

Grovelands Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125056
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381034
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hugh Mannerings
Headteacher	Liz Nichols
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eighteen lessons were visited and 13 teachers were observed. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities, a representative of the governing body and a local authority officer. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, inspectors examined 87 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and 18 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.

- Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage and how well children progress in Nursery and Reception.
- How consistently pupils develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and the impact of teaching and learning on raising attainment.
- Whether teaching and the curriculum consistently meet the learning needs of different groups of pupils.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders in tackling barriers to improvement, such as recent changes in staffing.

Information about the school

This is an above-average-sized infant and nursery school. Pupils are nearly all White British. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, including the number with statements of special educational needs. The majority of these pupils have speech and language difficulties and/or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are in the two Nursery and the four Reception classes. Most children attend the Nursery part time but the school also provides for children to attend full time, in which case the extra provision is funded by parents. The school provides a daily breakfast- and after-school club for all age groups. The school manages the children's centre which is on the same site, but this provision was not inspected during this inspection.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for two years. There have been significant changes since the last inspection. The school has grown in size and now takes a four-class entry into Reception. There have been changes to teaching staff and half of all classes are taught by teachers who took up post this September. The school's awards include Activemark and Healthy School 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?

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 the school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it could be reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the pupils' achievement and to the quality of teaching and learning, especially in reading and mathematics.

Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly average but fewer pupils attain the nationally expected levels in reading than should and, in mathematics, fewer reach higher levels than in most schools. Since children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with average attainment, this indicates elements of inadequate progress.

There is some good teaching, but this is thinly spread and teaching and pupils' progress are currently unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Many of the recently appointed staff are new to the profession and are still becoming established. At times, this is impacting adversely on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teachers manage pupils well but do not match work well enough to pupils' needs as they make insufficient use of assessment information in their planning. Pupils do not apply phonic skills (knowledge of letters and their sounds) sufficiently well in reading or writing, and often guided reading sessions do not involve pupils in enough reading activities.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory and has enabled the school to identify accurately areas for improvement. Senior leaders are driving and ensuring improvement satisfactorily. They have improved attendance, and taken decisive action to improve the teaching of reading in order to accelerate the progress of pupils. This has had a significant impact on attainment in Reception. However, it has not been embedded with continuity over a sufficiently long period to address the backlog of lower achievement in Years 1 and 2. Assessment procedures in Reception, and Years 1 and 2 are much improved. These positive developments illustrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

Senior leaders monitor teaching and learning with a view to making improvements. This is having a positive impact but at this early stage in the school year the literacy teaching of new staff has not yet been thoroughly checked and supported in every class. Some middle leaders are new to their roles and are still developing their

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expertise. They are not yet involved enough in checking pupils' performance, evaluating the quality of lessons and sharing good practice. The governing body supports the school well and provides satisfactory levels of challenge.

Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in satisfactory provision and have led to a rise in attainment in sounds and letters and writing by the end of Reception. However, the school has rightly identified the need to implement uniform systems for tracking assessment across Nursery and Reception, in order more accurately to measure the impact of its work on children's progress. Outdoor play areas for Nursery and Reception have been improved considerably since the previous inspection, although there remain some weaknesses in their use.

Parents generally have confidence in the school and recognise it as a welcoming, caring place for their children, where pupils are kept, and feel, very safe. Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good, including their behaviour, their understanding of healthy lifestyles and their contribution to their community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement by July 2012 by:
 - raising the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels of attainment in reading and higher levels in mathematics at the end of Year 2
 - accelerating pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading
 - enabling pupils to apply their phonic skills consistently to reading and writing.
- Eliminate inadequate teaching as a matter of urgency and, by July 2012, ensure the majority of lessons are good by:
 - improving the extent to which assessment information is used to inform planning
 - providing staff training in the teaching of reading, including guided reading, and in helping children to apply phonic skills when reading and writing
 - ensuring that work throughout lessons is carefully matched to all pupils' capabilities and builds on their existing skills.
- Improve provision and children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by July 2012 by:
 - giving higher attaining children in Reception better opportunities for problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in their outdoor learning
 - increasing adult intervention and ensuring children make balanced choices across the areas of learning during outdoor activities
 - implementing common tracking procedures for checking children's progress throughout Nursery and in Reception.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - focusing the monitoring and evaluation of teaching on reading, ensuring it covers all teachers quickly, and providing support where needed, so that pupils' progress improves rapidly

