

Greyfriars Primary School, King's Lynn

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121021
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358903
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Colin Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Hemeter
Headteacher	Beverly Barrett
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2008
School address	London Road King's Lynn PE30 5PY
Telephone number	01553 773087
Fax number	01553 776140
Email address	office@greyfriars.norfolk.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons involving 10 teachers and 14 teaching assistants. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, self-evaluation form, minutes of governing body meetings and local authority reports. They also analysed 58 questionnaires from parents and carers, 75 from pupils and 14 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- Inspectors explored how successful staff are in improving pupils' weaknesses in writing.
- They investigated how well the school integrates pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and supports their learning.
- They looked at how the school has improved its provision since the last inspection for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and how this promotes their progress.
- They explored how well the school's ethos encourages pupils' personal development and well-being and promotes a desire to learn.

Information about the school

This is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from the local area. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing, although it is below the national average. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. An average proportion speak English as an additional language and a very few are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Pupil mobility (the proportion of pupils leaving or joining between Year R and Year 6) is high with 15 pupils transferring into Year 3 each year from a separate infant school. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2010 following a period in which the school was led by an interim headteacher. The school has achieved Healthy Schools' Status and the Basic Skills, Artsmark, Activemark and Eco schools awards.

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: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

Greyfriars provides a satisfactory education. It is a friendly school where pupils enjoy their learning and get on well together. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and both progress and teaching are improving securely. Most parents and carers value the school and are pleased that their children look forward to going, enjoy learning and behave well. One commented, 'It is a school with interest in the particular needs of each child and has a warm and friendly atmosphere'. Pupils feel safe and benefit from good personal care and support; they are confident that they could approach any member of staff if they have a concern. Parents, carers and pupils value particularly the broad programme of learning activities; for example, all pupils swim each week and have the chance to learn Spanish, French and German.

Pupils' standards are low but improving; the gap between the school's performance and the national average is narrowing each year, despite high levels of pupil mobility. Standards in mathematics have risen as a result of a strong focus and an intensive support programme. Writing standards are improving more slowly, but the school's involvement in the 'Every Child A Writer' project is beginning to have an impact. The direct teaching of writing is often good now, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their skills in different subjects or through the cross-curricular topics. This limits opportunities for pupils, particularly more-able writers, to produce more-detailed, longer pieces of writing.

Teachers manage their classes well to encourage pupils to stay focused on their work. Some use assessments to match activities to the range of different learning needs in mixed-age and mixed-ability classes, but this is not consistently effective in every class. As a result, activities do not always ensure that more-able pupils are challenged enough to extend their skills and knowledge or that lower-attaining pupils can understand and complete the activity without support. Some teachers help pupils to gain a clear idea of how to improve their work, for example, through careful, constructive marking and self- and peer-assessment. Such initiatives are demonstrated and introduced well by good subject leadership, but they are not yet consistently effective in each class.

Children settle happily into the Reception year and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Outdoor provision has improved, but outside activities are not always used effectively to extend children's learning, for example in communication, language and literacy. Adults often intervene well to support learning through play, but opportunities are missed to extend the children's spoken language.

The new headteacher, supported well by key subject leaders, has an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing. They are developing more rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures in order to focus plans for improvement more finely. However, these are not fully established. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, for

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example, assessment information is accurate, but has not until recently been routinely analysed to see how provision should be improved. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The capacity to improve is satisfactory.

About 40% of the 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 and learning from satisfactory to good by ensuring that;
 - teachers use assessments to match activities to the full range of learning needs
 - systems used to guide pupils to improve their work are consistently effective in all classes.
- Raise attainment in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their skills across the curriculum.
- Develop further the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by;
 - providing a sharper focus on self-evaluation to inform planning for specific groups and individuals
 - increasing opportunities outside for children to initiate their own learning in writing, calculation and shape, space and measures
 - improving the skills of adults who support learning in order to extend children's use of words.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in lessons. In the increasing proportion of lessons where the teaching is good, pupils are enthusiastically involved in their own learning. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils clearly knew what they were expected to achieve within a literacy lesson and a brisk pace was maintained through regular reminders about how well they should be achieving. Pupils' achievement in lessons slows when opportunities are missed to match work closely to their needs, for example through extending the writing of more able pupils in topic work.

Pupils make satisfactory progress from low attainment on entry to the Reception Year. The school uses assessments to set challenging end-of-year targets. Staff track pupils' progress closely each term and identify those who are not achieving as well as they could. The effective partnership between teachers and a team of experienced and well-trained teaching assistants provides close support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. However, too few pupils attain above-average levels, particularly in writing, where weaknesses in the range of words used and handwriting limit the standard of work. The small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language also benefit from good individual support and make good progress in their English language skills.

