

Stanley Grove Academy

Stanley Grove, Rushford Street, Longsight, Manchester, M12 4NL

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start.
- Progress in Years 1 to 6 is good and has improved rapidly.
- There is a continued rising trend in the standards achieved in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Lessons are planned imaginatively and pupils enjoy their learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times. They are attentive and always try their best. They feel safe in school and enjoy each others' company.
- Overall, current leadership and management have brought good improvement to key areas of the school's work.
- An outstanding feature is the leadership and management of teaching which has effectively set the school on a successful path and will ensure its further improvement.
- Governors support and challenge the school well and contribute very effectively to its improvement planning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistencies in the quality and effectiveness of marking and the expectations of the way pupils present their work.
- The most able pupils, especially, do not write at length often enough across different subjects in order to make best use of the writing skills they learn.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics could be raised further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons and part lessons, discussed pupils’ learning with senior staff and examined the evidence of how teaching quality is checked by school leaders.
- Meetings were held with staff members, pupils, members of the governing body and senior executives of Bright Futures Education Trust.
- The views of 53 parents who responded via Ofsted’s online questionnaire Parent View were taken into account, as well as questionnaires completed by staff members.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and scrutinised a wide range of documentation that included: national assessment data and the schools own assessments; minutes from governing body meetings; the school’s own view of its work, samples of pupils’ work and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sandy Dixie

Additional Inspector

Stephen Helm

Additional Inspector

Lyn Field

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group represented is Pakistani, followed by Bangladeshi pupils. Others come from a mix of European and non-European cultures. Very few pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is slightly above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- An above average proportion of pupils is supported by school action.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Stanley Grove Academy converted to an academy in September 2012. When its predecessor school, Stanley Grove Community Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory. The academy is one of the schools within Bright Futures Education Trust.
- The current school principal and vice principal were appointed in July 2013.
- A breakfast club is provide by the school during term time as well as some additional organised activities at weekends and during holidays.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and thereby raise standards and pupils' achievement further by:
 - improving the quality, consistency and effectiveness of marking across all subjects
 - raising expectations in the way that pupils present their work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils, especially the most able, to write at length across different subjects so that they use the language and writing skills that they learn to the full.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Nursery and Reception classes with skills well below those typically expected for their ages. A significant proportion of children speak English as an additional language. Good teaching and well planned activities mean that all children get all the support that they need to make good progress. By the end of Reception most children's knowledge and skills are just a little below those expected, but some are more advanced and ready to face the challenges of Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. They build well on the good knowledge of letters and sounds that they gain in the Early Years Foundation Stage and tackle reading and writing confidently, as well as making up ground quickly in mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average. That represents good progress from the earlier starting point.
- The rate of progress in Years 3 to 6 shows continuous improvement since the school converted to an academy. In the last year, particularly, leaders have consolidated good progress in all classes. Standards have risen and currently pupils' work and school assessments confirm that they are securely matching the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements in reading and mathematics and an increased number of pupils on track to reach higher levels, account for the better standards seen in the school.
- The school's assessments show that the rising trend is sustainable. Very challenging targets are set to ensure that pupils make the progress they need, and significant proportions in each class have exceeded their progress targets for the current year.
- A successful drive to improve writing in 2013 has been followed up with a similar focus on reading this year. Reading has a high profile throughout the school and the school's 'Big Book Bash', a whole community event, generates a lot of interest in books and good reading.
- Pupils in Year 2 use their skills well to tackle unfamiliar words. They choose from a good range of reading and show good understanding of what they read. In Year 6 also, pupils enjoy books. They read confidently, using good expression. Pupils have good knowledge of different authors and are very clear about the kinds of books they like to read.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Their learning is well managed and tailored carefully to their particular needs. Pupils receive good and well focused additional support for their learning in classes and small groups. Their progress is checked and recorded very closely to make sure that step-by step progress continues at a good pace.
- The most able pupils are identified and provided for in lessons. More pupils than previously are on track to reach level 5 and the highest level 6 in reading, writing or mathematics. School leaders recognise the potential for more pupils to achieve at the highest levels, particularly in writing by making sure that expectations remain high and that extended writing skills are fully tested across all subjects.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and has visible impact on pupils' achievement. The progress of those supported by the funding is checked separately to ensure that leaders' commitment to equality of opportunity is fulfilled. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did better than others in the school in 2013. Currently the group is performing equally as well as their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching quality has been successfully improved because of the impact of leaders' actions and the way that staff have embraced new expectations and responded to training and support.
- Many new teachers and assistant teachers have been appointed since 2012. They have been moulded by leaders into an ambitious team, clearly sharing in the drive for better learning for pupils, and higher achievement.