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- revising the responsibilities of senior leaders so they are shared more evenly
- supporting middle leaders so they can skilfully monitor the quality of teaching to judge its impact on the learning of different groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils really enjoy school and work hard. This, combined with good relationships, provides a very positive ethos for learning. Most of the current Year 2 pupils made satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics when in Year 1, but inadequate progress in reading. Although a minority of pupils are now catching up in reading due to good literacy teaching in one Year 2 class, most are not because of too much inadequate literacy teaching in other classes in Year 2. More able pupils are not attaining the levels they are capable of in mathematics. This uneven journey through the school is experienced by pupils of all abilities. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities often make satisfactory progress in small group sessions, where their learning needs are better met than when in class.

In a good guided reading lesson in Year 1, all pupils learned well because reading activities were interesting, well matched to their different abilities and pupils were enabled to apply their phonics skills well. However, pupils’ learning is too often unsatisfactory in guided reading. Too many are not actively involved, and do not apply their phonic skills because they are not encouraged to do so.

Pupils are polite and behave well in lessons even when work is not well matched to their needs. Those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are helped well and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. The development of spiritual, moral and social understanding is a strength of the school. Pupils’ sense of wonder and curiosity is engendered well through art, and design and technology. Pupils play a positive and active role within their community, for example through the school and eco councils, fundraising and charity work. However, weaknesses in their progress in reading means pupils are not adequately prepared for their future.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
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	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2

¹ 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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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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching ranged from good to inadequate. Teachers are enthusiastic, keen to teach well and pupils respond well to their high expectations for good behaviour. There is a small amount of good teaching in every year group but inadequate teaching is limiting pupils' achievement, especially in Years 1 and 2, where teachers do not always have adequate subject knowledge for teaching reading. Pupils' progress is now being assessed more accurately but the results of these assessments are not always used to match the work accurately to pupils' abilities. In a good mathematics session in Year 1, teaching was sharply focused on the full range of pupils' needs, engaged all pupils fully and moved learning on at a quick pace. However, not all teachers are clear about where to pitch pupils' work, and they do not ensure activities remain challenging throughout the lesson. Currently, there is not enough good teaching to redress the legacy of slower progress. The support provided by teaching assistants is variable in lessons; here they do not always adequately support individuals and groups in their learning.

The curriculum encourages enjoyment and engagement by making topics come alive through trips; practical work in art, and design and technology; and by linking subjects together. Curriculum planning outlines suitably flexible programmes to allow for different abilities in each year group, but teachers do not always implement the programmes with sufficient attention to this in lessons. The school provides a good range of intervention programmes in literacy and mathematics to help pupils catch up in Year 2 and these help to redress some earlier inadequate progress. Pupils enjoy the good range of after-school clubs, such as country dancing, different sports and cheerleading.

Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Good pastoral care supports the vast majority of pupils in feeling confident and secure at school. Those attending the breakfast- and after-school clubs are well cared for and have an enjoyable start and end to the school day. The revised and rigorous procedures for improving attendance have proved successful, with a rise in pupils' attendance and a drop in persistent absenteeism. Pupils report very little bullying and agree that there is always someone who will help them if they are worried. The school draws upon its good links with outside specialists to help those with particular needs as well as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example pupils with speech and language difficulties. However, fluctuations in pupils' progress indicate that the school is not

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supporting all pupils to do as well as they could.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders work closely together and have put suitable structures and systems in place so that a school of this size can be properly managed. Although many of the staff are new to the school, the headteacher has successfully forged them into a team who share the drive for improvement. The school's monitoring of teaching shows that the proportion of good teaching increased steadily throughout last year. This was affirmed during the inspection by the good teaching demonstrated by several longer serving staff, indicating that senior leaders have had a positive impact on improving teaching and learning. However, the changes in staff mean that securing consistency in approach has not been easy. The mentoring systems for recently trained teachers are satisfactory and are helping new recruits to hone their general teaching skills. These are beginning to have satisfactory effect. However, at this early stage of the school year, they have had less impact on pupils' progress in literacy. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are now beginning to involve other senior and middle leaders in monitoring the work of the school but the responsibilities are unevenly distributed. Partnerships support pupils' welfare well. Links with other schools are developing and contribute to sound leadership of teaching through enabling teachers to observe good practice elsewhere. The school can demonstrate improvements to individual practice during last year as a result of this work. Links with parents are satisfactory and are being strengthened as a result of much recent work on closer liaison between school and home for reading.

