

Grove Primary School

Pickersleigh Grove, Malvern, WR14 2LU

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Lower ability pupils and those who need extra help do not always make as much progress as they should. This is because their work is not always set at the right level.
- Standards in Years 1 to 3 are low because the pupils in these year groups have not made enough progress in the past.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems.
- Subject leaders do not check the work of teachers carefully enough and do not always provide individual teachers with suitable support.
- Governors do not sufficiently challenge subject leaders about their impact in the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are leading changes in the school with enthusiasm. They have an accurate understanding of the actions that need to be taken to continue improving the school.
- The quality of teaching has strengthened. There is no longer any inadequate teaching in the school.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. They are kind and considerate.
- In Nursery, Reception and Year 6, a high proportion of pupils make good progress. This is because of stronger teaching.
- In partnership with parents and carers, the school has improved pupils' attendance. It is now average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by 11 teachers. Seven of these were joint observations with the headteacher. They also heard a sample of pupils from each key stage read aloud.
- Inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and governors. A telephone conversation was held with a local authority representative. There were informal discussions with parents and carers during the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' writing and mathematics books with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of nine responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and 27 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the school improvement plan and action plans, the school's own assessment data, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Usha Devi, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Burton

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is above the national average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced high levels of staff absence since the previous inspection. Half of the class teachers who were in post at the time of the last inspection have left.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good and better teaching by making sure that teachers:
 - closely match activities to the needs of all pupils, and especially lower ability pupils and those who need extra help
 - show pupils how to complete their work before pupils begin to work independently
 - check how well pupils are learning during lessons so that those who are ready can be moved on to more challenging work.
- Raise achievement in all year groups by:
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to solve mathematical problems
 - enabling pupils to use a range of strategies to check the meanings of unfamiliar words
 - providing appropriate resources for lower ability pupils and those who need extra help with their writing.
- Strengthen leadership, management and governance by
 - making sure that subject leaders have the skills required to check carefully the quality of teaching and learning and to help teachers become more effective
 - ensuring that governors challenge more thoroughly the middle leaders about their impact in the school
 - improving the quality of school action planning so that all plans clearly state how the impact of the school's work will be measured.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- At the time of the previous inspection pupils were making inadequate progress in Years 1 and 2. In the rest of the school they were making at least expected progress. This uneven progress in the school led to pupils leaving Year 6 with low standards. The school has successfully tackled the issue of inadequate progress. However, pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils do not yet make good progress in all year groups.
- Children start the Nursery class with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their age. The children in the current Reception classes are on track to enter Year 1 with average standards. This is because teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often good.
- In 2012, standards improved at the end of Year 6, with pupils matching the national average in English and mathematics. They made expected progress from the end of Year 2. Currently, standards are lower in Years 1 to 3 than in Years 4 to 6.
- The gaps between the standards attained by different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls, are steadily closing. The way subjects are taught has been suitably changed so that topics are interesting for boys and girls.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is improving. However, not enough pupils make good progress because the quality of teaching they experience varies.
- Pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds well to read unfamiliar words. However, they do not always know how to find out the meanings of words they are not familiar with. For instance, pupils do not look for clues in the text to help them as they read.
- Lower ability pupils and those who have special educational needs do not always make as much progress as others in the school, especially in writing. This is because teachers do not always set activities which are at an appropriate level. Also, teachers do not always provide pupils with the resources they need to help them while they write.
- The pupils who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding are making progress that is at least in line with expectations. The school has used its funding appropriately to provide these pupils with extra support outside of lessons and by purchasing a range of reading books and resources to support learning in mathematics.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Despite some improvement since the previous inspection, there is still too much teaching that is not consistently good.
- Where teaching requires improvement, activities for pupils are not always well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. This is particularly the case for lower ability pupils and those who need extra help. The work they are given is often too difficult. As a result, they are unable to complete their work without support from an adult.
- Teachers do not always move pupils on to new learning quickly enough during lessons. While

reviewing pupils' workbooks, inspectors saw examples of pupils, especially the more able, completing activities that were too easy for them.

