

# The Grove Primary School

Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0HN

## Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teachers do not have equally high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The quality and presentation of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Sometimes, teachers do not match work carefully enough to pupils' abilities.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistent. Staff sometimes do not help pupils to apply their reading skills as well as they could in their writing.
- Leaders' development of some middle leadership roles is still at an early stage.
- Staff sometimes do not insist on the highest standards of behaviour. Sometimes, low-level disruption slows learning.
- Pupils' understanding of the fundamental British values is not as secure as it should be for their age and maturity.
- Attendance and punctuality, including that of disadvantaged pupils, are improving. However, attendance is below the national average.

### The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Leaders are effective in bringing about improvements to behaviour, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Leaders are establishing a culture of higher expectations.
- Leaders and other staff share a vision for creating a school and curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils and the community in which they live.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They are often skilled in using questioning to help pupils learn.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well.
- Relationships are positive. There is an increasing ethos of mutual respect.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their school life. Children make good progress.
- Those responsible for governance know the school well. They effectively support and challenge the school to improve.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and those responsible for governance to ensure that:
  - they develop further the roles of middle leaders, so they have more impact in raising standards in their areas of responsibility
  - pupils gain a deeper understanding of the fundamental British values, so they are better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress and attainment by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve, including of the quality and presentation of pupils' work
  - have the expertise to ensure that all pupils make good progress in acquiring phonics and early reading skills, and can apply these in their writing
  - use information about pupils' learning to match work carefully to pupils' abilities.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
  - all staff have high expectations of behaviour and apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well
  - leaders continue their efforts to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality further.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The cohesive senior leadership team are successfully addressing a legacy of underachievement and poor behaviour. They are determined to bring about continued improvement. Their decisive, well-chosen actions have brought about improvements in all aspects of the school's work. However, inconsistencies remain. The quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and behaviour are not consistently good.
- Leaders take determined actions to improve the quality of teaching. They support and work alongside staff. Leaders and staff meet to discuss the progress made by all pupils and identify pupils who are falling behind. They agree the actions needed to help them catch up. However, leaders have not ensured that their initiatives to improve standards are applied consistently well.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive relevant training linked to school priorities. This includes in relation to behaviour management, the teaching of mathematics, improving pupils' speech and language skills and the teaching of phonics. Staff receive coaching from leaders or personnel such as the English or mathematics leads in the trust to develop their expertise in, for example, planning sequences of lessons. However, again, the impact of training is not consistent across the school.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic and value the support they receive from senior leaders and the trust. They carry out actions to monitor and evaluate standards. However, due to staff changes, some middle leadership roles are still at an early stage of development and the impact of middle leaders is variable.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, and complemented by a range of enrichment opportunities. Initiatives such as the music room or the new mathematics and science 'lab' help to raise the profile of different subjects. Leaders, governors and staff have a clear vision for creating a curriculum that focuses on meeting the needs of the pupils. Recently, the curriculum has been developed to promote pupils' well-being. Pupils learn about different religions and beliefs. However, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that the pupil premium is used increasingly well to improve the progress and raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and improve their attendance. Leaders' plan for the use of the funding is focused and additional support is carefully targeted to meet pupils' needs. While outcomes are inconsistent, the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- Leaders have prioritised developing the reading curriculum. A range of initiatives have been introduced help pupils make links between language, reading and writing. An example of this is the way curriculum topics are linked to carefully chosen books which explore themes such as friendship, immigration, being an orphan and living in different countries or cultures. While this work is at an early stage, the approach is helping to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport is used well to provide coaching to improve the quality of teaching. Leaders check that pupils' participation in sporting events and physical activity is improving. The school offers a range of

opportunities including a school swimming team, dance club and judo sessions. During the inspection, pupils participated in cricket sessions led by professional coaches. The funding is also used to provide a yoga programme.

- Leaders ensure that additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used effectively. Pupils' needs are quickly identified and early help is put into place quickly. Leaders identify specific relevant approaches and leaders and other staff review pupils' learning carefully. Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance have a clear vision and ambition for the school. Staff are committed to improving outcomes for pupils. Leaders' evaluation of what the school does well and the areas in which it needs to improve is accurate. The school improvement plan sets out relevant, focused targets for improvement.
- The trust is effective in supporting the school to bring about improvements to the quality of teaching, leadership, behaviour and attendance. The trust has been proactive in providing opportunities for staff to share expertise, for example in the teaching of reading or mathematics. Staff and leaders value the close working with schools within the trust. Leaders, with the support of the trust, have managed significant staff changes well.
- The large majority of parents and carers who spoke with inspectors were very positive about the school and the improvements made. Many parents spoke positively of the progress that their children are making. 'They are always trying to push them to do better' was a typical comment. Parents were nearly unanimous that their children enjoyed coming to school.