The governing body has recently reorganised, and under the keen leadership of the chair, is increasingly playing a strong role in challenging the school and holding it to account for its performance. Governors give high priority to safeguarding and ensure the school site is secure. Checks on staff and visitors fulfil all legal requirements. Although there is no form of discrimination, equality of opportunity for pupils is inadequate because not all individuals and groups of learners are given the chance to achieve as much as they possibly can. Many are making inadequate progress and middle leaders have had too little involvement in the analysis of the progress of groups. The school develops community cohesion at a local level effectively and has links further afield. It has begun to develop an association with a school in a different setting in the United Kingdom.

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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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Nursery with skills and levels of understanding that are similar to those expected for their age. Children settle well into Nursery and Reception and all, including those who are in the Nursery full time, are well cared for. Nursery staff are well trained and qualified, and cater for children’s individual learning and personal needs effectively. The strong emphasis on developing children’s personal and communication skills in the Nursery leads to children’s good progress in these areas. Most Nursery children transfer to Reception. Children’s progress and the teaching they receive are satisfactory overall in Nursery and Reception. By the end of the Reception Year, children’s attainment is average. School records show that children’s attainment in writing has improved in recent years. The school provides an appropriate combination of adult-led and child-selected activities in the daily programmes, and effective routines are well established.

Adults plan a wide range of learning activities outdoors, especially in Reception, which children greatly enjoy. However, Reception children do not always engage in a balanced programme of activities that covers all areas of learning during purposeful play (the times when they are not being taught formally). Adults do not always monitor this, and sometimes miss opportunities to intervene to extend children’s thinking. The outdoor activities selected by the more capable children do not always extend them, especially in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Children in the breakfast- and after-school clubs, and the nursery lunchtime club are well cared for and they enjoy healthy food, as well as suitable play and learning activities.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. There is systematic assessment of children’s individual attainment and progress for

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both year groups. There are also good class- and whole-year tracking systems for Reception but not for Nursery. This lack of a uniform tracking system for Nursery and Reception is limiting continuity in experiences and more robust self-evaluation of the impact of provision on the progress of different groups.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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 to the Ofsted questionnaire was below average. Almost all responses show that parents and carers are pleased with their children’s experiences at the school. They feel this is a happy school where their children are kept safe and they say their children enjoy attending. Parents and carers who responded are particularly pleased with the way their children have settled into Nursery and Reception classes. The very large majority are pleased with the progress their children are making but a few felt progress was inconsistent. Inspectors found pupils’ progress too variable, especially in reading. A very small minority of those who responded do not feel the school always listens to their concerns and several wrote to say that communication could be improved. Inspectors found no evidence that the school does not listen to the concerns of parents and carers. They found that school leaders and governors are improving communication with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grovelands Infant and Nursery 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 365 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	64	29	33	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	61	31	36	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	22	53	61	5	6	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	34	41	47	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	48	35	40	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	30	34	42	48	7	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	43	44	51	1	1	1	1
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)	31	36	39	45	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	30	34	43	49	6	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	31	40	46	8	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	31	42	48	5	6	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	35	40	34	39	8	9	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	46	53	37	43	1	1	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	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).

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"> ■ 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.



5 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Grovelands Infant and Nursery School, Walton-on Thames
KT12 2EB**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We were very impressed by your behaviour and the obvious pride that you have in your school. We were also very interested to hear your views. There is a variety of things that your school is doing well, such as helping the youngest children to settle quickly in Nursery and Reception. We were also impressed by the way you are so helpful and do so much for your community. However, we have judged that the school is not as good as it should be. The school has been given a 'notice to improve' because we judge there are things that need to get better quickly. Some other inspectors will be back to see how well the school is doing.

To help your school improve quickly, we have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to do the following important things:

- Make sure more of you reach the standards you should in reading and those of you who are more able reach higher standards in mathematics.
- Make sure you get exactly the right work to do in lessons, not too hard and not too easy.
- Help you to make sensible choices during outdoor play in Reception so you can learn lots of new things.
- Ensure school leaders, teachers in charge of subjects and members of the governing body keep a closer check on how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and help by working hard in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick
Lead inspector

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