

Grange Community Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 111048 |
| Local authority | Cheshire West and Chester |
| Inspection number | 378222 |
| Inspection dates | 25–26 January 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Kevin Johnson |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 195 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Don Beckett |
| Headteacher | Hazel Palmer |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 May 2009 |
| School address | Brindley Avenue Winsford CW7 2EG |
| Telephone number | 01606 288010 |
| Fax number | 01606 862842 |
| Email address | admin@grange-pri.cheshire.sch.uk |



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Introduction

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson
Adrian Martin

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers, talked with pupils and reviewed some of their work. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body. Some informal discussion with parents and carers took place in order to gain their views about the school. In addition, inspectors took account of 35 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff members and pupils. There were no comments from parents and carers via the online (Parent View) system to aid inspection planning. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at national assessment data and the school's assessments, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and the school's self-evaluation and future planning.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils are White British in this smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs. A very small number of pupils have disabilities. The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds the Investors in People award. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 2. A breakfast club is provided by the school. The headteacher was appointed since the previous inspection. There has been a considerably high turnover of teaching staff.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall Effectiveness | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6 and their attainment is broadly average when they leave the school. Mathematics is improving but attainment in writing is lower than it should be. Overall achievement is satisfactory.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning. The new leader has introduced positive changes. Children’s personal, social and emotional development is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved. Half of the lessons seen were good or outstanding, but too much teaching is satisfactory.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful and get on well with one another. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. This is supported by the views of parents and carers.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have established a settled and cohesive staff team. There is strong commitment to, and a clear vision for continued improvement. Leaders have steered the school through a difficult period with regard to staffing over the past two years and have brought about some significant improvements.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and thereby improve pupils’ progress and achievement, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, are always fully engaged and challenged by their work
 - sharing the best practice seen in teaching effectively throughout the school
 - developing the curriculum so that it provides better opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills, especially in writing, across all subjects
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teachers’ marking so that the best quality is seen consistently in all classes and that it has sufficient impact in helping pupils to improve their work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils are attentive in lessons. They generally work hard and show interest and this is helping to improve their learning. Sometimes, however, they are not challenged as well as they should be especially when lesson introductions are too long and there is little time left for practical work. Learning is slow on those occasions. The opportunities pupils have to discuss work and test ideas out with partners gives them confidence when they answer questions, write and solve problems. Pupils enjoy a challenge especially when there is a real purpose to what they do, such as finding out more about the Tudors by writing letters to Queen Elisabeth the First. Pupils are increasingly being asked to assess their own work and plan improvements but that good practice is not evident in all lessons.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they are on track to make the expected progress by the end of Key stage 2. Progress has been patchy over time due to some ineffective teaching. School leaders have rectified that situation and year-on-year progress throughout the school is beginning to gather pace with a more effective system for checking pupils' individual progress and setting targets for them. Progress reviews are regular and teachers are more accountable.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Children's skills on entering nursery vary from year-to-year, but they are generally below and sometimes well below typical expectations. Most work within the expected levels on leaving reception, but their communication, language and literacy development is weaker. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but for some it is good and showing improvement overall, especially in reading, where well-targeted support is having a good effect. In classrooms they are not always as well engaged in learning as they are when withdrawn to work in small groups. The few disabled pupils, who respond well to the sensitive care and support they are given, make the progress expected from their varying starting points. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals generally keep pace with their peers. In 2011, their performance in mathematics exceeded the national average. Attainment at Key Stage 2 has fluctuated in recent years but has been broadly average overall. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has been broadly average. It was low at the end of Year 2 in 2011 but that cohort (now in Year 3) are quickly making up ground because of strong teaching and the target-driven support to meet their needs.

The school employs a teacher to deliver the Every Child a Reader programme which is boosting reading performance well. A systematic programme for teaching letters and their sounds has been introduced and is beginning to have some impact on pupils' confidence with early reading and writing skills. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Year 6 and Year 4 pupils read with accuracy and expression, well within expected levels for their age. The vast majority of parents and carers are happy with the progress their children make and are supportive of the school.

Quality of teaching

Teachers manage pupils well in lessons. They value pupils' contributions. Pupils feel more confident as a result and there is a positive climate for learning. In the most effective lessons, a good pace and the engagement of pupils keeps them constantly on their toes. Work is finely matched to pupils' different abilities and teachers' clear expectations leave

pupils in no doubt about what they are to learn. In one outstanding lesson, pupils used personal computers to research information for their writing. Working in pairs, they shared their learning with others and made rapid progress towards achieving the lesson target as well as improving their computer skills. Teachers question pupils well to make them think and to test their understanding. Pupils are given more ownership of their own learning by being asked to assess their own work and decide what they must do to improve it. Parents and carers unanimously agree that their children are taught well. However, on balance, much of the teaching is no better than satisfactory.

