

# Grove Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135067
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	381798
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ken Buxton HMI

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	251
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Avril Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Ridlinton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Pickersleigh Grove Malvern WR14 2LU
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<b>Fax number</b>	01684 577345
<b>Email address</b>	office@groveprimary.worcs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 14 lessons, taught by 10 different teachers. The inspection team also met with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, pupils and a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were also held with several parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the full range of evidence including a sample of pupils' books and safeguarding procedures. They also looked at the school's development plan, progress reports, headteacher reports and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 50 parents and carers and took account of staff and pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- What are the reasons for the variability of teaching across the school and what impact have the school's improvement strategies had?
- What action has the school taken to address the recommendations from the previous inspection and what impact has this had on raising pupils' outcomes?
- Why is an increasing number of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities and how well are they being supported to achieve their full potential?

## Information about the school

This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils attending the school has decreased slightly over the last three years. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. The level of pupil mobility is higher than in most primary schools. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to increasing pupils' rate of progress, raising pupils' attainment, improving the quality of teaching and learning and strengthening the leadership and management of the school.

Since the last inspection there has been a steady decline in the standard of education being provided for pupils. The previous legacy of poor quality teaching has led to an inequality in the rate of learning across the school. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2 pupils make faster progress and begin to make up ground, with the result that they begin closing the attainment gap that exists. However, despite the accelerated progress across Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is lower than average in English and mathematics. There is no significant difference in attainment or progress between boys and girls or different groups, although pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do make satisfactory progress.

The appointment of a new headteacher has brought a sense of urgency to turn things around. Working closely with the local authority, the school's leaders have correctly identified the improvements needed and started to introduce change. Inspection evidence shows that the school has already reduced the number of inadequate lessons being taught. Senior leaders have also successfully begun to improve Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in writing. The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory, with some pockets of better quality teaching and learning across the school. In the more successful lessons teachers enthused pupils and generated enjoyment in learning. The satisfactory lessons were characterised by fairly lengthy periods where pupils were sitting listening to teachers talk and tasks were not organised well enough to challenge pupils sufficiently, with the result that pupils made no more than the expected progress. Teachers' marking is variable in quality and consistency. Although it offers encouragement, and comments are often written neatly, it does not provide enough guidance to help pupils know how well they have done and what they could do to improve the quality of their work. The inadequate curriculum does not enable pupils to apply and develop their skills progressively and, in some of the younger year groups, too much time is wasted with some activities serving little or no purpose other than to act as

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time-fillers.

Most aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being have declined since the last inspection, although pupils still show a good awareness of how to keep safe. Similarly, the care and attention for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is very good, resulting in them making similar progress to other pupils. Behaviour is satisfactory although in the less engaging lessons, pupils lose interest and some low level disruption occurs.

The school leaders have achieved some success as they work to take the school forward. They have been faced with many challenging and complex problems, including managing a deficit budget. The accuracy with which pupils are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities has also been recognised as unreliable. The current practice has resulted in higher numbers of pupils being placed on the special educational needs register than might typically be expected. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher has a clear view of the school's current position and the improvements needed. The school's development plan provides a suitable starting point for tackling the remaining issues. These include the inadequate impact of the school's efforts to promote community cohesion and the inadequate attention given to promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. Action taken to improve attendance has started to make a positive difference by reducing the number of persistently absent pupils and increasing levels of attendance. Despite these improvements, attendance remains low and considerable work is still needed to build on these early successes. The school has appropriate procedures to monitor and evaluate the impact of its improvement strategies, although at present the work is not delegated sufficiently across the leadership team. As a result of the recent improvements, there is clear evidence that the senior leaders have the necessary capacity to drive and embed better practice and thereby improve pupils' outcomes.

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

- Increase pupils' rate of progress so that by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is at or above the national average by:
  - working more effectively with parents and carers to improve attendance levels
  - ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress each year
  - developing and implementing a curriculum that provides a progressive learning experience for all pupils.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, so that by July 2012 the majority of lessons are good, by:
  - challenging teachers and holding them to account for their pupils' progress and attainment
  - improving classroom practice so that lessons move at a faster pace and activities sufficiently challenge pupils of all abilities
  - using marking to better inform pupils of their next steps in learning.

