

Grafton Primary School

Grafton Road, Essex, RM8 3EX

Inspection dates 21–22 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, with his senior team, leads the school outstandingly well. Leaders at all levels ensure that both teaching and achievement are of a high standard and the tracking of pupils' learning and progress is accurate, consistent and rigorous.
- Children join the school with skill levels that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in literacy and numeracy because their experiences in school are fun and engaging.
- Good teaching provides pupils with memorable experiences and opportunities to develop their excellent attitudes to learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan and teach collaboratively so that that all pupils enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make excellent progress because their needs are well met by teachers and their assistants.
- Pupils consistently display their love of learning and work well independently and in groups. They behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. They are confident in expressing how safe they feel in school.
- Parents and carers work conscientiously with the school and are pleased that their children feel safe and happy.
- Governors successfully ensure resources are allocated well and that pupil premium funding makes a positive contribution to the excellent achievement of the pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching over time ensures pupils make good rather than outstanding progress overall.
- Too few pupils reach the higher levels in writing.
- Sometimes, the most able are not given sufficiently challenging work.
- Comments in teachers' marking of pupils' books in English do not always provide challenging next steps for them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons, 14 of which were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made eight shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and attended three assemblies.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted’s Parent View, the online questionnaire, as well as parent surveys carried out by the school. Members of the inspection team also spoke to many parents and carers when bringing their children to school.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including school improvement plans, data on pupils’ current progress, pupils’ written work, the governing body minutes and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Liz Kissane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- A high proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families. There are currently no pupils from service families in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and some of them speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is an amalgamation of the Grafton Infant and Grafton Junior schools, which were on the same site. They were amalgamated in April 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers provide more challenging activities for all pupils, especially for the most able.
- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing by:
 - providing more challenging work for the most able
 - ensuring that teachers' marking in pupils' books consistently provides pupils with more challenging next steps.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, their attainment is at the expected level for their age, indicating that they have made good progress. Children learn quickly to recognise their letters and sounds because of the teachers' good focus on play activities that are built around speaking, movement and active learning. Similarly, the systematic teaching of language, literacy and communication skills supports pupils' achievement well.
- The phonics (learning the sounds that letters make) screening check at the end of Year 1 shows that pupils are broadly average in reading.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain above-average standards in these subjects. Consequently, pupils make good progress.
- The most able pupils make particularly good progress in reading and mathematics but their achievement is not yet outstanding overall because not enough pupils make more-than-expected progress in writing and achieve the higher levels.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress because teachers and their assistants provide well-suited learning activities to develop their learning and language skills. Pupils' success is shared through opportunities to celebrate these skills, for example, bilingual pupils across the school performed a multilingual production of *Snow White* to pupils, parents and carers.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills mostly develop at a fast pace because they read with interest and enthusiasm. The exciting curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills. For example, pupils enjoy solving mathematical puzzles that are displayed all around the school.
- The pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support the high number of eligible pupils by providing funding for extra teaching staff to deliver specialised teaching activities. These pupils make accelerated progress across the school and their attainment is better than that of their peers in both English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding, because teachers encourage the growth of pupils' knowledge and understanding and develop excellent pupil attitudes to learning. For example, pupils are able to discuss what they would like to learn and go on visits around London to add a 'wow' factor to their learning.
- Teachers provide pupils with choice, independence and engaging classroom activities. However, sometimes they do not always provide enough challenging work for the most able pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilful educators, using positive language that motivates and engages pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language. In a Year 2 class, when some children saw a caterpillar on the floor, their teacher capitalised on this incident by showing it on a visualizer (a magnifying tool) and asking them questions about its life. This engaged and excited all the children.
- Positive relationships and vibrant classrooms and corridors contribute to a very stimulating atmosphere for learning across the whole school. Photographs of pupils with their own motivational statements are displayed around the school, and all classes take pride in creating displays outside their classrooms.
- Pupils learn and develop their skills rapidly because their teachers track their progress regularly and accurately in lessons and move them on to what they need to learn next quickly. Pupils are encouraged to check their own learning by referring to the lesson's success criteria. Marking in books is regularly carried out but sometimes lacks guidance that is challenging enough for pupils' next steps.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils consistently display their love of learning and work well independently, as well as in groups. They are able to talk about their learning with appropriate examples. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils confidently expressed their thoughts on why a graph showed a higher number of ice creams being sold in the summer months.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. They are polite and considerate and have very good relationships with each other and with their teachers. Their behaviour in the school is excellent both in class and around the school because it is managed exceptionally well by caring adults who model positive and respectful behaviour and communication skills.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and can talk about why they have to keep safe. As a result, pupils confidently apply the principles of e-safety when using computers.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their lives. They organise and run the school tuck shop and raise funds for charities through events such as discos and fairs. Year 6 pupils also visit their prospective secondary school and take part in transition events such as spending time at the school to gain experience of what it is like.
- Parents and carers praise the school highly and are happy that their children are safe, very well motivated and making excellent progress. Parents attend literacy and numeracy workshops to learn how best to support their children at home.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and the leadership team provide excellent role models for all their staff through their positive attitudes, collaborative style of working and high levels of expertise. Middle leaders are extremely effective in leading their teams through change and new procedures.
- Middle leaders monitor and develop their team members rigorously in order to develop their skills in teaching and leading learning. Leaders meticulously analyse how well pupils are doing in their

