

# Grasmere Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	100252
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	376375
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sharon Sullivan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Derrington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	92 Albion Road London N16 9PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7254 4564
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7249 7278
<b>Email address</b>	office@grasmere.hackney.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	14–15 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376375



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane

Additional inspector

David Nebesnuick

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Twenty lessons or part lessons were observed and 10 teachers, or teaching assistants leading parts of lessons, were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading and looked at safeguarding arrangements, development planning and records of pupils' progress and achievement held at the school. In addition, they analysed questionnaires from 97 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is of similar size to others of its kind. Fewer pupils than average are White British. Others come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Nearly three times more pupils than average speak English as an additional language. Fewer pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. An average number of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs, or have a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery and a Reception class.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It holds Healthy Schools Status and a number of other awards for its provision, including Active Sports Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The quality of provision and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a key improvement. Standards overall in the school have been maintained since the previous inspection, but attainment dipped in mathematics in 2011. The school is not outstanding because teaching is not yet promoting outstanding achievement.
- Achievement is good. Attainment is usually significantly above average by the end of Year 6. However, pupils make better progress in reading and writing than they do in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and 2, because mathematics skills are not promoted well enough through a wider range of subjects, and not enough calculation work is related to real life.
- Teaching is mainly good and some is outstanding but there is some inconsistency. In a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning slows because teachers spend too long introducing and explaining tasks, which limits the time available for pupils to get on with tasks matched to their abilities. Some teachers set targets for pupils, to help them understand how to reach the next level in their learning, but this is not consistent or systematic. Marking varies. In literacy, the teachers rigorously mark the pupils' work and guide pupils to the next steps, but this excellent practice is not fully transferred to mathematics.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes have a very positive impact on their attendance and learning. The school's strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has helped to create a harmonious and cohesive community.
- Leaders and managers have responded to succinct and accurate self-evaluation by checking the quality of teaching and learning more robustly. Through systematic staff review, they are providing staff training designed to tackle inconsistencies. The governing body provides strong support and challenge.

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

- By March 2013, eliminate the remaining inconsistencies in teaching and ensure a higher proportion of outstanding lessons by:
  - setting and regularly reviewing individual targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics that specify what is required for them to reach the next level in their learning
  - increasing the pace of lessons and allocating the majority of the lesson time for pupils to work on tasks matched to their different abilities.
- Accelerate progress in mathematics so that the gap in attainment closes by July 2013, by:
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematics skills across the whole curriculum
  - relating calculation and problem solving to situations that children will meet in their adult lives
  - improving written and verbal marking in mathematics so that it offers clearer guidance to pupils as to how to reach the next level.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children's starting points as they enter Nursery or Reception are generally in line with those expected for their age. They enjoy an exciting array of learning activities inside and outside that promote rapid progress. Consequently, children's outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved significantly year-on-year, so that they now enter Year 1 with above-average attainment. Parents and carers believe their children are making good progress and inspection evidence confirms this for all groups of pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs enjoy their learning and achieve well. The school works closely with parents and carers to develop the confidence of this group of pupils and ensure good progress through individual education programmes. Gaps in performance between groups of pupils have closed, compared with the national picture.

Although attainment in mathematics, previously consistently above average, fell to broadly average levels in 2011, pupils are beginning to respond to the range of strategies and interventions introduced to reverse the dip. Pupils make more progress when tasks are related to real life, such as the shopping expedition calculations observed in Year 1, rather than in the more mundane work in older pupils' books, which was sometimes lists of written sums. Overall, progress remains faster in reading and writing than in mathematics.

In most lessons, pupils busily engage with the tasks and present their work well. Pupils learn best in lessons when the pace is brisk and tasks that match their abilities capture and maintain their interest. In the few lessons when the teacher's

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introduction to the whole class goes on too long, pupils sit patiently, but there is limited time for them to complete individual tasks.

Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. Most pupils can read fluently and can blend letters together well to read unfamiliar words. They understand the main points and they are beginning to find information for themselves, using their knowledge of the alphabet. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 is significantly above average. Pupils can identify key themes in their reading and describe characters, using the text to support their views. Pupils who do not speak or understand the English language when they newly arrive into the school make rapid progress. This is because the school's thorough induction procedures enable them to settle and participate in the routines very quickly.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers confirm that their children are well taught. Pupils agree. Teaching is at its best in the Early Years Foundation Stage, because the activities set up for children to choose enable them to practise, consolidate and extend the things they have been taught during sessions led by their teachers. This is typically illustrated by a Nursery activity in which children pretended to be post workers, excitedly counting out and delivering the number of brightly wrapped parcels denoted by the number written on each prepared 'door', after a starter session with the teacher had engaged their interest. This type of activity underpins the strong provision now evident for promoting calculation skills in this section of the school.