### **Governance of the school**

- The local governing body is passionate about supporting and challenging the school to improve further. The minutes of its meetings show that governors ask challenging, probing questions of leaders in relation to, for example, the use of the pupil premium, behaviour and attendance. They are sharply focused on the school's priorities.
- The local governing body are clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the trust. They are effective in supporting the trust to hold leaders to account. There is a clear structure of accountability.
- The governing body have a clear understanding of the school's local community and how this links to the school's curriculum and priorities for improvement.
- Those responsible for governance know the school well. They regularly visit the school and meet with leaders and other staff to review the school's progress in achieving its objectives for improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a secure culture of safeguarding.
- Leaders ensure that all members of staff are kept up to date with the latest guidance on keeping pupils safe in education. This includes, for example, the government's

'Prevent' duty. All staff are aware of the procedures they should follow if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare.

- Leaders swiftly follow up any concerns raised. They decide what actions need to be taken, including the involvement of external agencies where this is relevant. They take timely actions which they record carefully.
- Leaders also record carefully the rigorous checks they make on adults before they can start volunteering or work alongside pupils. The record of recruitment checks meets all statutory requirements.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and the large majority of parents say that the school keeps their children safe. Many commented on the improved safety of the school site.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving. There is some very strong practice in the school. However, this is not consistent. Teachers do not have equally high expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, the extent to which pupils are taught to redraft their work and pupils' handwriting are inconsistent.
- Sometimes, teachers do not use information about pupils' learning well enough to ensure that tasks are appropriately matched to pupils' needs or abilities. Sometimes work is too hard for the least able, or too easy for the most able. Pupils sometimes complete tasks and are unsure what to do next.
- The teaching of phonics is well structured and organised. However, the quality of the teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers do not help pupils to apply their phonics and reading skills as well as they could in their writing.
- Teachers often used visual imagery and apparatus well to teach mathematics. There is evidence of the impact of training in developing a mastery approach. Calculation methods are taught well. In some classes, pupils are taught how to improve their problem-solving and reasoning skills. However, this is variable.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they often use to plan logical sequences of learning. Questioning is often effective in checking pupils' understanding or developing their thinking.
- Teachers promote pupils' increasingly positive attitudes to reading. Pupils are increasingly positive about the use of novels to support their learning. A typical comment from pupils about the approach was that, 'It helps you learn and gives you ideas. "Journey to the River Sea" made me learn a new word I did not understand: voyage. It's like a long journey.' Pupils value the new school library, which opened on World Book Day.
- Teachers set homework that is appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, which consolidates learning or prepares pupils for work to come. For example, parents of pupils in Year 1 commented positively about the sealife 'scene in a shoe box' homework task set as part of a school topic.
- Teachers generally deploy teaching assistants well to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants often provide effective support for pupils' learning, particularly when working with small groups and individual pupils.

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development increasingly well. Pupils learn about different religions such as Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. In addition, visits such as that of the Mayor of Melton helped pupils to understand ideas about democracy, the rule of law and helping others. Pupils can speak in general terms about the importance of respecting others and that 'We should not upset others.' However, pupils do not have an understanding of the fundamental British values that is appropriate for their age or maturity.
- Leaders and other staff encourage pupils to have high aspirations of themselves. In an assembly, for example, pupils were encouraged to reflect on the school's current value of 'ambition'. Pupils shared what they wanted to be when they were older, such as a police officer or a horse rider.
- Leaders have introduced recently an initiative to promote pupils' positive mental health and well-being as part of the curriculum. This is beginning to help pupils gain greater self-confidence and understanding of their emotions. Pupils have increasingly positive attitudes to learning and school life.
- Older pupils enjoy the roles of responsibility the school offers them, such as the school council or the 'reading buddy' opportunities that older pupils have, reading with younger pupils. Pupils told inspectors how they enjoyed taking younger pupils to the playground.
- Pupils are taught about the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to make healthy choices. Illustrating this, many pupils were observed independently visiting the salad bar during lunchtimes and supplementing their lunches with salad and vegetables.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They say that bullying is now rare and they are confident that staff will resolve any concerns they might have.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Leaders have made improving standards of behaviour a priority, and staff, parents and pupils all commented on considerable improvements. Pupils know school systems, including the system for gaining rewards and what will happen if they do not behave well. School rules are displayed in classrooms. However, staff do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well. Low-level disruption was observed in some lessons and this sometimes hinders learning.
- Pupils increasingly enjoy learning and coming to school. Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is improving. Leaders, with the support of the trust, have put into place a range of initiatives to emphasise the importance of attendance. The free

bagel offered to pupils in the mornings, for example, is helping to encourage punctuality. Leaders check attendance and punctuality carefully and work with families of pupils who have persistent absence. Nonetheless, current attendance is below the national average.