- There is a noticeable drive throughout the school to secure pupils' learning of basic mathematics and literacy skills.
- Pupils learn well in mathematics because they are given opportunities to use the skills they are taught to solve problems. These are often related to real life. For example, one class used their number skills effectively to work out what profit they could make from selling bags of popcorn. Younger pupils discussed what fears they commonly felt (linked well to a project on safety) and constructed a graph to show, for instance whether pupils were more afraid of spiders than getting lost or finding a monster under the bed. They learned well, put their mathematical skills to the test and enjoyed doing so.
- Such imaginative approaches can also be seen in English lessons. In one lesson high expectations were not exclusively from adults in the classroom. Pupils also checked each others work and discussed how it might be improved.
- Although there are many examples of pupils' writing in different subjects and for different purposes, the most able pupils, especially, do not practice their writing at length often enough to sustain ideas and apply the language of different subjects accurately in their writing.
- Planning builds well on what pupils have learned before, and takes account of the varying abilities within the class. Resources are always on hand to help pupils learn. Good use is made of technology both through pupils' use of computers and adults' use of electronic whiteboards.
- Learning assistants are a crucial part of the teaching team. They have a good understanding of pupils' needs and abilities and provide good support for learning whether in the classroom or working with small groups.
- Assessment is used well to check progress and set new targets. These are reviewed and adjusted regularly so that there is always sufficient challenge.
- Day to day checking in classrooms is also good. Pupils are questioned well and asked to explain their thinking. In addition, adults check pupils' work and offer good support and advice for pupils to maintain their pace of learning.
- The quality of marking, however, is not consistently helpful to pupils because it does not always identify clearly what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils do not correct and make improvements before they start their next work and so learn from their mistakes. There is too little attention given to some pupils' poor presentation of work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- When they were asked how they would improve their school if they could, they replied 'make lessons longer'. This aptly sums up their positive attitudes to school and their keenness to learn.
- Their good behaviour in lessons underpins their good progress and achievement. Pupils work well together, for example when solving problems or planning their writing. They like testing their ideas on each other.
- Pupils from all cultures play harmoniously with one another. They are friendly and respectful. There is barely a cross word in the playground. Pupils are very active at playtimes and make very good use of the play equipment to organise their own games.
- A popular activity is listening to stories read by parent volunteers in the quiet area of the playground. This is a good indication of how the current drive to promote books and reading is influencing both parents and pupils.
- Pupils contribute well to the everyday life of the school. They are invariably welcoming and polite and know how to adjust their behaviour to suit different occasions. Most, though not all, arrive on time. They dress neatly in uniform and are proud of their school. Attendance meets the national average and shows signs, this year, of reaching a higher target owing to the school's vigorous drive to involve parents more, and raise aspirations.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they are safe and have great trust that adults in school will always help them

when needed. Parents overwhelmingly support their children's views that they are safe and well cared for.

- Parents also appreciate the additional care that the school provides through the breakfast club and other out of school activities. The growing links with, and support from, parents is one of the school's important successes over the past year.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying. They know the difference between bullying and falling out and are sure that bullying and offensive name-calling does not occur in their school.
- They are well aware of potential risks both in and outside of school and how best to deal with them should they arise.

The leadership and management are good

- Clear and decisive leadership over the past year has had a strong impact on the school's good progress.
- The senior leaders work effectively with the sponsor school and other schools within the Trust to establish common principles and a clear vision. They support each other well and work determinedly to achieve success for the school's future, based on meeting pupils' needs and aspirations.
- Central to achieving that vision is leaders' outstanding management of teachers' performance. This is based on incisive analysis of teachers' skills, well-targeted training, in-house support and the opening up of professional development opportunities that benefit the whole school, as well as individuals. The impact has been swift. In the past year teachers' confidence and their aspirations have risen. They now ask for their practice to be assessed. They know how they are accountable for progress. Teaching throughout the school is typically good or better.
- Middle leaders, in charge of curriculum development, are knowledgeable about their subjects and have already made good headway in planning for the implementation of a new primary curriculum in September 2014. The curriculum is enriched well by a good range of clubs and activities outside of lesson time. This enables pupils to achieve well in areas such as art and physical education. A notable learning opportunity is the Shine project led by the Halle Orchestra whereby pupils take on a range of new and exciting challenges.
- The school's allocated primary sports funding is used effectively to boost opportunities for pupils to take part in sports and improve their well-being. The quality of physical education lessons is also being addressed through staff training and the employment of a subject specialist. This has already had some impact in that the school is now entering more competitive tournaments with other schools. Pupils are more active in the playground and the range of activities on offer has increased.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well and recognise how far it has come since it opened as an academy. Their expertise in different areas is a strength that enables them to challenge the school well over all aspects of its work and make a valuable contribution to leaders' accurate view of how well it performs. Academic success is checked against national data and school leaders are held to account. Governors have a very good overview of teaching quality in the school and of how teachers' performance is linked to increase in salary. Finances are managed efficiently and governors are watchful over the impact of pupil premium spending and sports funding. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet all of the government's requirements.

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	138785
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	440077

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	609
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eddie Smith
Headteacher	Phil Mellen
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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