Through the school, in the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and explain the learning objectives clearly. In a Year 3 creative writing lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge led to a brisk start that developed the pupils' logical thinking skills effectively. Teaching ensured that learning objectives were frequently checked and tips shared about the use of dialogue and connecting sentences for best literary effect. This led to rapid progress. On occasion, the pace in lessons slows, and so does pupils' progress, particularly when the introduction is too long and there is less time for pupils to work independently.

Lessons and special events planned through the good curriculum often stimulate pupils' excitement and curiosity, promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For instance, in a group session led by a teaching assistant, Reception children enthusiastically pointed out, on the globe, where each of them came from, including Turkey, Bangladesh and Ireland. Visitors enrich the curriculum. In a whole-school assembly during the inspection, a troupe of Irish students taught the pupils about St Patrick's Day and demonstrated Irish dancing, musical instruments and singing. Pupils grew in cultural understanding through this event and the follow-up work in the classroom.

About a third of pupils responding to the questionnaire said that they only sometimes know how well they are doing. In literacy, teachers' marking is often of great help to pupils in guiding them what to do to reach the next level in their work, but the row of ticks often found in pupils' mathematics books is less helpful to them. In some,

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classes, targets and next levels for learning are displayed, but these are not specific to the pupil and do not extend fully into other key subjects. Systems for checking and reviewing learning targets are at an early stage. This makes it difficult for pupils to know how well they are doing and how to move to the next level in their learning.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

A majority of pupils, parents and carers feel that there is a culture of safety in the school and a good standard of behaviour, although a few disagree. Inspection evidence, and records held in school, show that behaviour is typically good. Pupils manage their own behaviour sensibly. They show high levels of respect towards each other and to other adults, and are very polite and friendly. They respond well to praise and much enjoy the weekly sharing of success in assemblies. A very few parents and carers mentioned incidents of bullying, but records show that these are exceptionally rare. Events such as anti-bullying week teach pupils about the different types of bullying to watch out for, including prejudice-based, physical and cyber-bullying, and how bullying is dealt with in school. Pupils are adamant that they feel safe and feel strongly that, if they have a concern, they can approach the adults in school. Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, or on the roads, or near water. Their above-average attendance confirms their confidence regarding being safe in school. The school works effectively with external agencies when pupils and families find themselves in vulnerable circumstances. Pupils who attend the before- and after-school care provision enjoy this additional support, which includes a range of games and activities such as table tennis, skipping and board games.

Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning and work extremely well together. They are proud of the school's Healthy Schools Status and feel they have contributed, by their enthusiasm, to its awards for sports-related and academic provision. They actively help to keep their learning environment safe by taking on different responsibilities such as school councillors or as reading partners with younger pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and exceptionally well devised, succinct and evaluative. It shows that school leaders and members of the governing body have a good understanding of strengths of the school. Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, including a curriculum that provides a good spread of provision inside and outside to support teaching and learning, are testament to the success of the school's successful initiatives. The curriculum is good and overall includes a wide range of sports and cultural visits and visitors. These promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills in other subjects.

Leaders and managers at all levels are involved in the rigorous cycle of checks to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This, and well-established staff review, leads to focused staff training. Consequently, the contribution of subject leaders to

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the drive for improvement has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Improved, detailed tracking and analysis of pupils' progress enables a quick response to any sign of falling behind. These features, along with those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, demonstrate the school's strong capacity for continuing improvement.

Pupils know that the school does not tolerate racist behaviour and harassment, or any other discrimination. The closing of attainment gaps between different groups of pupils, and the way the school raises the achievement of all pupils, from their starting points, shows how well equal opportunities are promoted. Good attention given to pupils' safety, by members of the governing body, and all staff, ensures that safeguarding procedures fully meet statutory requirements.



## 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](http://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

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.**



19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Grasmere Primary School, London N16 9PD**

Thank you for helping the team to feel welcome in your school and for contributing to the inspection by talking to us and answering our questions. I am writing to tell you about what we found out.

You go to a good school. You achieve higher standards than most 11-year-olds and you are working hard to get your mathematics back up to the usual standard, after the dip last year.

Your response to the questionnaires told us that you agree with all of our findings. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good start in their busy and lively area of the school. Most teaching in the school is good and some is even better. Your school takes part in many sporting events that you enjoy. Your behaviour and your attitudes help you to learn. The school helps to develop your experiences and understanding about the world by taking you out on visits and bringing visitors in to come and talk to you. Like you, we enjoyed the visit of Irish dancers and singers. Can you remember how they taught us all to say 'Happy St Patrick's Day' in Irish?

To make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher and other leaders to help you to achieve further, especially in mathematics. This can be done by ensuring more teaching and marking is outstanding, and making sure that you are given most of the lesson time to work on tasks that make you think hard. We have also asked for more opportunities for you to practise your mathematics skills in a range of different subjects, and for the school to get better at giving you targets for learning that you understand, and checking how you are getting on with them.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and telling the teacher if the work is too easy for you.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane  
Lead inspector

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