- Pupils are increasingly proud of their school. However, pupils are not consistently taught to take pride in their work.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. Many asked inspectors, 'Are you having a nice day?' Pupils were happy to talk about their learning and school life.
- Older pupils say behaviour has improved. Many commented positively on the 'happy lunchtime' initiative, which is ensuring that pupils have lots to do. Playtimes are a fun, positive experience for pupils. Pupils say, 'No-one is naughty any more.' Many said that they now enjoy playtimes much more than in the past.
- Leaders and other staff ensure that clear systems are in place for pupils who need support to improve their behaviour. This is effective. Staff are committed to ensuring an inclusive school ethos which helps pupils to understand themselves better. The number of incidents of poor behaviour has greatly reduced. The formerly high number of permanent exclusions has reduced. At the time of the inspection, there had been no permanent exclusions for the current school year.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Previously published information shows that in 2018 there were improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. The proportions of pupils meeting the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check and children achieving a good level of development in the early years also improved and were above the national averages. However, pupils' attainment in writing, and particularly in reading, at the end of key stage 2, as well as reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1, were below the national averages.
- Pupils' work shows that many pupils are making good progress. As a result of leaders' and other staff's efforts, outcomes are improving overall. However, this is not consistent. Expectations are not consistently high and too many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Sometimes, when teachers do not match work well to pupils' abilities, the least and the most able pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Pupils are making improving progress in writing. In some classes, pupils are given clear guidance and are taught how to edit and improve their writing. This helps pupils to make stronger progress. However, this varies. In some classes, the quality of pupils' writing is not as high as it should be. They do not make the progress they should in improving spelling, handwriting or presentation.
- Many pupils often make strong progress in mathematics. They gain understanding and fluency in the key mathematical ideas and methods of calculation. In some classes, teachers promote pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills well. However, again, this is not consistent across the school.

## Early years provision

Good

- Children, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their individual starting points in the early years. In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development improved compared to the previous year and was above the national average. Children are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- The early years is well led and managed. Leaders analyse strengths and areas to improve. For instance, leaders have analysed that some pupils join the school with speech and language skills below that expected for their age. Staff provide specific support and focused teaching. For example, inspectors observed staff using actions and symbols to help children articulate and remember names of characters in a dinosaur story.
- Leaders check children's learning and development carefully. Children's 'learning journey' and 'My world' books show how individual approaches are used to meet children's needs, including those who are disadvantaged or those with SEND.
- Staff ensure that clear systems and routines are established. Children are encouraged to be responsible. Children were observed all sharing the responsibility for tidying up at the end of the morning, for example.
- Children behave and collaborate well in the early years. There are positive relationships between adults and children, and children themselves.
- Teaching is effective in the early years, including the teaching of phonics. Children have positive attitudes and are confident talking about their learning. They showed enjoyment as they searched excitedly for dinosaur names in the outdoor classroom.
- Leaders encourage parents to contribute to children's assessment by, for example, sharing children's achievements at home. Leaders offer information sessions so parents can better understand and support children's learning.
- Leaders ensure that the early years welfare requirements are met.
- Staff ensure that learning activities are planned and organised well both indoors and outdoors. Children show independence and perseverance when they engage with activities. However, on occasion, activities, particularly in the outdoor areas, are not as sharply focused as they could be to offer challenge and stimulate children's curiosity.

## School details

Unique reference number	141469
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10054073

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Christine Stansfield
Headteacher	Steve Nash
Telephone number	01664 562554
Website	<a href="http://www.thegroveprimary.co.uk">www.thegroveprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@meltongrove.org">admin@meltongrove.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 February 2019

## Information about this school

- The Grove Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Mowbray Education Trust. The school has a local governing body which reports to the board of trustees. An executive headteacher works with the schools in the trust.
- The school has a breakfast club.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and of pupils who speak English as an additional language, are below those seen nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons, the majority jointly with senior leaders. During these visits, the inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke with them to evaluate the quality of their learning. The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with leaders, met with a group of pupils and listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. The inspectors met with members of the local governing body, the chief executive officer, the executive headteacher, the lead for behaviour and SEND and the group operations manager of the Mowbray Education Trust. The inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school days.
- A range of documents were scrutinised. These included those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' attainment and progress. The inspectors looked at plans for improvement as well as leaders' evaluation of the school's performance. The inspectors also considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

## Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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