

# Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Grafton Primary School

Grafton Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 3EX

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Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

## **Outcome**

Grafton Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils take immense pride in contributing to the inclusive community at Grafton. They speak passionately about their keen sense of belonging and how everyone is accepted. They feel safe at school and trust staff to address any issues that might arise.

The importance of human rights is central to the school's ethos and woven through curriculum. One 'Rights Respecting' ambassador captured the school's spirit by stating, 'We are all different, but we can all be friends.' This is a sentiment widely shared and enacted by pupils.

There are high expectations for pupils' learning, including in early years. In most cases, pupils rise to these expectations. Pupils try hard and produce work of high quality. By establishing clear routines, staff help pupils learn to behave well. Pupils use a school-wide approach to recognise, express and manage their feelings and emotions with increasing confidence.

The range of additional activities is a highlight of the school's provision. There is something on offer for everyone, from choir and 'friendship club' to a variety of sporting activities. Pupils also enjoy outings that bring learning to life. For example, a visit to the Houses of Parliament provided student councillors firsthand experience of democracy in action.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge they want pupils to know from the Nursery onwards. This is well sequenced to ensure that pupils build their knowledge over time. In mathematics, for example, pupils compare and order fractions. This foundational knowledge supports older pupils to convert fractions with different denominators into percentages and then order these values.

Leaders recognise that outcomes for some pupils at the end of key stage 2 are not as high as they would expect. They have prioritised pupils' early reading. Regular visits to the local library, along with lessons in the school library, provide plenty of opportunities to read and be read to. The teaching of early reading is effective. The school has refined its implementation of the phonics programme this year to further strengthen pupils' accuracy and fluency. The school has ensured that younger pupils who struggle to read well are swiftly identified and ably supported. As a result, these pupils catch up and achieve well. However, this work is not as well embedded with older pupils at the early stages of reading. Some of these pupils struggle to read with the accuracy and confidence they need.

Similarly, the school has ensured that the curriculum for writing is well designed. It is sequenced to ensure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to write with precision and to use techniques that interest the reader. While this has been largely successful when writing in English lessons, it is less well embedded in other areas of the curriculum. In some subjects, pupils do not have sufficient time to practise and develop their writing.

The school identifies pupils who arrive with a range of needs accurately. Careful and sensitive support is provided. For example, a 'hub' for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs helps to improve their readiness to learn. Additionally, a specially resourced provision, The Ark, ensures the right support for pupils with autism. High-quality provision allows pupils with SEND to access the same learning as their classmates at an appropriate level. Across the school, staff adapt their teaching so that pupils with SEND learn the curriculum well. As a result, pupils with SEND typically achieve well and are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils follow the school's clear routines and consistently applied policies. They take pride in respecting and supporting one another. Skilled staff ensure that pupils who sometimes struggle to manage their behaviour receive the help they need to learn calmly alongside their peers. Attendance rates are high and continue to improve. This is because of leaders' high expectations and robust systems for identifying and supporting families for whom this is a priority.

The school places strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. The curriculum helps pupils to understand important values such as democracy, inclusion and respect. A well-structured enrichment programme ensures that all pupils, including those who are

disadvantaged, benefit from a range of cultural and social experiences, including an overnight residential. Pupils have participated in the 'Graftonbury' Festival, African drumming workshops and performed as a lead school in the UNICEF Rights Respecting 'Create Day', where they met local Members of Parliament.

Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They have a precise understanding of the school's strengths. For example, they understand the factors that have contributed to lower-than-expected outcomes at the end of key stage 2 and have ensured that appropriate and robust plans are in place. Leaders and governors are mindful of staff workload and well-being. Staff acknowledge this and are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in different subjects is limited. In these instances, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise, refine and apply what they learn in their English lessons to different subjects. The school should ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunity to develop greater accuracy and automaticity in their writing in different subjects.
- The systems to support those at the earlier stages of reading are not fully embedded for older pupils. As a result, some older pupils are not sufficiently supported to catch up and develop the accuracy and confidence they need to read with fluency. The school should build on the strong support provided to younger readers to ensure pupils are consistently supported to read well.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection

is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

## **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.

## **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

|                                            |                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 101206                                                                 |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Barking and Dagenham                                                   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10345718                                                               |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11                                                                |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 909                                                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                     |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Roza Shirazi                                                           |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Junaida Bana                                                           |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.graftonprimary.co.uk">www.graftonprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 30 April and 1 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005     |

## Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2024.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school has an on-site specially resourced provision supporting eight pupils with autism.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors visited a range of lessons and spoke with teachers. They also spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- 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.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents, carers and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Lisa Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Hayley McClenaghan

Ofsted Inspector

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