

Grove Wood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number131329Local AuthorityEssexInspection number360257

Inspection dates19–20 May 2011Reporting inspectorNichola Perry

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

Type of school Primary

School category Foundation

Age range of pupils 4–11

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 554

Appropriate authority The governing body

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| Age group | 4–11 |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Inspection dates | 19–20 May 2011 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty teachers were observed in 27 lessons. One assembly and three break and lunchtime sessions were also observed. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the governor who leads on safeguarding, subject leaders, the inclusion coordinator, the learning mentor, the designated person responsible for managing the single central record, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books and displays and at documentation, including the school improvement plan, assessments, records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning, and safeguarding and welfare arrangements. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and scrutinised 244 parents' and carers' questionnaires, 51 staff questionnaires and 92 pupils' questionnaires.

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

- Is the wide range of assessment information being used as well as it can be so that pupils make rapid progress in all year groups?
- Has the school adjusted to the increasing numbers of pupils entering Year 1 with higher prior attainment and are teachers' expectations sufficiently high?
- How effective is the school's work on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of life in the wider world, beyond that in their local community?

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average foundation primary school, comprising twenty single-age classes from Reception to Year 6. The school mainly serves its local catchment area, a relatively socially advantaged area, with an increasing number of pupils being admitted from outside the area. Very few children and their families face challenging circumstances or experience significant social and emotional needs. The school population is stable. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly lower than the national average. Numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very much lower than average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly the same as that found nationally. The very large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. There is a much lower than average proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language.

A number of key appointments have been made since the previous inspection, including a new headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and a learning mentor.

The school provides a breakfast club and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, with afterschool provision being offered from September. A lunch time nurture group is provided for pupils who experience social and emotional difficulties. An on-site Sure Start Children's Centre has also been recently opened.

The school has been awarded Active Sportsmark, Advanced Healthy Schools Status, ECO Schools Silver Award and re-awarded Basic Skills.

There is on-site pre-school provision for children aged 2 to 4 not managed by the school and which is inspected separately.

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

Grove Wood is a good school striving to be even better and succeeding in many respects. The school is a happy, friendly and purposeful place of learning of which the pupils are truly proud. This is reflected in their consistently high attendance. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership which has brought about rapid improvement in a short time. He is ably supported by his deputy and assistant headteachers and other senior leaders. Together, with an effective and challenging governing body, he has ensured that the entire school community works as an effective team which strives to improve all aspects of pupils' personal development and their learning.

The excellent quality of care, guidance and support offered to pupils and their families is a real strength. Behaviour is exemplary through the school. Adults act as excellent role models in the way they show great respect to all pupils. This contributes strongly to the outstanding relationships and the very effective inclusion of pupils in all groups. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is a strength. They feel totally safe and well-cared for and have complete confidence that their teachers and others will listen to them and take any action necessary to keep them safe. Pupils are extremely confident, polite and friendly and work very well together. They play a very active role within the school and wider communities, for example, through the school council and the eco warrior group. Through these groups pupils develop strong social and moral awareness and values and also learn very well how to establish priorities and make best use of a budget. Pupils are very thoughtful towards those who are less fortunate or different from themselves and contribute regularly to local and national charities. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy life through sensible eating and regular exercise and recognise their own responsibility for this, for example, through choosing sensible options at lunchtime or ensuring that their packed lunches contain healthy foods. The school has won awards for its strong systems in this aspect of pupils' personal development. Pupils show excellent spirituality, for example, when being visibly moved during their singing of 'From a Distance' and in the many opportunities they have for reflection in their learning.

Good teaching, some of it outstanding, encourages all groups of pupils to be positive learners. Pupils make good progress and achieve well so that attainment is above average by the time they leave the school. Effective in-class support also contributes positively to pupils' good learning. Overall, assessment is accurate and senior leaders use the good range of assessment data well to monitor attainment and progress and to set challenging targets. However, progress is not even across the school and this is particularly so in Years 1 and 2 where teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and teaching is not yet consistently good. In these lessons, whilst learning objectives are supported by a range of appropriate activities, assessment information is not being used to fine-tune them so that they provide greater challenge, taking into account what pupils can already do.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The good, activity-based curriculum is stimulating for all pupils. The themed approach to learning is much enjoyed by pupils as are the wide range of additional activities provided both within the school and the wider community.