subjects and provide targeted support to improve areas that need to be worked on. Leaders have enabled some groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils who speak English as an additional language, to achieve outstandingly well. Teaching and achievement are not yet outstanding overall because the proportion of the most able reaching higher levels is not yet high enough. However, leaders are very aware of this issue and have plans to tackle it.

- The pupil premium is allocated effectively to focus on the literacy and numeracy needs of eligible pupils through, for example, after-school support, theatre and music groups, and specialist intervention groups. As a result, the progress made by these pupils is excellent.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well planned and organised by all teachers, taking into account pupils' views on what they want to learn. Pupils deepen their knowledge through activities that develop teamwork, imagination, and an understanding of the world. For example, when learning about the Victorians, Year 5 pupils and staff dressed up as Victorians for the day. When pupils studied the Second World War, they designed and built Anderson shelters.
- The school makes good use of the additional sports funding by promoting physical education and pupils' health and well-being both during the day and in after-school clubs. Sports coaches provide opportunities for fencing, dancing, gymnastics and tag rugby. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthy food and also take part in gardening and friendship clubs.
- The school ensures that all elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is embedded across the curriculum. For example, pupils learn to play a range of musical instruments and learn about artists from different cultures. They visit local places of worship and contribute to the caring ethos of the school, which staff reinforce through assemblies and lessons. Pupils learn French and celebrate a language every half term by learning some key words and in looking at the countries where they are spoken.
- All groups of pupils achieve well and all staff are supported to enable them to perform at their best. Pupils are tolerant and respectful. Discrimination is non-existent because the school is sensitive to diversity and disability.
- Safeguarding practices meet the statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides appropriate challenge and support for the school, visiting at key points and endorsing partnership working.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very active in supporting school's leaders in ensuring there is good teaching and in securing high levels of pupil achievement. The Chair of the Governing Body actively supports and empowers other members of the governing body to collectively hold the school to account. Governors visit the school regularly and enjoy watching lessons and celebrating the work of teachers and pupils. They take part in a variety of training sessions provided by the local authority. They understand the data on how well the school is doing. Governors ensure that teachers are suitably rewarded for good performance related to the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. They check that that pupil premium funding is allocated in the best interests of the pupils concerned and these pupils make rapid progress in their reading, writing and mathematics skills and attain higher levels than their peers nationally.

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	101206
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	400181

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	925
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marie Douglas
Headteacher	Martin Nicholson
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 September 2010
Telephone number	020 8270 6445
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Email address	mnicholson@grafton.bardaglea.org.uk

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