

Inspection of Grove Academy

Turner Street, Northwood, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 2NL

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of the school is Shirley Carrigan. The school is part of Esprit Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for the running of the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Stephanie Moran, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Atkins.

What is it like to attend this school?

Grove is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are happy and keen to learn. The school day gets off to an early and productive start. Pupils are motivated to do their best and rise to the high expectations set by leaders and staff. They value the ways the school promotes good attendance through events such as non-uniform days and football events on a Friday. They are tremendously proud of their school.

Pupils are keen to talk about the school's MAGIC values. They show gumption and independence and communicate well with each other and visitors. Pupils demonstrate such values in lessons and outside of the classroom. The views of pupils are important. For example, an active school council helps to shape changes at their school. As part of its work, it has introduced new zones on the playground at lunchtimes.

Pupils enjoy participating in a wide range of sporting events in school and locally. They celebrate their individual successes while recognising participation and teamwork are of equal importance. Trips, including residential visits for many year groups, enrich and bring learning to life. Pupils use these opportunities to show resilience, cooperation and teamwork.

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

The school has high ambition for all pupils to succeed, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is well sequenced and organised to build pupils' knowledge over time. Many pupils are achieving well, particularly in reading and mathematics, because this curriculum is being delivered effectively.

In mathematics, staff revise what pupils have previously learned and link this to new learning. They check how quickly pupils can recall basic number facts through regular daily practice. Pupils successfully deepen their understanding by applying these facts to reasoning problems. They are proud to be mathematicians and believe that the skills and knowledge they have developed will help them in later life.

Staff use assessment well in some subjects to identify gaps in learning and address misconceptions. Staff make cross-curricular subject links to help pupils apply the knowledge they gain in different contexts. For example, in science, pupils learn about how to conduct fair tests and successfully apply mathematical skills to analyse patterns in their results. In some other subjects, however, pupils find it more difficult to recall what they have learned, meaning they are not then able to make connections between their current and prior learning.

The school prioritises the teaching of reading. Staff promote a love of reading by sharing high-quality books with pupils. The books pupils read are closely matched to the phonics knowledge they know. However, not all staff deliver phonics as precisely

as is needed. This means that some pupils at the early stages of reading do not progress as quickly as they might.

The systems for identifying pupils with SEND are effective. Staff receive training on how to support pupils with SEND. They skilfully adapt learning and provide additional support to ensure all pupils know what to do. As a result, pupils with SEND are able to access the same curriculum and wider opportunities as their peers.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They show respect for each other and staff. Pupils are polite and courteous and greet visitors warmly. Bullying is not a problem. However, pupils know what they should do if it were to happen. Staff listen to pupils and take any concerns seriously. The school's meticulous analysis of the attendance of all pupils ensures that patterns of poor attendance are addressed rapidly. Many pupils now attend school regularly.

Pupils are responsible, active citizens in their school. They enjoy taking on the many different leadership roles they are offered. For example, sports leaders organise games at lunchtimes while monitors help other pupils take pride in the school and support with dinner duties. Reading buddies promote reading to younger pupils and school councillors help to organise events and activities.

Pupils are thoughtful speakers, and they debate issues sensitively. Pupils celebrate the diversity of their school and enjoy learning about other cultures. Those who join the school during a school year are welcomed into the family of the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Trustees and executive leaders know the strengths of the school and future actions. They provide strong support and challenge to the school. Leaders are mindful of the workload of staff who feel well supported to do their jobs. Staff know the children and families well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that all staff deliver phonics as precisely as is needed. This means that some pupils at the early stages of reading do not progress as quickly as they might. The school should ensure that all staff deliver the school's phonics programme as intended.
- In some subjects, pupils do not demonstrate a secure knowledge of what they have learned. This impacts on their ability to connect prior knowledge to new learning. The school should ensure all pupils are supported to recall and build progressively on what they already know.

How can I feedback 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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144696
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10322905
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Atkins
CEO of the trust	Stephanie Moran
Principal	Shirley Carrigan
Website	www.grovejunior.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 January 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and after-school provision.
- Grove Academy is a four-form entry school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the deputy principal and other senior leaders of the school. Inspectors also met with a range of teaching and support staff.

- The lead inspector met with trustees and the CEO.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupil's work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects, including history, geography, modern foreign languages and design and technology.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a known adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The lead inspector spoke with two parents on the telephone.
- The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector

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His Majesty's Inspector

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