School leaders and the governors have an excellent understanding of the school's performance. This is because all aspects of self-evaluation are highly accurate so that the very strong focus on ongoing improvement is well founded on the needs of the school. This has contributed strongly to the rapid and significant improvement since the previous inspection. This, and the whole school community's relentless pursuit of excellence, demonstrates that the school is well placed to improve further and rapidly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise attainment and accelerate pupils' rate of progress by:
 - increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure that all teachers' expectations are sufficiently high and learning is consistently challenging for pupils in all groups, but particularly for more able pupils
 - using assessment information more accurately, particularly in Years 1 and 2, so that planned activities focus more closely on what pupils can already do, thereby avoiding unnecessary repetition of past learning and building on the good start pupils have in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good overall. This represents good progress from pupils' average starting points. High expectations and accelerated learning, particularly in Year 6, have ensured that attainment by the end of Year 6 is again above average, following a dip in 2010. Attainment by the end of Year 2 has been above average. However, school assessment data, supported by inspection findings, indicate that the rate of pupils' progress in the current Year 2 has not been sufficiently rapid to ensure that pupils make better than expected progress, leading to sustained improvement.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and have very positive attitudes to learning. This is because learning in most lessons is motivating, challenging and very relevant to their experience. This is particularly the case in Year 6 where, for example, learning, centred around a recent visit to a local theatre, was brought alive when pupils applied the stories they were told during the visit to their own writing. Exceptionally well-structured and challenging learning for a more able group of pupils, ensured that they had excellent opportunities to discuss and share their ideas, practise and improve their writing and review their teacher's own writing before embarking on their own story. Writing outcomes reflected the very high expectations in the lesson.

Whilst some teaching and expectations have adjusted to increasing numbers of higher attaining pupils entering Year 1 from the Early Years Foundation Stage, this is not consistent. Where the pace of learning is not as rapid as it needs to be this is because planned activities do not challenge pupils sufficiently and do not build on their previous knowledge.

The learning and attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language is good. Individual pupils' needs

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

are quickly identified and assessed. Excellent support and a wide range of focused interventions, including one-to one tuition, are having a very positive impact so that pupils make good and sometimes very good progress. Individuals and groups of pupils are very well supported in lessons so that pupils can achieve as well as they can. Highly effective induction arrangements and support ensure that pupils who enter the school part-way through the academic year settle extremely quickly and learn well.

Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge of other cultures and faiths. They show an outstanding ability to reflect on issues facing themselves and others and strongly uphold values such as tolerance and kindness towards each other, regardless of difference. Pupils participate willingly and express their ideas confidently, such as when addressing the recent school community conference. Their well-developed personal skills and the good progress they make in acquiring basic skills means that pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their learning. Pupils really appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and subjects such as art, music and singing. The quality of singing is outstanding and the artwork around the school is excellent, reflecting pupils' great enjoyment of both subjects.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Teaching is good overall. This results in good achievement in all aspects of pupils' learning and development. Evidence from inspection and the school's monitoring show a trend

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

towards more outstanding teaching, most notably in Year 6. Relationships are excellent which result in a very relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Teaching focuses well on ensuring pupils learn appropriate subject-specific language and teachers make regular reference to 'learning walls' throughout lessons, as part of their teaching. This encourages pupils to develop their research skills and to think for themselves, thereby becoming increasingly independent learners.

In the good and outstanding lessons assessment is used effectively to build on what pupils can already do. This results in accurate learning objectives and a range of well-focused activities which ensure that pupils' learning is both exciting and challenging. In satisfactory lessons the planned activities, although matched to pupils' different abilities at a basic level, are frequently too general and lack challenge. As a result, pupils, and particularly those who are more able, are not extending their learning at a sufficiently rapid rate. Questioning is good throughout the school and focuses well on extending pupils' learning and assessing their understanding. Ongoing feedback in lessons is very effective in motivating and challenging pupils. Many teachers are using this as an effective way to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Marking is positive, encouraging and helpful in informing pupils how well they are doing. Much marking also helps pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve their work.

The curriculum is effective and very well enriched. Outdoor learning is particularly well-developed, for example, through the excellent use of the extensive school grounds, including the woods, and also the local and wider environment. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the activity-based learning which focuses strongly on developing their basic skills across the different subjects as well as their thinking and investigative skills. They speak excitedly about memorable learning opportunities such as the visit during the inspection of a mobile planetarium and the day they 'became the Union Jack' on the school playground. Pupils have access to a very wide range of extended provision activities. The breakfast club is very well supported and provides a welcoming and nutritious start to the day for pupils. The many after school clubs are extremely popular and very well attended. They offer pupils opportunities to participate in creative, musical, artistic and sporting activities.

Pupils' pastoral care and support is exemplary. Wide-ranging work is undertaken with any pupil and his or her family whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The school makes excellent use of external support agencies so that no pupil or group is disadvantaged in any way. There is excellent provision within school to ensure the care, safety and well-being of any vulnerable pupil, for example, the 'all sorts' group which operates throughout the lunchtime. The role of the learning mentor plays a pivotal part in supporting pupils and in making and maintaining links with parents and carers, including those who are hard to reach. The outstanding work undertaken by the school is highly rated by the parents and carers so that they feel very involved in all aspects of their children's learning and development. They are unanimous that their children are safe and well-cared for and that they enjoy school.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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 | |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders have created a vibrant and happy learning environment where pupils can thrive, regardless of their ability or background.

