

# Grange First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108444
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle Upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	377755
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Shepherd

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>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ron Hinshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matt Ward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 April 2009
<b>School address</b>	Norham Road Gosforth Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE3 2NP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed taught by six teachers. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, governors, senior leaders, staff and a local authority officer. They observed the work of the school, scrutinised documents related to self-evaluation, safeguarding pupils, the data relating to pupils' progress over time, teachers' planning and assessment and pupils' work. They also analysed 65 parental questionnaires.

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

- The aspects of teaching and the curriculum that relate to pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The impact that the changes of leadership have made on the school's rate of improvement.
- Whether the school is correct in judging how well pupils keep safe and healthy, pupils' contributions to the community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as the stronger features of pupils' personal development.
- The impact on children's progress and the quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage of the movement of children in and out of the school between Nursery and Reception.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than usual. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. More than nine different ethnic groups attend the school. The proportion of these pupils is lower than the national average. A larger than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average with a smaller proportion of pupils than usual having a statement of special educational needs. The school has Healthy School status, Eco-School status, the Activemark, Basic Skills Quality mark, International School intermediate award and Investors in Children membership. An external acting headteacher was appointed for the term as a result of the previous headteacher moving to another headship. An externally appointed acting deputy headteacher was in post this year to cover for maternity leave.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Members of the governing body are managing the transition between headteachers skilfully, based on clear core values for the school. These values include creating good quality teaching and well-focussed care, guidance and support. Governors are keen to raise the quality of teaching to outstanding. The acting headteacher has made an excellent start to his role and, together with the staff, is building firmly on the school's self-evaluation. Staff, pupils, parents and carers express great confidence in his leadership. Management systems run smoothly. These features result in a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well as they move through the school. This is a result of consistently good teaching and a well-balanced curriculum with a clear focus on basic skills. Children enter the school with development slightly lower than typical for children of this age. They make consistently good progress through Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in their personal development. The school has focussed on improving provision in pupils' writing and mathematics. As a result attainment is rising, with some significantly higher standards. Whilst attainment in reading is above average, it is slightly lower than writing and mathematics. The school has identified this and has clear plans to increase pupils' progress further. There are good systems for developing reading skills, particularly in the literature-based project where pupils work with a key text over time. There are some outstanding features in the daily phonics sessions (letters and the sounds they make) but the progress in these sessions is variable. The school promotes equal opportunities extremely well, particularly in analysing different groups of pupils' progress to narrow any gaps in attainment.

A key strength of the school is the pupils' personal development. The weekly organisation where pupils move into the same mixed-age groups for personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional development works very well. This results in pupils having an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and with older pupils supporting younger pupils very confidently. The weekly sessions where pupils work across a wide range of mixed-aged activities also supports learning very effectively. Many external specialists work in partnership with the school, providing particularly good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school creates excellent partnerships with parents who show great confidence in the provision.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:-
  - providing a consistently challenging pace throughout all lessons
  - giving pupils more opportunities to talk about their thinking and learning to each other and to respond to questions more fully.
  
- Extend the consistency of pupils' progress and teaching in the phonics reading sessions by:-
  - carrying out an audit of the key strengths and weaknesses of these sessions and sharing the best practice amongst all staff
  - providing further training for the whole school and individuals
  - increasing the challenge to the higher-attaining pupils
  - monitoring and evaluating the impact of the changes.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Pupils thoroughly enjoy the start to their learning each morning with their lively 'wake up, shake up session'. They appreciate the work of the pupils who have produced routines for them to follow on the interactive white board. They settle quickly into the more formal learning and listen well to teachers in whole-class sessions. When lessons proceed at a consistently fast pace, pupils concentrate very well and rise to the challenge of meeting deadlines. They are confident in using information and communication technology. Pupils achieve well, particularly when they move into group work, responding well to interactions with members of staff and working hard to complete their tasks. Levels of independence vary between classes. In the better lessons they work very confidently with each other, interacting confidently to solve problems. When they are given the opportunity to talk to each other to share their ideas, they make good use of this time and concentrate on finding answers to teachers' questions. They have a good understanding of how to improve their work, particularly in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well, working confidently in class and in group work.

Pupils use their excellent understanding of keeping healthy very well. They are keen to eat healthy food. They all play a very active part in physical education lessons and are eager to show the skills they have developed. They also enjoy the wealth of additional clubs based on physical development, such as fencing. Pupils have a very good knowledge of keeping safe, including e-safety and the perils of smoking or drug abuse. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. Their behaviour around the school is outstanding. They move very sensibly around the building and are courteous to each other and respectful to adults. Behaviour is good in lessons. There are occasions where pupils lose some concentration when the pace of lessons drops. Pupils are keen to take on additional responsibilities, including their term as a school councillor. They enjoy learning about other cultures and appreciate opportunities to go on visits outside of school or to work with visitors coming into school, such as the flamenco guitarist and dancer. Pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with each other. Rates of attendance are higher than average and are improving. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers work well with their teaching assistants in whole-class sessions and in group work. There is a good balance between whole-class sessions and group work. In the better teaching there is a consistently fast pace to learning with a very good balance between teachers talking and opportunities for pupils to work together on tasks such as talking in pairs or collecting data. These sessions are lively and challenging with high expectations of every pupil. Assessment systems are well-organised and teachers use this information well in their planning.

