

The Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125131
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359843
Inspection dates	29–30 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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	387
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Allan
Headteacher	Jackie Gray
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 17 lessons taught by 17 teachers. They held meetings with pupils, staff, and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and documentation, safeguarding records, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records, strategic planning and the minutes of governing body meetings. Questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 133 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- The extent to which White British boys and pupils from Her Majesty's forces families are currently making satisfactory or better progress.
- Whether the quality of challenge and match of work to pupils' needs is good enough to accelerate their progress and raise attainment.
- The extent to which pupils understand how to improve their work.

Information about the school

The Grove is an above-average sized primary school serving a suburban area of Surrey. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average, while the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is just above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average, though the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is high compared with the national picture. This is because the school houses a 20-place speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) centre, comprising an infant and a junior class for statemented pupils. About a fifth of pupils come from Her Majesty's forces families, and as a result the number of pupils leaving or arriving at the school other than at the usual time is high. The school offers Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its Reception classes. There is a privately run nursery and out-of-school care provision on the site, and these are subject to separate inspection. The school has gained a number of awards, and has Investors in People, Eco Schools and Healthy Schools status.

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

The Grove is a satisfactory school which is showing some good signs of improvement. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school and their achievement similarly reflects this. They are happy at school, and parents and carers are pleased with what it offers their children. One parent said, 'The headteacher and her staff are approachable, friendly and welcoming and there is a warmth shown towards the children and their carers.' Another commented, 'I feel my son has benefited hugely from the values taught and lived at the school.'

Thanks to the good pastoral care, pupils feel safe at school and able to turn to adults if they have a problem. Those in the SLCN centre are particularly well supported. Throughout the school, pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and are keen to take on responsibility. Pupils get on well with one another and are mutually supportive. They have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles, recognised by the Healthy Schools status. They enjoy their lessons, because the curriculum offers them interesting and engaging activities.

Despite the turbulence caused by the high proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at different times, there is an improving picture of achievement within the school. In recent years, pupils have reached broadly average attainment in English and mathematics by the time they leave but they could do better if more progress was made across the school. This year, attainment in Year 6 is showing an improvement on previous years. Children are making a better start in the Reception classes than they were at the time of the last inspection and this improvement is beginning to work through the school. Pupils in the SLCN centre make good progress thanks to the carefully planned, personalised provision they receive. This best practice is not always evident in planning for other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Elsewhere in the school the picture of progress is mixed, due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. There have been improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection, and much is now good, but some unevenness remains. Planning does not always match the differing needs of pupils precisely enough, which leads to groups of pupils not being well catered for in some lessons. Teachers are often very skilled at checking pupils' understanding during lessons, but this is not always the case. The school's new marking system, which involves pupils in assessing and correcting their own work, is proving very successful in some classes. This is helping pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, it is not consistently applied in all classes.

The headteacher and senior staff give the school clear direction. They have recently introduced new structures to develop leadership and management effectively at all levels. School improvement teams have been set up to focus on the school's most pressing

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priorities, enabling staff to work together with a common goal. These teams are already beginning to have an impact on improving provision and outcomes for pupils. Tracking of pupils' progress and analysis of the performance of different groups have been securely developed since the last inspection, so that the different needs of pupils are being identified. The school's self-evaluation is realistic and accurate, and senior staff understand what needs to be done to move from being a satisfactory school to being a good one. As a result the school has a satisfactory capacity for further continuous improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics across the school.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - providing the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities in lessons
 - checking pupils' understanding regularly throughout lessons
 - sharing best practice in planning support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities across the school
 - applying the school's marking policy effectively in all classes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that attainment is broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2, and that most pupils achieve satisfactorily from broadly average starting points. Those who are learning English as an additional language and those from forces families achieve similarly to their classmates due to the support they receive. The school has made particular efforts to find material to engage White British boys more in their learning. The current Year 6 revision topic based on the board game 'Cluedo', for example, has been successful in motivating boys to want to write in different ways for different purposes. In class, pupils are well behaved, attentive and ready to learn. In the best lessons, they show that they are capable of being independent and can take responsibility for their own learning, for example in carrying out research. They are able to concentrate and build on what they have already learnt to make rapid progress. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils used their understanding of different strategies for tackling problems to set tasks for the rest of the class, who then competed to get the right answer as quickly as possible. Sometimes, when teaching is not pitched at the right level, pupils are passive in lessons and slow to put forward their ideas.

Pupils behave well in class and in the playground, and are sensible and orderly in the way they move around the school. They understand how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. The high quality artwork produced by Years 1 and 2 pupils in the style of the painting 'The Fighting Temeraire' is a good example of how the school successfully promotes cultural and spiritual awareness. Pupils know the school's stated values and recognise their importance in making the school a pleasant place to be. They mix harmoniously and appreciate one another's differences. Levels of attendance are in line with the national average, and pupils are adequately prepared for moving on to secondary school and for later life.

