

Greasby Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105022
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	355682
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Phillip Shepherd
Headteacher	Mrs Joanne Hall
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection 11 lessons were observed taught by six teachers. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including that related to safeguarding of pupils, their attainment and progress, the curriculum and leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness. They also took account of 67 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as 19 completed by members of staff.

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

- Whether there is sufficient challenge for the more-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Whether the curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promotes good progress.¿¿
- How leaders and managers have demonstrated capacity to improve since the last inspection.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized school for infant pupils, the very large majority of whom are of White British heritage. A smaller-than-average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. A very small minority of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Among the schools achievements are its Healthy Schools status and Activemark, which has been awarded on three consecutive occasions. There is a pre-school class on site which is not managed by the governing body.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Strong and determined leadership from the headteacher and governing body, ably supported by an equally determined staff team, has brought about good improvement in key areas of the school's work since the last inspection.

Children get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress from starting points which are generally in line with expectations for their age. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 because teaching and the curriculum are good. At the end of Year 2, levels of attainment in reading writing and mathematics have been significantly above the national averages over the past five years. Indications from pupils' current work and the school's assessments are that those levels of attainment are on track to continue. This consistent picture of attainment largely contributes to pupils overall outstanding outcomes and achievement.

Children are very polite and well mannered. They behave well whether in the classroom or other areas of the school and say that they feel safe. They show that they have good attitudes to work by their attentiveness in lessons, the good contribution they make to daily routines and the enjoyment they get from being in school. The school provides good quality care, guidance and support, particularly with regard to attendance, which is very high. All-in-all pupils are extremely well prepared, both personally and academically, to face the challenges of the next stages in their education.

Teaching is good overall and there is some that is outstanding. Leaders and managers are aware of the need to ensure that the outstanding practice is shared more effectively throughout the school. The quality and teachers' use of assessment is good in that it guides planning and target-setting for varying ability groups in lessons. However, it is not used sufficiently to pinpoint the needs of individual pupils who may require more specific challenges. A new approach to curriculum planning, with more focus on pupils practising their skills in different ways across subjects, has had a good impact on their achievement and enjoyment of learning.

The school's work is enhanced by the excellent relationships and vision it shares with parents and carers, as well as highly effective partnership with other schools and providers. There is a cohesive and strongly motivated staff team whose collective aim is to drive the school forward. The governing body has effectively overseen improvements in the curriculum and assessment which have in turn boosted the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Leaders at all levels contribute to the process of self-evaluation to provide an accurate assessment of the school's overall performance. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly. The school clearly demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take steps to raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers refine their use of assessment and planning in order to provide the precise challenges that some individual pupils need
 - the outstanding practice is shared more effectively throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils learn well because they are enthusiastic about school and enjoy lessons. They show good levels of concentration and perseverance when tackling problems and are more than willing to work with others and help each other out. They particularly enjoy practical lessons, such as science and mathematics which some say are their favourites. They are confident learners, keen to share ideas, as well as to make assessments about their own progress.

Progress in reading and writing is given a high priority. Good strategies are in place, such as the teaching of letters and sounds and a recently introduced scheme, to give children's language skills an early boost. As a result, pupils progress confidently to more challenging work as they move through the school. Current assessments for Year 2 show the positive impact of these measures on their attainment. Indications are that improvement is likely, especially in the numbers who attain above the expected levels for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. Work is generally well tailored to their needs and they are supported effectively by teachers and teaching assistants.

Most of pupils' personal development outcomes are good. Their attendance is well above average and they enjoy opportunities to take on responsible roles in the school, whether it involves being members of the school council or playing a part in the Christmas productions. They are mindful of one another and show a growing awareness of others' cultures, which contributes to the school's friendly 'community' ethos. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to stay safe and healthy and relish the opportunities they have to improve their sports skills. Their personal qualities and consistently significantly above average attainment are an excellent contribution to the life-skills they will need as active community members and to their overall outstanding achievement.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Lessons are planned well and teachers use a good range of resources and methods to engage pupils in learning. An outstanding example was seen when pupils took on the characters of Mary and Joseph in role play to help them to empathise with the feelings that the characters may have had on their way to Bethlehem. Pupils were extremely well motivated and came up with some exciting ideas in their discussion with partners. The pace of lessons is usually brisk. Time is balanced well between listening and practical activity. Relationships in lessons are very good so children feel valued and, as a consequence, are more willing to 'have a go'. Teaching assistants provide good classroom support. They work well alongside teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Teaching is more effective than previously because of the work that has been done to improve the management and use of assessment. Teachers have clear systems for checking pupils' progress and matching appropriate targets. Their use of day-to-day assessment, for example, through questioning in lessons, discussion and marking is generally effective and points pupils towards the next steps. However, sometimes the more specific needs of individual pupils within a group are not planned for so their progress, although good, is not as quick as it could be.