The curriculum for personal development is particularly good with many opportunities for enrichment. There is a good balance between subjects with a very well-organised curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for pupils who speak English as an additional language, that is tailored to their particular needs. Opportunities are also provided for the higher-attaining pupils to extend their learning.

There are some excellent features in care, guidance and support. School systems to promote attendance are outstanding. The school uses its small size very well to ensure that all staff know and support every individual. The mixed-age organisation supports this very effectively. Transition arrangements are good.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

<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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has worked hard to ensure that he understands the key strengths and improvement issues of the school. He combines this well with his own educational vision to create a strong sense of purpose across school staff. Senior leaders are keen to play their part in driving improvement. Monitoring systems for teaching and learning are well-organised and feed into whole-school and individual developments.

The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. Governors have a wide range of expertise and regularly monitor provision during the working day in order to evaluate the school's work fully. Leaders have a strong commitment to equal opportunities. Action is taken to narrow gaps in achievement after thorough analysis of the well-organised data collection of pupils' progress and attainment. Systems to safeguard pupils are carefully considered. They meet requirements, although there is some inconsistency in the quality of the different systems. The promotion of community cohesion is particularly good within the school, although it is not as well embedded in the national or international context.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Despite changes of staffing in this key stage and movement of children in and out of the key stage, the provision is consistently good. The full teaching team work very well together. They provide a good balance between adult-led work and child-initiated learning, coverage across the different areas of learning indoors and outdoors. The outdoor provision has improved since the previous inspection and is now stimulating and carefully organised. Children play confidently with each other, share equipment sensibly and know the routines well. They particularly enjoy carrying out investigations, playing in the stimulating role-play areas or settling down with a book. Staff guide children well to extend their learning in independent activities although some opportunities are missed to promote children's speaking skills. There is a strong emphasis on promoting children's welfare. Self-evaluation is good and leaders work systematically to improve provision. The early identification of children with potential special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly

effective and ensures that these children receive well-targeted support from a very early stage.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school’s provision. A high proportion report that their children like school. Overall they are happy with their children’s experience. They believe that the school keeps their children safe and that the teaching is good. They judge that the school meets their child’s particular needs, that the school is led and managed effectively and that their children are well prepared for their future. Although there were an extremely small number of concerns raised, none were raised by more than one parent and/or carer. Some parents and/or carers mentioned the changes in senior leaders but expressed confidence in the way that this had been handled. Several comments referred to the good start the acting headteacher had made in his leadership. There were a large number of positive comments made by parents and carers. A typical comment was, ‘The school is like one big happy family where all the staff and children try their best to work and look after each other.’ Inspectors considered the responses carefully and agree with the parental views.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grange First 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	85	10	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	75	16	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	60	24	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	60	24	37	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	46	71	18	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	60	24	37	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	62	24	37	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	68	18	28	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	68	19	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	54	24	37	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	60	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	68	19	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	80	13	20	0	0	0	0

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

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

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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 is 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.**



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Grange First School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 2NP**

My colleagues and I would like to thank you very much for giving us such a warm welcome when we came to inspect your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and listening to your views. You helped us to understand what you think about your school. We would like to tell you what we found out.

You go to a good school and make good progress. You make a good start in the Nursery and Reception. You told us that you love working in family groups on Mondays and in different groups on Fridays to carry out interesting activities. We agree that this really helps your learning. Older pupils are very good at supporting younger pupils. Your understanding of how to keep healthy is outstanding. You make very well-informed choices about eating healthy foods and you thoroughly enjoy physical exercise. Your 'wake up shake up sessions' are excellent. You know how to keep safe and develop good basic skills. Around the school your behaviour is excellent. It is good when you are in lessons. Your school works hard to help you all understand how important it is to come to school every day and your attendance rates are getting better.

Teaching is good with teaching staff all working well together. We have asked staff to make their teaching even better by making sure that you are working hard in every part of lessons and to give you more opportunities to talk together about your learning. You can make sure that you concentrate hard right through lessons and listen carefully to each other to share your ideas. Teachers mark your mathematics work very well and you have a very good understanding of how to improve in this subject and in writing. You enjoy your reading, and we have asked your teachers to make sure that you learn even better in your phonics groups and that this work is always challenging and interesting.

You told us that your new headteacher already knows you very well. We think that he is working very well with your staff and governors to help to make your school a better place. We wish you all the best in your future learning.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Shepherd  
Lead inspector

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