- In some lessons, teachers do not show pupils how they should complete their activities. Consequently, when pupils begin to work independently they are not quite sure what the teacher expects them to do by the end of the lesson.
- The quality of teachers' marking is improving. Teachers, particularly in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6, make effective use of 'Learning Targets' to tell pupils what they need to do to correct their mistakes. Year 6 teachers ensure that pupils have time to respond to their comments.
- Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and they encourage pupils to help each other while learning. In one successful example, pupils used a range of instruments to recreate the sounds in a scene from the film, *Hugo*. Prior to their final performance, pupils worked in groups and commented on how they could enhance the sounds they were making.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons. They remain focused during independent work. When working with others they respect each other's views and listen carefully.
- In the playground, pupils from different classes play together and behave responsibly. They appreciate the 'playground buddies'. One pupil, summing up the views of many said, 'They look out for us.'
- Instances of bullying and poor behaviour have reduced and are now rare. Pupils told inspectors that, occasionally, a few pupils do call each other names. However, pupils are confident that staff deal with these incidents promptly and fairly.
- Pupils state that they feel safe in school. A view confirmed by parents and carers who responded to the Parent View questionnaire and those who spoke with inspectors. Pupils talk confidently about how to keep safe in the home, when crossing the road and when using the internet.
- The school promotes good levels of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Grove Primary has links with a school in Tanzania. Pupils from both schools have taken part in a radio broadcast and exchanged letters so that they can learn about each other's way of life.
- Attendance has improved markedly since the school's previous inspection. Following years of low levels of attendance, it is now in line with the average for primary schools. The school is working with parents to reduce the number of pupils who arrive late.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has improved since the last inspection. Leadership and management requires improvement, however, because the school has further to go and subject leaders do not yet have all the skills required to check carefully the quality of teaching or to help teachers become more effective.
- Subject leaders visit lessons and review how well pupils are doing so that they can identify

strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. However, their feedback to staff is not precise enough. For instance they do not make clear the actions that need to be taken to raise achievement for pupils of different abilities.

- The school improvement plan identifies accurately what needs to be done to further improve the school. However, it does not make clear how the impact of the school's actions will be measured.
 - With effective support from the local authority and governors, the headteacher has made good use of the school's performance management procedures to eradicate inadequate teaching. The headteacher has high expectations. He is resolute in his commitment to ensuring that pupils reach higher standards. The headteacher and deputy headteacher keep a close check on the progress of different groups of learners. The headteacher uses this information to organise training for staff and to decide if teachers should move up the pay scale.
 - The introduction of topics which are more interesting and relevant for pupils across the school has improved pupils' behaviour. 'Lessons are much more interesting' was just one of the comments made by pupils. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in other subjects. This is not the case with mathematics. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their number skills to solve mathematical problems.
 - The support and training offered by the local authority have helped to improve pupils' learning and to strengthen the quality of teaching and governance.
 - The school is strengthening its links with parents and carers. The headteacher is looking at ways in which the school can continue to work with parents and carers in order to support children's learning at home.
 - Through 'learning logs,' pupils have good opportunities to complete projects at home and to find out information. For instance, as part of project on biographies, a pupil interviewed his grandfather who was in the Royal Air Force.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For instance, it is aware, that standards in some year groups are not high enough and that some groups in the school need to make faster progress. However, governors have only recently started to question the school about its use of pupil premium funding. They are keen to ensure that all pupils for whom the school receives this funding make good progress. Although governors ask demanding questions of the senior leaders, they do not challenge subject leaders enough. The procedures for keeping pupils safe meet requirements.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	135067
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	399730

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Hayden
Headteacher	Mark Ridlinton
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 September 2011
Telephone number	01684 572516
Fax number	01684 577345
Email address	office@groveprimary.worcs.sch.uk

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