessment systems in all subjects, to make sure that pupils embed key concepts and use their knowledge fluently to develop their understanding.
- The school has successfully prioritised teachers' subject knowledge within core subjects. However, their expertise in some other areas of the curriculum is less developed. The school should develop teachers' subject pedagogy across all curriculum areas to help pupils transfer key knowledge to long-term memory.

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 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	145377
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10290642
Type of school	Infant school
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Trevor Sutcliffe
CEO of trust	Richard Simcox
Headteacher	Rebecca Cox
Website	www.grangeschool.academy
Date of previous inspection	14 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Grange School converted to become an academy in March 2018. Grange School is a converter academy within the Central Co-operative Learning Trust.
- The headteacher took up the substantive post in January 2023.
- Grange School offers provision for two-year-olds. However, there are none currently on roll.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer, chief operations officer and the trust improvement partner.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector/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.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's Parent View. However, an inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day. The lead inspector also reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Donna O'Toole, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Patrick Amieli

Ofsted Inspector

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