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- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management by:
  - developing a robust tracking system to monitor pupils' progress and attainment in order to gather pertinent information about how well different groups of pupils are performing and ensure there is equality of opportunity for all pupils
  - reviewing each leader's role and their capacity to bring about the changes needed, including the leadership of the special educational needs provision
  - delegating roles and responsibilities more equitably so as to drive and embed improvement systems more effectively
  - ensuring that the school's actions to promote community cohesion are making a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

Analysis of the school's tracking data, lesson observations and evidence from pupils' books confirm that although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, it is uneven throughout the school and inadequate in Key Stage 1. When children join the school they do so with skills and knowledge typically lower than might be expected. Inspection evidence arising from observing teaching and learning shows that, despite making faster progress in some classes and in some year groups, pupils' attainment is still lower than average by the end of Year 6. There is no significant variation in the attainment of different groups, although the good progress and relatively high levels of attainment made by a few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities does indicate their needs may have been misdiagnosed. Although pupils' achievement is inadequate, almost all pupils enjoy being at school and they talk positively about their learning experiences. They feel safe and say with confidence that any concerns will be respected and dealt with fairly by staff at the school. Pupils are polite and courteous. They say that behaviour is improving with very few incidents of bullying. When inappropriate behaviour does occur it is often because pupils have lost interest in the lesson and begin to fidget.

Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and the wider community. They enjoy taking on additional responsibilities around the school and rise to the challenge with maturity. Pupils enjoy taking part in physical exercise lessons. They have a clear understanding of the importance of being healthy and the steps they should take to ensure they eat properly and exercise regularly. They enjoy supporting charities such as Children in Need and engage actively within the community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The introduction of a weekly praise assembly, which celebrates pupils' achievements, has started to promote higher aspirations for attendance and achievement. Even so, attendance levels remain stubbornly low and further work is required to improve matters. Low attendance, coupled with pupils' inadequate attainment, means that they are inadequately prepared for secondary school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning has, until relatively recently, been inadequate as pupils were making too little progress. While there is now some good teaching, it is not sufficiently embedded to enable pupils to make consistently good progress and so attain the standards expected by the end of Year 6. Teachers are using information and communications technology such as visualisers, which can display material onto the whiteboard, to good effect and thereby promoting discussion about how pupils’ work can be improved. Teachers are also planning in detail for support staff and providing clear direction as to how they can support learning in the classroom. They often support those pupils needing additional help and contribute to managing pupils’ behaviour, which can and does sometimes deteriorate when too much time is taken up listening to instructions. They record their observations of pupils’ learning diligently, but because they have not been trained in assessing pupils’ progress, they are limited in identifying the next steps in pupils’ learning.

Most teachers mark pupils’ work conscientiously and provide written commentary that praises effort. There is limited evidence that marking is developmental; in only a few cases are pupils helped to improve the quality of their work from reading teachers’ comments.

Although the curriculum is broad and covers all the subject areas expected, it is inadequate. In some year groups, too much time is wasted on unfocused activities that result in little learning taking place. There is not enough progression in subjects, causing unnecessary repetition of learning in different year groups. Importantly, teachers are not enabling pupils to acquire skills early enough, with the result that, in

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

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later years, teachers are spending time repeating work. For example, some of the older pupils are not confident in using basic punctuation, such as capital letters and full stops, which should be acquired much earlier in their development.

The systems providing care, guidance and support provided to pupils are satisfactory. While there are some good examples of support provided to pupils, the actions taken to improve attendance levels have not yet resulted in the level of improvement required; this continues to act as a barrier to improving pupils' learning and progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leaders work well together and there is a clear determination to bring about the improvements needed at the school. The governing body has successfully recruited a capable headteacher who leads from the front and who has galvanised the school into taking action to raise the school's overall effectiveness. In doing so, he has quickly gained the respect and confidence of the school community. Working closely with the governing body, there is strong agreement about the way forward. The current improvement priorities are appropriate and arise from the school's own accurate self-evaluation, which has been supported by the local authority's recent review of the school. The actions already taken to address the immediate priorities are showing some early signs of success, which confirms that the school's capacity to bring about improvement is satisfactory. However, the senior leadership and the governing body are fully aware that much more needs to be done if the school is to provide the quality of education expected.