The very dynamic leadership of the headteacher and high expectations have resulted in rapid and significant improvement since the previous inspection. He has established an effective leadership team who are fully committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential in all aspects of their social, emotional and academic development. Their leadership skills are strong and they demonstrate a clear and unequivocal understanding of what has to be done to bring about improvement. School improvement plans provide excellent guidance with clear objectives and very focused actions to bring about change. Regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching has led to a greater proportion of outstanding teaching and ensures that pupils experience at least good teaching for the majority of lessons. The school is aware that there is still work to be done in Years 1 and 2 to take account of the improved outcomes for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Under the leadership of the headteacher, the governing body has rapidly developed its role and level of challenge to the school's performance so that governors are now effective. Governors are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating processes and play a key part in strategic planning. They ensure that the school is fully compliant with all statutory requirements and that safeguarding, child protection and training requirements are effectively met and take account of best practice.

Much work has been done to develop pupils' excellent understanding of both the school, local and wider communities. Pupils do a great deal by way of participating and helping in their local community and contact has already been established with a school in a contrasting area within the United Kingdom. The school is currently in the process of developing a global link to build on pupils' already good understanding of wider world issues, which comes from the strong emphasis placed on this aspect of their learning throughout the curriculum.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | | |
|---|---|--|
| 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 | 2 | |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 | |
| 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 | | |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective leadership has led to very significant improvement since the previous inspection. Expectations are high and teaching is effective. The good provision ensures that children now make rapid progress across all areas of their learning and development from their broadly average starting points. They are now entering Year 1 with attainment levels slightly above those expected. Children are very happy and settled due to the excellent induction arrangements. Parents and carers are rightly very satisfied with the good start their children make and feel very much involved in their learning. The very good ongoing liaison with parents encourages them to provide teachers with examples of progress their children are making at home so as to include all aspects of achievement in their learning journals.

Children's welfare is supported consistently well so that personal development and behaviour are very good. Learning focuses strongly on developing children's social, emotional and communication skills and it is this that helps them to become happy, confident and independent children who are very eager to learn. There is good balance between activities which children choose themselves and those which are adult-led. From the start, children are encouraged to develop their thinking skills and to make choices, for example, about their own learning and behaviour, so that they quickly become independent learners. These aspects provide a firm base upon which future learning can be developed. Occasionally, children who choose not to be involved in adult-directed activities are left too long without some form of adult intervention. Planning covers all areas of learning effectively so that basic skills are taught systematically. Ongoing assessment is used well as a tool for ensuring that learning closely matches individual needs. Children who find learning difficult are well supported so that they are not disadvantaged in any way. Adults know the children very well. Assessment is thorough and accessible and progress is carefully tracked so that adults have a secure knowledge of

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

all their stages of development. The newly designed learning environment is used effectively and is well resourced. Outdoor learning is now well integrated with that provided indoors and children are encouraged to use the natural resources around them to stimulate imaginative play and develop their physical skills. Adults use questioning skilfully to ensure good language development. They model play effectively so that children learn how to negotiate, take turns and work and play together. Liaison with the on-site pre-school provision is developing well so that transition arrangements have improved and are now good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | | |
|--|---|--|
| 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

A high proportion of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. Those who returned questionnaires are highly satisfied with what the school provides for their children. The overwhelming majority are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. A few parents raised individual concerns regarding behaviour. These were explored with the school and the evidence taken into account in the inspection judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grove Wood 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 244 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 544 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|----------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 157 | 64 | 81 | 33 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 166 | 68 | 77 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 125 | 51 | 112 | 46 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 131 | 54 | 100 | 41 | 11 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 154 | 63 | 84 | 34 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 131 | 54 | 106 | 43 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 142 | 58 | 99 | 41 | 1 | 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) | 126 | 52 | 103 | 42 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 135 | 55 | 97 | 40 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 110 | 45 | 114 | 47 | 16 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 104 | 43 | 126 | 52 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 182 | 75 | 59 | 24 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 172 | 70 | 68 | 28 | 3 | 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

| Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of scho | | | | ge of schools) |
|---|-------------|------|--------------|----------------|
| Type of school | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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: 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.

■ 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove Wood Primary School, Rayleigh, SS6 8UA

Thank you so much for helping the inspectors find out all about your school and what you think of it. We really enjoyed our visit and came away agreeing with you that you go to a good school where everyone is very happy and friendly and is a super place to go to each day. We can see why you all like coming here so much- your attendance is very good indeed. There are lots of good things about your school:

You make good progress in your work because you all try very hard to do well.

Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent.

You really know how to keep yourselves safe and recognise that the adults care about you very much and work hard to make sure you feel really safe.

Your parents and carers are extremely pleased with what the school provides for you and they get on very well with your headteacher and staff.

Your headteacher and senior teachers have really good ideas about how to make your school better and have worked hard to achieve this for you.

We have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to do a few things which will help them make your school even better. The most important things are listed below.

We would like your teachers to get even better at teaching you so that you all make quicker progress and get better results when you are assessed.

We want your teachers to use all the information they have to make sure they give you more challenging work, especially those of you who are in Years 1 and 2, because we think you can do more.

You can help them by continuing to come to school every day and working really hard. We wish you all good luck in your future at Grove Wood.

Yours sincerely

Nichola Perry

Lead Inspector

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