

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



6 November 2017

Mr P Fowler
Headteacher
Granby Primary School
Granby Road
Leicester
Leicestershire
LE2 8LP

Dear Mr Fowler

Short inspection of Granby Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 October 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your staff and governors are ambitious for the pupils to do well. School leaders, including governors, have an accurate knowledge of the strengths of the school and the priorities for improvement. You lead the school well, ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Staff at all levels appreciate your concern for their well-being and the investment you make in their professional development. You show them that their contribution to the school is valued, and they appreciate this. Overwhelmingly, the staff, governors, parents and pupils hold you in high regard. One parent summed up the views of many by commenting, 'They put the children first.'

While academic achievement is of great importance at Granby Primary School, pupils' physical and emotional health is equally high on your agenda. You are determined that the limited outdoor space available on your school site should not be a barrier to pupils being active. Pupils complete a 'daily mile' around the playground. Staff join them. This is not an actual mile, but an opportunity to have fun in the fresh air and set personal achievement targets. Gently supported by staff, pupils develop important skills such as resilience and perseverance. They celebrate their own and others' achievements. Recently, you introduced an initiative for pupils to understand their feelings and emotions and to learn how to manage them. Pupils and staff say that they enjoy a chance to take a short time out of their busy day to be quiet and reflect. Pupils say that they can see the benefit of understanding a little bit about how their brain works and why they feel the way they do in different circumstances.

The annual 'Granby Day' marks the school's place in the community. Pupils and staff enjoy a 'street party' on the playground and celebrate the school's long-standing place in the community. The school building, at over 125 years old, holds many memories and archives of information for the local area. Granby Day is a chance for pupils to celebrate different eras in the school's history. Visitors, such as the Aylestone History Society, come into school to talk to pupils, and pupils are involved in raising funds for charities, such as the local hospice.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Since that time, a new leader for this phase of school has been appointed. Teachers spend time observing colleagues teach, in order to learn from each other's classroom practice. Teachers who are new to the profession appreciate that their experienced colleagues have willingly supported them to improve their skills. You have ensured that teachers and teaching assistants receive important training to develop their skills. During our tour of classrooms, we saw that teachers and teaching assistants use well-considered questions to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. They use their strong subject knowledge to explain clearly new ideas to pupils.

You and other leaders keep a close check on the progress pupils make and take action to provide additional support for pupils if it is needed. Provisional assessment information for 2017 shows that pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 was at least in line with the national average for 2016 in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils achieved the higher standards in each of these subjects than did so in the previous academic year. You have rightly noticed, however, that in 2017 too few pupils in key stage 1 achieved the expected standard in writing and too few disadvantaged pupils achieved the higher standard in this subject at key stage 2. You have made improving writing a high priority for the school this year.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of ensuring that pupils are safe and cared for at Granby Primary School. You and your office manager make sure that all the necessary vetting checks take place when a member of staff or volunteer joins the school. You ensure that all staff have the most up-to-date training and check regularly that they know their responsibilities and how to raise a concern about a child's welfare, should one arise.

You make effective use of alternative provision for pupils with specific needs. Governors also receive appropriate training and they check that the school's systems and procedures are fit for purpose.

Parents who expressed a view were confident that their children are safe and well cared for in school. One parent particularly praised the information they receive about the school's approach to anti-bullying. Pupils said that bullying is very rare, but they could tell an adult, either in person or by putting a written message in the 'STOP Box', safe in the knowledge that an adult would deal with it successfully. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they spoke knowledgeably about online safety.

Inspection findings

- You rightly identified that, at the end of 2017, Year 1 pupils did not achieve as well in the national phonics screening check as had been seen previously. You and your leaders have identified the reason for this uncharacteristic dip. A new approach to teaching phonics was introduced last year in the early years classes. The early years leader's evaluation of this system has resulted in the approach being successfully rolled out across key stage 1 this year. As we toured the school, we saw phonics being taught well.
- The majority of pupils attend school regularly and rates of attendance are in line with the national average for primary schools. However, the attendance of some pupils, particularly those who benefit from the pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is too low. This has been the case for several years, with no real signs of improvement. You reward high rates of attendance and have taken creative steps to encourage improved attendance. This has not successfully improved the rates of attendance of these groups of pupils.
- Teachers make sure that the most able pupils make effective use of time during lessons. Teachers use their assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding to provide them with work that is matched to their ability. One pupil said that she found it 'inspiring' that the teacher had set her a task in a mathematics lesson that she found challenging to complete. As we looked at pupils' books, however, we noticed that often teachers do not make it clear what they expect of pupils when they are writing. This means that those pupils who are capable of writing at a high level are not challenged, and reminded, to do so. For example, teachers do not insist that pupils use the skills they have learned in spelling, punctuation and grammar to a consistently high standard when they write at length.
- You make effective use of the pupil premium funding. For example, pupils who are entitled to benefit from this funding receive additional support in their learning and to access extra-curricular activities. You have plans to use this additional government funding more creatively to broaden horizons for these pupils, particularly those who are the most able. You recognise that you could make even better use of this funding to support the most able pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are capable.
- As we toured the school, we saw that pupils engage well with their learning. They were keen to answer their teacher's questions and demonstrated positive attitudes to their learning as they worked hard at the tasks they had been set.
- Pupils spoke proudly of their school. They are respectful of those whose lifestyles and beliefs may be different from their own. They enjoy the opportunities you provide for them to take part in residential visits and trips locally to enhance their learning. They understand that the responsibilities they are given, such as supporting younger pupils and helping staff around school, show that they are trusted. They value this accolade.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard of attainment, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make sure that pupils use the skills they have learned in their English lessons to write to the best of their ability
 - making even better use of the pupil premium funding to support those pupils capable of achieving this standard
- leaders work more extensively with parents to improve the attendance of those few pupils who do not attend school regularly enough.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy headteacher and leaders with responsibility for upper key stage 2, key stage 1 and the early years. I also met with the office manager, six governors, including the chair, and a group of six staff.

I spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning, with pupils informally in class and more formally with a group of six pupils. I held telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and with two alternative providers that the school uses for pupils with particular needs.

I examined a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvements plans. I scrutinised information relating to the progress pupils make and relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Together, we visited the breakfast club in the morning. We visited classes from every year group and I looked at a range of pupils' books from across the school with you and the deputy headteacher.

I considered the 244 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I also considered the 25 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.