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Good use of incentives and rewards has improved attendance considerably to just below average levels. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, for example through their weekly swimming sessions. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Social and moral aspects are good. Pupils' understanding of life in different communities is less secure, but it is enhanced by visitors, for example, members of the local Chinese community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Where teachers plan activities carefully and provide good opportunities for pupils of different abilities to become fully involved in their learning, progress is good. In these lessons, learning objectives are clear and understood and pupils are encouraged to assess their own success in attaining them. As a result, pupils feel involved in and responsible for their learning and they respond very positively. However, in some lessons, objectives are not specific enough to allow pupils to assess how well they have done and activities are not planned carefully to challenge pupils of different ages and abilities. Some pupils, particularly in some Year 5 and 6 classes, have a clear understanding of their learning targets and what they need to do next because of effective marking and the good use of assessment sheets. This is not effective in every class and does not encourage consistent progress.

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The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of learning activities that meets statutory requirements. A recent curriculum review has led to plans to provide more cross-curricular topics and extend opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning by extending their writing and information and communication technology skills. The programme is enhanced by interesting visits and visitors and a good range of well-attended clubs, such as street dance and table tennis.

Pupils benefit from some good support in classroom activities and through an

- effective induction process when they join the school and when they move to their
- next school. The high-quality care given to any pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is a strength of the school. Staff know the pupils well and interventions begin early to improve attitudes and build confidence. The school works very closely with families, for example through the work of the Parental Support Advisor and other agencies, to support and guide pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher works in close co-operation with members of the senior management team, particularly key subject leaders, to provide a purposeful direction to the work of the school. They are beginning to involve all staff in establishing clear monitoring and evaluation procedures, for example through better use of tracking information to set challenging targets for the progress of each pupil. These procedures are raising standards, although they are not yet consistently rigorous enough to ensure rapid progress in every class.

The school is successful in tackling any discrimination. It promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily. Senior managers are beginning to analyse carefully the achievement of different groups of pupils, for example, minority ethnic groups. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and carers and a good partnership with other local schools and agencies which enhances pupils' learning; for example, working with the Kings Lynn Arts Centre to provide Year 3 and 4 pupils with an expressive arts day. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body works closely with the school and holds it to account, although recent personnel changes have limited the rigour of their evaluations. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. Many aspects are good, for example, all staff are fully trained in child protection, but some procedures require more detail in their recording to be fully effective. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There

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is a strong sense of community within the school, and work is developing to improve promotion in a wider context.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their activities. Good induction procedures help them to settle happily and behave well. They make satisfactory progress overall. Some make good progress, for example, in physical and creative development as a result of some improvements in provision since the last inspection. By the time they enter Year 1, most remain at standards that are below average for their age. Some children still have weaknesses in mathematical development and in aspects of communication, language and literacy, although the school's involvement in a national project is raising performance in these areas. Teachers and support staff use a broad range of teaching methods to encourage children to become involved in their learning. The balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities has improved since the last inspection, although opportunities in the outdoor area for children to initiate learning are not developed fully, for example, there are few tempting activities to encourage early writing and calculation skills. Teachers and other adults successfully promote children's personal and social skills, although they do not consistently take opportunities to widen vocabulary through guiding play.

The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader is gaining a clear understanding of the areas of strength and weakness. She is using assessment information to identify where children are under-performing, although a rigorous focus on using self-evaluation to inform improvement planning is not securely established.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A comparatively low proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most who responded were positive about the school. Many value its friendly approach, which helps their children to feel safe and enjoy school. Most parents and carers are pleased with the quality of teaching, although some are concerned about the progress their children make. Inspectors judge that pupils make satisfactory progress as teaching is not always of a consistently good quality. A small number of parents and carers expressed concerns upon the effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling any unacceptable behaviour and the leadership of the headteacher. Inspectors found that these procedures are effective and that behaviour is good. The inspection team judge that the new headteacher has gained a clear understanding of the school and provides purposeful leadership focused on raising standards.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greyfriars Primary School, King's Lynn to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 288 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	52	26	45	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	32	55	23	40	1	2	2	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	40	26	45	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	29	34	59	6	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	34	35	60	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	36	31	53	6	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	24	38	66	4	7	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	26	30	52	5	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	29	36	62	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	22	35	60	3	5	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	31	26	45	6	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	26	33	57	5	9	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	40	32	55	1	2	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



26 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greyfriars Primary School, King's Lynn, PE30 5PY

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. After talking with you about what you do and hearing your views, looking at your work, watching you learn, and talking to your teachers, we have judged that your school is satisfactory.

We were pleased to see how well you get on together and you are proud of your school. As your behaviour is good, teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to some prefects and school councillors about how they contribute to improving your school community, for example, by improving facilities in the playground. You told us that you enjoy your work, especially the interesting clubs and playing such musical instruments as the ukulele. You said that you enjoy your topic work and we have asked your teachers to provide you with some more topics to develop your writing skills. We have also asked your teachers to help you learn even more effectively by making more of your lessons interesting and including a range of activities that all of you will enjoy and find challenging.

You are keen to improve your achievement. For some of you, teachers are using different ways to let you know how you are doing, such as giving you targets and getting you to check your own and each other's work. We have asked your teachers to do this in more classes and tell you how to improve your work. Please use these ways and try hard to make your work even better. Children in the Reception Year settle happily into school. If you are in Reception, we have asked your teachers and other staff to encourage you to make choices from a good range of activities, especially in the outdoor area. We have also asked them to encourage you to increase the range of words you use.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector

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