

# Grove Street Primary and Nursery School



Grove Street, New Ferry, CH62 5BA

Headteacher: Mrs L Walsh

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Dear Parents and Carers

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018

## Ofsted Report

As you are aware, the school underwent a full Ofsted inspection on 15th and 16th November 2018. We have now received the final report, which is posted on the school's website. We recommend you read the entire report. If you do not have access to the internet, please call into the office and ask for a paper copy. In summary, Ofsted judged that Grove Street Primary School requires improvement in all areas.

Ofsted's findings mirror the key action plan areas that I had also identified when I started at Grove Street. Ofsted commented that: **"A new and very experienced Headteacher took up post in September 2018. She has a very accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Working with governors, she has developed clear and coherent plans for improvement. Together, they have prioritised well to ensure that change is introduced at a realistic pace. They have already taken action in the weakest areas, such as the teaching of phonics in key stage 1."** Please be assured, we are committed to doing our best for every one of our children and the Ofsted findings give us even greater impetus to build on our strengths and effectively tackle the identified improvement priorities.

Ofsted identified the following strengths:

- **The very recently appointed Headteacher has used her considerable experience as a Headteacher and school improvement partner to review the school and quickly make substantial changes.**
- **While it is too early to see sustained impact on areas of weakness, some improvements in teaching and pupils' progress are already evident.**
- **There are considerable strengths in some aspects of middle leadership.**
- **Some teaching, including in the early years, is highly effective.**

- At key stage 2, pupils' progress from low starting points is in line with national averages and is improving, especially for the most able.
- The school provides a very high standard of care for pupils who have medical needs.
- Using a great deal of warmth, praise and humour, teachers and teaching assistants generate very positive relationships with pupils. Pupils follow instructions quickly and enjoy well-established routines. Pupils, including children in the early years, settle in quickly, enjoy school and behave well.
- Leaders of mathematics, English, key stage 1 and key stage 2 articulated very well to inspectors the strengths and weaknesses of their areas and explained well-devised plans for improvement.
- Governors are reflective, honest and determined about the need for change. They show this commitment in the amount of time they give to meetings and visits. They are currently undertaking a wide range of training related to their role.
- As a result of a number of changes which the headteacher has made since September, teaching is beginning to improve. This is particularly the case in the teaching of phonics at key stage 1. The new programme has given teachers a strong structure to which they have responded very well. The use of skilled teaching assistants has allowed smaller teaching groups, enabling adults to match their teaching closely to individual pupils' needs.
- In key stage 2, the new system for monitoring and managing independent reading practice and promoting reading for pleasure has resulted in pupils reading more books across a wider range of themes and styles. This has increased boys' enjoyment of literacy and, in particular, their enjoyment of reading.
- There is some very strong teaching in both key stage 1 and key stage 2. The Headteacher and subject coordinators are beginning to ensure that weaker teachers have opportunities to be coached by and learn from the best teachers in the school.
- Some teaching in the early years is highly effective. This teaching shows a very good knowledge of how young children learn and develop across the full range of skills.

- **All teachers in the early years develop children’s social and emotional skills well. Children behave well and show respect for each other and for adults. They happily share and take turns.**
- **The school has strong systems to deal with bullying. School records, and discussions with staff and pupils, indicate that bullying is rare and that when it occurs staff deal with it well.**
- **Staff teach pupils to care for others and to treat everyone with courtesy and respect.**
- **Standards of care, welfare and safeguarding are high.**

Ofsted identified the following requires improvement:

- **Until very recently, leaders had not recognised or addressed the long-standing weaknesses in teaching and pupils’ progress.**
- **Pupils in key stage 1, particularly boys, do not make the progress of which they are capable. The standard of their work in reading, writing and mathematics remains too low.**
- **The leadership of the early years does not promote good standards of education.**
- **Children in the early years do not make good progress and are, therefore, not well prepared for starting Year 1.**
- **Across the school, too much teaching is ineffective. Sometimes the tasks which teachers set are too easy for the most able pupils and too hard for the least able.**
- **A considerable number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough and, therefore, fall behind in their learning.**
- **The organisation and management of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not effective.**
- **Although the school is vigilant and pupils are safe, the school’s records relating to safeguarding are not well organised or quickly accessible.**

I anticipate that members of our school community will be disappointed with the overall outcome of the report; however, we do consider the Ofsted judgement to be a fair reflection of our current situation. Staff are aware of our school improvement priorities; there is a very positive team atmosphere in school and they are eager to make the changes we need to improve for our children. There are many very positive

comments about the school and it is worth reading the entire report to see that the inspectors found much to praise about our ethos, behaviour, relationships and many aspects of our teaching, learning and leadership. I'm also pleased they recognised many of the improvements the Leadership Team have put in place since September.

I would like to thank parents for the very positive Parent View responses and for all the positive comments and support that you have given to me over the past few months. We are fully committed, as school leaders and governors, to working together on this rapid journey of school improvement. This journey will be made much easier for us because we know we work with such a positive and supportive parent community and with children who are such a joy to teach.

Kind regards,

*Mrs. Lisa Walsh*