The senior leadership team is relatively new and the role of subject and phase leaders has not been fully developed. There is some variation in how successfully they hold staff to account and drive improvement in their areas of responsibility. Their ability to do so is impeded by the lack of accurate information about the performance and progress of different groups of pupils. As a result of the school's inadequate promotion of equal opportunities, staff are not able to monitor and track the development of similar age pupils who happen to be working in different classes. A few leadership roles are shared by staff. For instance, the part-time special educational needs coordinator shares responsibility for monitoring the performance of pupils with special educational needs with the intervention manager and the deputy headteacher. This leadership model has led to various tracking systems being



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developed that are not able to accurately judge the effectiveness of the various intervention strategies. Consequently, there is a lack of reliable data about the progress of pupils on the special needs register and the leadership is uncertain whether or not they have all been identified accurately.

Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. The school’s checks on adults’ suitability to work in school comply with current government requirements. Child protection is a strong feature of the school’s procedures. Staff training is mostly up-to-date with the exception of the lunchtime supervisors, who are currently awaiting up-dated child protection training.

Community cohesion is still very much in the early stages of being promoted. Currently, there is no clear plan of action and no evaluations have taken place to judge the impact of the different initiatives that have taken place.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start at the school. They settle quickly and happily to the school routines. Provision in the Nursery is good as adults are deployed effectively. Time is used well to maximise learning through a sensible mix of child-initiated and teacher-led initiatives. The rather limited outdoor learning area is used imaginatively to complement activities organised in the classroom. In contrast, the quality of provision for the Reception children is satisfactory. This is because teacher-led learning activities dominate and not enough use is made of the outdoor learning space. Time is not used efficiently enough, which reduces the amount of learning taking place and slows children’s progress. As a result, children make satisfactory progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that by the time they join Year

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1 their attainment is slightly lower than average.

Leadership of the Nursery is good. The good quality provision promotes a positive learning environment and enables children to do well. The leadership of the Reception Year is not as effective. The organisational structure of having Reception age children working with Year 1 pupils is a challenge and too much of the day is lost on time-filling activities that are of little benefit.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

## Views of parents and carers

The response rate by parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire was in line with primary schools nationally. Of those families who did respond, the level of satisfaction with the school was broadly average. Inspection evidence supports the view that the school needs to work closely with parents and carers to improve attendance levels and thereby increase pupils' progress.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 251 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	72	12	24	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	68	13	26	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	23	46	18	36	5	10	3	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	40	23	46	2	4	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	19	38	27	54	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	23	46	18	36	2	4	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	54	21	42	0	0	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	52	17	34	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	27	54	16	32	2	4	3	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	46	18	36	4	8	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	48	17	34	2	4	4	8
The school is led and managed effectively	22	44	20	40	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	27	54	17	34	3	6	1	2

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and 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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



19 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Grove Primary School, Malvern, WR14 2LU**

You may remember that I inspected your school, with other inspectors, to see how well your school is helping you to learn. I am writing to thank you all for being so friendly and helpful. We really enjoyed talking with you, listening to your opinions and seeing you work. We were also particularly impressed with your singing during assembly time. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

You go to a school that has had a lot of recent changes. Although some aspects of the school are satisfactory, it can do better. As a result, we have given the school a 'notice to improve'. This means that inspectors will return in about six months to check on how much progress has been made helping you to make faster progress.

We asked the school to improve by:

- improving attendance levels
- ensuring you make good progress each year
- developing a curriculum that ensures you build on your prior learning
- making lessons more challenging and marking your books so that you know how to improve the quality of your work
- strengthening the effectiveness of the school's leadership.

Your teachers know that you can make even more progress and attain higher standards. You can play your part by getting to school on time, attending regularly, working hard in lessons and always doing your best.

I wish you the very best for your future at Grove Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Ken Buxton  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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