This best practice is not shared throughout the whole school. Too few opportunities are provided for independent learning because sometimes teachers talk for too long. Planning does not always match the needs of some groups of pupils. For example, too little was expected of higher-attaining pupils when writing in one lesson. In another, the lower-attaining group were not supported well enough either by the teacher or the resources they were given, so they could not manage to do their work. A more common feature of satisfactory lessons is teachers' limited use of interactive whiteboards to help bring more impact to learning. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. At best it clearly informs pupils about what they have done well and how they can improve, but this is not seen in all classes or subjects and pupils do not always respond to the advice given in their marking. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning by providing focused additional support, which helps some pupils to achieve alongside their peers. Teaching supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. The curriculum provides sufficient focus on developing essential literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

There has been noticeable improvement in behaviour over the past two years. Pupils comment on how it has changed for the better. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that behaviour is good. Most pupils are polite and well mannered. They have caring attitudes towards one another and behave well in lessons and around the school. They modify their behaviour to fit different occasions, for example, by behaving with dignity and respect during assemblies and enjoying the social occasion of the dining room. Pupils contribute well to everyday life of the school by being active members of the school council and supporting initiatives such as discouraging parking too close to the school gates. They help willingly with routine tasks when they are asked to do so. Pupils are firmly opposed to any form of bullying or name-calling and say that instances of such behaviour are very rare in school. They understand the difference between right and wrong and of the importance of loyal and trusting friendships.

Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance is average and improving. Punctuality is also improving, the breakfast club being a contributory factor. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are confident of help from adults when it is needed. They understand the importance of keeping to a healthy lifestyle and how to avoid potentially dangerous situations outside of school, including use of the internet and resisting pressure from others. Parents and carers unanimously agree that their children are safe in school.

Leadership and management

Current leaders, ably guided by the headteacher have successfully managed some significant improvements. Considerable setbacks relating to staffing have been dealt with

well and some areas of teaching and leadership have strengthened as a result. Teachers' marking is not monitored as rigorously as it might be to ensure it is consistently good and has sufficient impact in helping pupils to improve their work. Effective professional development and support is beginning to show positive outcomes. Improved systems for assessing pupils and setting targets for them are being reflected in an increasing rate of progress and better achievement, particularly in mathematics. Underpinning that success is the care provided for pupils that has resulted in their improved behaviour and attitudes to learning. Leaders have clearly demonstrated a good capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum satisfactorily meets pupils' academic needs. However, although some teachers are using, for example, history to develop pupils' writing there are not extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills across all subjects. Pupils' understanding of cultural issues is satisfactory. There are developing links with schools in other countries such as France, as well as in the United Kingdom, but these are at an early stage. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

The governing body is fully committed to the school's success and acts promptly on the better quality information they now receive to challenge and question the quality of the school's work. The governing body is ever watchful over the safeguarding of pupils and staff. Procedures are very regularly reviewed and all are fully aware of their responsibilities. All forms of discrimination are strongly challenged by the school. The support provided for, and progress of, all groups of pupils but especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, ensure equality of opportunity.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 46 | 8 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 47 | 40 | 5 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 38 | 40 | 8 |
| Special schools | 28 | 48 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 15 | 50 | 29 | 5 |
| All schools | 11 | 46 | 38 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

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| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Behaviour | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Community Primary School, Winsford, CW7 2EG

Thank you very much for the help you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you because we found you so well mannered and polite. Your attendance is average and improving and most of you arrive at school on time. You behave well and that is very important. You take good care of each other. Well done for all of those things and do keep them up.

We found Grange to be a satisfactory school which has brought about some important improvements since it was last inspected. You reach average standards in your work and make satisfactory progress. Your mathematics is getting better but your writing needs to improve further. Your teachers work hard to help you to learn and enjoy school but we have asked them to make some of your learning more exciting.

All the governing body, the teachers, and I am sure that you would like to see even more improvements. To help that to happen we have asked teachers to help you to achieve higher standards, especially in writing by making every lesson as good as the very best ones.

We have asked them to do that, first by helping each other with what works best in lessons to make them all exciting. Second, by making sure that all of you are really challenged all of the time by your work. The third thing is by marking all of your work to the highest standard and seeing that you really do what their marking asks you to do. Finally, by planning exciting ways for you to practise all of your skills, but especially writing, in different ways across different subjects.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Johnson
Lead Inspector

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