

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Grendon Primary School

Grendon Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 4RB

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 November 2024

Outcome

Grendon Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's logo, 'We Can', sets the tone for this positive and aspirational school. It underpins the school's values, known as 'Grendon's Goals'. These set out how pupils should behave. Pupils understand the importance of working hard to achieve well and be successful. They enjoy learning and participate enthusiastically in lessons.

The school has high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The well-designed curriculum ensures that pupils build their knowledge and skills step by step in all subjects as they move through the school. This is particularly successful in reading and mathematics. Most pupils reach the standards expected by the end of Year 6. This ensures that they are ready for their secondary education.

Pupils feel safe and are confident that the adults who work with them will help and support them. They behave well, and disruption to learning is rare. Pupils understand the new behaviour policy, and this supports their behaviour. This includes pupils with SEND who sometimes need additional support to manage their behaviour.

Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise of the school. As one parent put it, 'The staff care, they nurture, and they support all children, no matter what their abilities are.'

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

Since the previous inspection, and despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, the school has maintained its focus on improving standards. This has been successful. There are notable improvements in many aspects of the school.

The school considers pupils' personal development to be equally as important as their academic development. The school's curriculum is uniquely designed on a 'cupcake' model. The casing represents the strong pastoral care pupils receive and partnership with parents. The sponge is the broad academic curriculum all pupils access. The topping and sprinkles are the exciting enrichment opportunities that spark pupils' interest.

The school is adept at identifying pupils with SEND early. Teachers make adaptations in lessons to ensure that all pupils can access the work set. Skilled subject leaders have carefully designed the curriculum. It is based on the local area. Pupils gain a deep understanding of their community and roots. Subject leaders are knowledgeable about their subjects and monitor teaching carefully. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and present content clearly. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. For example, pupils can explain the difference between a continent, a country and a city.

The school prioritises reading and writing development in the early years. Children start daily phonics and writing practice as soon as they join the Reception class. Teachers provide helpful resources to support children develop these early, essential skills. For example, phonics books match the sounds that children learn, and pencils with finger grips help pupils develop the correct hold. Most pupils learn their letters and sounds successfully and go on to read fluently. However, some pupils who find reading challenging do not receive sufficient support to master the skills needed. Additionally, some pupils struggle to transfer the writing skills they learn in English lessons to other subjects. This shows that some elements of writing are not securely embedded.

Staff instil good behaviour from the outset. Children learn to share, take turns and work and play together happily. Pupils understand the importance of good behaviour. They know and follow the school rules. Staff manage the behaviour of pupils well, including those with complex needs. Effective systems and support are in place to ensure that pupils learn in a calm, purposeful environment where everyone is safe. Actions taken by the school ensure that most pupils attend well.

There is a well-developed personal development programme at the school. Pupils enjoy the 'Fiver' challenge to generate funds. This initiative helps them to develop their financial and business skills. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep safe. Through the curriculum and assemblies, pupils deepen their knowledge of other world faiths and different cultures. This helps prepare pupils for life beyond the school.

The school offers many opportunities to attend extra-curricular clubs, including drama, orchestra and sports. These help pupils develop their skills and interests beyond the classroom. All clubs offered are free of charge and oversubscribed. However, the school does not ensure that all groups, especially disadvantaged pupils, benefit from this provision.

Staff are happy and well supported. Staff appreciate the effective training they receive and the reductions to their workload. Governors and leaders know and carry out their duties well, including in relation to safeguarding. They provide an effective balance of challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some lower-attaining pupils do not receive sufficient support to develop the skills needed to become successful readers. As a result, they do not achieve the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 or reading at the end of Year 2. The school should ensure that pupils who find early reading challenging receive the support needed to prevent them from falling behind and to become accomplished readers.
- Pupils do not routinely apply the writing skills they learn in English to other subjects. This reduces the accuracy and quality of their written work in subjects such as history and geography. The school should ensure that teachers have the same high expectations of pupils' writing in all curriculum subjects.
- The school does not analyse which pupils participate in the extra-curricular activities provided. As a result, staff do not know if all groups, especially disadvantaged pupils, are fully included. The school should analyse participation rates of extra-curricular clubs to ensure that all pupils benefit from the school's valuable offer.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in February 2015.

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	103205
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10343726
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Samuel Lewis
Headteacher	Helen Ridley
Website	www.grendon.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2020, having previously been the deputy headteacher at the school.
- Since September 2023, the school has reduced its pupil admission number. It has moved from a two-form entry to a one-form entry school. This means there is only one class in the Reception Year and Year 1, but two classes in Year 2 to Year 6.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. They met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. They also had a telephone discussion with the head of school improvement at the local authority.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspector met with groups of staff. They also met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: checked the school's single central record; spoke to senior leaders about safeguarding procedures; took account of the views of 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 inspector considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement, records of attendance and behaviour incidents.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and from their online questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024