

Inspection of a good school: Grindon Infant School

Gleneagles Road, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR4 9QN

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 November 2021

Outcome

Grindon Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' enjoyment is at the heart of this inclusive school. Pupils are kept safe and are well looked after. Attendance has improved. Leaders and staff have successfully eradicated longer-term absences. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff expect pupils to work hard and try their best, and pupils are keen to rise to this challenge. Adults help them to achieve well. Instances of bullying are rare. Pupils know the school rules and they behave well.

Pupils trust adults to help them. They know they can raise concerns they may have by using the worry box or coloured pom-poms to signify they have an issue. This informs staff of their problems so they can help. The curriculum for well-being is improving pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

Most parents appreciate the level of support their children receive to help them keep up with their classmates. Parents say that remote learning helped them to support their children to maintain their education.

Teachers plan lessons well. They build effectively on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils understand what they are learning. All pupils learn together. Parents appreciate how inclusive this school is. One parent said, 'The staff go out of their way to make sure my son is happy and enjoys coming to this school. He adores his teaching assistant'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a curriculum that reflects the needs of the pupils in the school's local context. The focus on developing vocabulary, language and communication is ensuring pupils have the knowledge and skills they need for the next steps in education. Teachers adapt curriculum plans so they can address gaps in knowledge and skills that have arisen during the pandemic. This means that most pupils catch up quickly.

The provision for remote delivery of the curriculum is thorough and detailed. During periods when schools were not open to all pupils, teachers adapted remote learning in response to the developing pandemic and changing needs of families. Pupils said they learned phonics and mathematics at home because their teachers made helpful videos they could watch.

Leaders have prioritised reading and have recently introduced a new phonics programme. All adults who teach phonics demonstrate expertise in the new approach. Adults pronounce pure sounds and model how to blend and segment words effectively. This is helping pupils to learn to read quickly. There is extra support to help pupils catch up with the phonics learning they may have missed. Pre-reading activities are taught in both the two-year-old and Nursery provision. These include the sharing of stories, songs and rhymes. This helps two-year-olds to settle quickly. Everyone is involved in hearing pupils read and books are well matched to the sounds pupils have learned. Pupils love listening to stories at the end of the school day. As a result, they show enthusiasm for reading.

The curriculum for mathematics has been carefully planned and sequenced. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. The curriculum is well connected from two-year-old provision to the end of Year 2. This ensures knowledge and skills are built upon. Children quickly learn to count, read and write numbers. In the early years, there are many number-based activities for children to build on this knowledge when playing. In key stage 1, teaching ensures pupils acquire a deep, long-term understanding of mathematics. Leaders know which areas of the curriculum they need to consolidate as a result of the pandemic. They are ambitious in their desire for all pupils to enjoy and be confident in mathematics. Pupils say they enjoy mathematics and actively participate in lessons. In key stage 1, teaching follows the same sequence in lessons so that pupils are familiar and prepared for learning, year on year. Teachers have useful resources to help pupils develop their grasp of mathematics. Children know how to use these resources to help them solve problems. Assessment is used to help teachers identify which pupils require extra help. This enables most pupils to keep up with their classmates.

Some subject leaders are new to their roles or new to the school. The physical education (PE) subject leader is working together with senior leaders and staff to address the areas for improvement brought about by the pandemic. Plans have already been amended and are being used by teachers to ensure pupils are now taught the whole PE curriculum. Leaders have identified that pupils need to be more active. They have re-introduced sports clubs such as football and dance, which are well attended. Assessment is an area for development in the wider curriculum, including PE. Curricular goals are not clearly identified in planning. This means that teachers do not know if pupils are making progress or whether they are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Leaders know the importance of personal development to pupils. They are keen to involve the wider community. Leaders are eager to resume the programme of visits and visitors to support pupils' wider development. Currently, some aspects of pupils' wider development are under-developed.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures there are systems in place to identify

pupils early on entry to school. The school engages with professionals to gain an understanding of the needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder. Pupils benefit from adult support and resources to enable them to engage in the full curriculum offer.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about leaders and the strength of the team. They appreciate the regular training on offer. They feel part of the decision-making process. Practical measures have been taken by leaders to support the staff's well-being. Secret Angel and workload interviews are keeping spirits high and supporting a healthy work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work with parents and external agencies to promote a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. They have effective systems in place to keep children safe. All staff understand the importance of reporting concerns, and systems are well understood. Staff know pupils and families well. The designated safeguarding leaders are quick to follow up any concerns. They seek advice and support from other professionals when they need to.

Staff access regular safeguarding training. This enables them to identify pupils at risk and report concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers have just begun to implement the new programme for teaching phonics. They are therefore unable to be sure that it will be effective in ensuring that younger children and those at the early stages of reading gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read. Leaders should ensure that this programme is monitored closely, so that all pupils can fluently decode text in their books using their phonics knowledge.
- The curriculum plans for subjects in the wider curriculum do not always identify the end goals or knowledge pupils need to achieve. Leaders need to ensure end points are clearly identified and put strategies in place to check what pupils remember and have learned.
- The pandemic has affected the implementation of plans to develop a high-quality wider development programme for pupils. Leaders should ensure that plans to develop pupils' broader development enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development more effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	108766
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10200083
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eleanor Robson
Headteacher	Andrea Charlton
Website	www.grindoninfantschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school offers provision for two-year-olds in the afternoon.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, key stage 1 leader, subject leaders, the SENCo, representatives from the governing body, and groups of staff. The inspector discussed with them the quality of education provided by the school, the pupils' wider development, pupils' behaviour and staff workload.
- The quality of education was inspected by visiting lessons, meeting with staff, looking at pupils' work and examining curriculum documentation for English, mathematics and PE. The inspector talked to pupils in lessons and met with them to look at their work.

- The inspector considered the views of parents through face-to-face discussions and via the 18 responses to Ofsted’s Parent View survey which were received. All of these responses were taken into consideration.
- The inspector considered the views of staff through discussions and through the 13 responses to the staff survey. The inspector met with staff to discuss the training they have accessed, the support they have received from leaders and how workload is managed.
- A wide range of safeguarding information and documentation was scrutinised, including referrals and attendance and punctuality records.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021