Recent curriculum development has resulted in more purposeful activity for pupils and has added to their enjoyment. Literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology skills are practised across subjects. Themed weeks focusing on art, for

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example, foster pupils' wider achievements. French, German and Mandarin are established features which give additional breadth to pupils' learning. There is a good range of activities outside of lesson time as well as good enrichment through educational visits and visitors to school.

Parents are unanimous in their view that the school takes good care of their children. There is a welcoming and safe environment and pupils feel at ease with those who care for them in school. Parents appreciate the information they receive from the school and the approachability of staff when there are concerns to share. Positive links between schools means that the transition from infants to juniors is supportive and helpful. The school understands the needs of all of its pupils well and provides sensitive and effective support for those who may be vulnerable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Owing to the headteacher's effective leadership, all staff members know how they are accountable for attainment and quality of provision in the school. Professional development opportunities have helped to invigorate the collective drive for improvement so that the school is ambitious for all of its pupils. The school works hard to ensure that pupils have the equal opportunities they need to achieve their personal best. Outstanding work with parents and carers means that the large majority of pupils are supported at home in their learning. Science, art, sports, reading and modern foreign languages, all benefit from highly effective partnerships with a range of other providers. The governing body supports and challenges the school effectively and lost little time in successfully targeting and monitoring the improvement in reading over the past year. Statutory responsibilities are fulfilled efficiently, including those with regard to the safeguarding of pupils. The governing body ensures that all forms of discrimination are challenged in school and that pupils learn within a culturally harmonious community. There are very productive links with local community groups but also an awareness that more can be done to extend community cohesion beyond the locality of the school.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has brought good improvement since the last inspection. Children are taught well and make good progress. The curriculum is planned well to provide a good balance between activities led by adults and those which children choose for themselves. Letters and sounds is a daily activity and enables children to tackle independent reading and writing confidently. Very good use is made of the outdoor areas to allow time for children to practise skills and explore their own potential through play. During one such session some boys created a nativity scene using a cradle and doll and acted out their own version of the Christmas story. Others sought a series of number and letter clues to find the code to different words linked to their Christmas activities. Provision for children's welfare is good. Children and their parents and carers are greeted warmly on arrival and children settle quickly with their teachers. Personal social and emotional development is nurtured well so that children are cooperative and well behaved and enjoy sharing activities with one another. Progress is closely observed and recorded so the next steps for children can be planned daily.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	2

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Stage

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Their views on most aspects of the school are overwhelmingly positive, with almost no concerns raised. Parents typically comment on how much their children enjoy school and how happy they are with the support provided by staff. A very few parents and carers raised issues related to their children's progress. Inspectors found no evidence during the inspection to confirm these views; nevertheless, the issues were discussed with school leaders.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greasby Infant School 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 67 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 178 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	76	15	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	75	16	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	51	32	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	52	27	40	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	63	22	33	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	61	22	33	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	70	19	28	0	0	0	0
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)	34	51	27	40	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	54	27	40	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	55	28	42	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	54	28	42	0	0	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	42	63	24	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	64	22	33	1	1	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



16 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greasby Infant School, Wirral CH49 3NX

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We had a lovely time watching your lessons and talking to you about school. Your Christmas lunch and seeing the Reception class concert were also special treats. With all of that going on it is no wonder that your attendance is so high. Well done for that! You behave well and you are always polite and well mannered, so well done for that too!

Yours is a good school and, because you all behave well, work hard, enjoy school, make good progress and attain highly in reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave, your achievement is outstanding. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons fun and they are good. Your headteacher and teachers have some good ideas about how to make your learning even better. All of the grown-ups in school take good care of you and we were pleased to see how well you take care of each other.

I am sure you would like to see your school become better so I have asked your headteacher and teachers to do one thing. That is, to make teaching and learning even better than it is now, by making sure every single one of you gets exactly the right work to make sure you all make the very best progress you can.

You can help by continuing to attend school and enjoying it as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson

Lead inspector

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