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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	3
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	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

There are many shared qualities in the teaching across the school. All teachers have good relationships with their classes and manage behaviour well, so that classrooms are calm and conducive to learning. Teachers use a wide range of resources. Especially useful are the visual aids, such as the interactive whiteboards, which are helpful to all learners, but particularly to those who are learning English as an additional language. Adults are well deployed to support individuals or groups of pupils. In many lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding of what is being taught carefully, through direct questioning or through pupils' written answers on small whiteboards. However, this is not consistently well done, and some pupils' lack of understanding or concentration passes unnoticed. Occasionally in group work, the groups are too large for all pupils to be actively involved in their learning and sometimes more able pupils are held back while the rest of the class catches up. The targets for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the main school are not always precise enough to help them make the next steps in their learning.

The school offers pupils a good curriculum with a secure grounding in literacy and numeracy and thorough coverage of other subjects. One parent commented, 'The school has tried hard recently to make learning more hands-on, which my children have really enjoyed.' There is a good range of clubs, visits and visitors which make learning

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memorable for pupils. The school has identified the need to increase its resources for information and communication technology, when finances permit. The quality of care, guidance and support is good, especially in the SLCN centre. One parent said, 'My child has made incredible progress in the centre, thanks to the dedicated individuals working there.' The school has taken effective action to arrest a decline in attendance, which is showing an improvement this year. There are good procedures for induction, which help new arrivals such as pupils from forces families settle in quickly. A parent commented, 'My child's move to the school was made a very happy and positive experience by all the staff.'

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff are committed to giving pupils the best all-round start to their education. The impact of their work since the last inspection is beginning to be apparent in rising attainment and improving progress, though the pace of this change has not always been swift enough. There has been good improvement in the development of assessment and tracking systems, but the use of these to improve provision for pupils is not yet consistently implemented across the school. Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of the challenges of their roles, although they do not necessarily have sufficient time allocated to carry out their responsibilities. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is developing its role in challenging senior staff and holding them to account. Procedures for child protection are robust and staff training is up to date. Required checks on adults who come into contact with pupils are carried out and risk assessments are thorough. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. The performance of different groups of pupils is well monitored and effective action is taken to remove barriers to their learning. However, the school recognises that the achievement of all pupils needs to be raised.

The school has built good relationships with parents and carers and makes particular efforts to keep them involved and informed, especially with those forces families who do not have daily contact with the school as their children travel in by coach. It has a good understanding of the local community and has forged good partnerships, which give pupils opportunities they might not otherwise have. Good links with the local college has meant that students have worked with the pupils on various initiatives, for example with art projects, while the support of the army and local businesses has helped the development of the school grounds and the pond. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Forces families are helped to settle and to feel part of the community. The traditions of the different cultures represented within the school are celebrated and respected. Global links with Nepal and the Philippines, where many families originate, are

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being strengthened and links with schools in the United Kingdom are the next target for development to help pupils understand what life is like for children in other parts of the country.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Relationships between adults and children are very supportive, and consequently children feel safe and secure. They are friendly, happy and enjoy exploring the good range of activities available to them indoors and outside. Adults work well with children, promoting their speaking and listening skills and developing their vocabulary. During the inspection, good use was made of the outdoor area to do practical measuring in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Adults gave the children good opportunities to develop their mathematical vocabulary and to practise writing their numbers. The outdoor area is a large and exciting space, full of interesting activities for the children to explore, though the school has recognised that some resources are old and worn and in need of replacement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Children's progress is carefully monitored and areas for improvement clearly identified. Senior staff have pinpointed reading and writing skills as targets for improvement in order to prepare children better for the challenges of Key Stage 1. Children are well cared for, and staff form positive working relationships with parents and carers, who appreciate their approachability.

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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 Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was broadly average, and parents and carers were pleased with what the school offers their children. Almost all felt that the school keeps their child safe, that the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle, and that their child enjoys school. A few felt that the school does not meet their child's particular needs and that their child is not making enough progress or well enough prepared for the future. Inspectors investigated these concerns. They found that overall the school meets pupils' pastoral needs well and their academic needs satisfactorily. As a result, pupils' personal development is good and their academic progress is satisfactory. The school has been asked to ensure that it meets pupils' academic needs more consistently, so that they make better progress and are better prepared academically for moving on to secondary school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Grove Primary 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 133 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 387 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	59	51	38	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	65	46	35	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	47	61	46	7	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	44	66	50	6	5	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	65	49	60	45	2	2	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	45	65	49	5	4	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	47	69	52	1	1	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)	50	38	66	50	6	5	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	44	60	45	10	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	43	65	49	5	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	32	74	56	5	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	60	45	63	47	3	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	52	58	44	5	4	1	1

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	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.



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Grove Primary School, Frimley GU16 8PG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently and for helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and sharing your lessons.

We found that The Grove is giving you a satisfactory start to your education and that it is improving. These are some of the things that we liked about your school.

- You enjoy being at school and you get on well with one another.
- You behave well in class and around the school.
- You feel safe and you are well cared for.
- You enjoy a good range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities.
- Those of you who are in the centre are very well supported.
- Senior staff know what needs to be done to make the school even better.

To help the school improve further, this is what we have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that you all do as well as you can in English and mathematics.
- Make sure that everyone has the right amount of challenge and support in lessons.

All of you can help by telling your teachers if the work you are given is too easy or too hard, and by letting them know if you do not understand something in lessons.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield

Lead inspector

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