

Grange Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124630
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380938
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2012
Lead inspector	Geof Timms

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Les South
Headteacher	Christabel Reynish
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2009
School address	Grange Road Felixstowe IP11 2LA
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geof Timms

Additional Inspector

Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons, taught by nine teachers, for a total of almost 10 hours, as well as spending other time looking at pupils' work. In addition, meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body, as well as pupils. The inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of assessment data, policies, reports and planning documents. They analysed the responses to 67 parental questionnaires.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. An above-average proportion of the pupils is currently known to be eligible for free school meals. A below-average proportion is from minority ethnic groups and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average, and very high in some year groups. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. A high proportion of pupils join partway through their primary school education. The headteacher has taken up her post since the last inspection. There were significant staffing changes last year. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. A children's centre shares the school site, but this is inspected and reported on separately.

The school has Healthy Schools status, Basic Skills and Activemark awards, and a variety of environmental and sustainability awards.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is rapidly improving after a fall in standards due to staffing turbulence, but is not yet good because there is not enough sustained good or better teaching to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve consistently well in the key subjects of English and mathematics. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children's progress in the Nursery and Reception is good. Older pupils make satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics, and good progress in reading. Attainment is broadly average.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Increasingly effective teaching is having a positive impact on the progress made by all groups of pupils. Teachers do not yet provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop independence, to respond to feedback or to reflect on their own or their peers' learning. Staff develop pupils' basic skills appropriately, but do not yet provide enough challenging activities in terms of speaking, writing and mathematics to fully overcome pupils' low starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. This has a positive impact on their learning and on how safe they feel at school. Pupils talk positively about how well they get on together. The school manages any incidences of challenging behaviour effectively.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked successfully to build a more stable staffing structure and senior leadership team, and to improve the quality of teaching. The governing body provides satisfactory and improving support and challenge for the school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' speaking and writing skills by:
 - providing more drama and role play opportunities, including speaking to different audiences
 - providing more opportunities to develop and extend their vocabulary
 - improving the way leaders track the progress pupils make in developing their speaking and listening skills, to clarify focus areas for improvement.

- Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop independence and thinking skills linked to practical activities
 - providing more opportunities to talk about and discuss their work with others
 - making tasks more challenging to accelerate the learning of the most able.

- Ensure that teaching is consistently of good or better quality by:
 - developing more independence in learners
 - providing more opportunities for peer- and self-assessment
 - encouraging pupils to reflect on and respond to teachers' feedback and marking.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. Year 6 results were low in 2011 because of significant staffing turbulence and a high proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs. A significant number of these pupils had joined partway through their primary schooling and often faced extremely challenging circumstances. As a result, government floor standards were not met in 2011, although they were in 2010 and the current Year 6 are on track to exceed them this year.

The work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that progress in reading is good. In writing and mathematics, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall from low starting points. However, the quality of pupils' writing is often hampered by the lack of a sufficiently rich and varied vocabulary and poor speaking skills. In mathematics, the school is working with a range of new strategies, including external support and taking part in research projects, to try and develop pupils' independence and thinking skills. This is at an early stage and is yet to have an impact on pupils' attainment, especially for those capable of reaching higher levels.

Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Reading skills, including linking letters and sounds, are developing well. The school works successfully to improve children's attitudes, which are often immature when they start. The current Year 2

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pupils are on track to attain levels much closer to the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. Basic skills are developing well. Pupils' understanding of sounds and letters is satisfactory, and their enjoyment of books is clear. In Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils enjoyed reading to an adult and could talk about their favourite stories. In Key Stage 2 pupils' progress is currently more rapid because of improvements to the consistency and quality of teaching. In reading, progress is good and attainment is broadly average. In mathematics lessons, the most able pupils are not given sufficient independence or opportunities to talk about or reflect on their learning, or to use their thinking skills to solve practical problems. Where these were provided, such as in an excellent lesson in Year 3, progress was much stronger and the most able were fully challenged. Most parents and carers are pleased with the progress that their children are making throughout the school.

Well-planned interventions mean that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The school ensures that the high number of pupils who join late are welcomed and supported, so they too make progress in line with their peers.

Quality of teaching

Much of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and a very large majority of parents and carers are confident that their children are currently taught well. However, this improving picture is not yet sustained so the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Teachers are improving their practice through professional development. For example, the work of a visiting expert teacher in mathematics is already having a positive impact on the teachers' skills in this subject throughout the school. The teaching of reading is good and this is reflected in the good progress that pupils make.

The school caters for a significant number of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The teachers manage these pupils effectively and demonstrate a genuine care and concern for their welfare. However, more generally they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning, or to assess and reflect on their own or others' work. Teachers have recently improved the way they mark pupils' work. Better feedback now shows them how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, although pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to reflect on or respond to this. Target setting is well matched to pupils' prior attainment, and they are aware of their targets and what they can do to improve.

Teachers generally make good use of the curriculum to provide a wide range of activities. The nurture provision and the 'forest school' initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, and this is reflected particularly in the strong support provided by the teaching assistants and other support staff. The most vulnerable pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs get real benefit from this provision. The progress they make is tracked well by staff so that the provision is continually reviewed and revised where necessary. This is not

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yet the case for pupils' general speaking and listening skills, and staff sometimes miss opportunities to sharpen these skills by encouraging pupils to practise their speaking skills in particular.

Children's learning needs in the Nursery and Reception are well provided for in a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In one good session, children explored the school grounds for minibeasts, showing a real interest in nature and some independence in pursuing areas of interest. Teachers help pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures, and this promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Outside expertise is used well to teach physical education and music.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a harmonious community. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically good, as is evident from questionnaire responses, school records and observations. The vast majority of the pupils are polite and friendly to those they know and respectful towards visitors. Their good behaviour in lessons helps their learning and they cooperate and collaborate effectively when the activities give them this opportunity. In Year 6, for example, small groups worked together well to develop short dramas to illustrate how they could respond to bullying. Pupils throughout the school enjoy talking about and sharing their work. Their enthusiasm for school is not fully reflected in their attendance because too many parents take pupils out of school during term time. However, the school works very hard with all appropriate authorities to try and improve attendance and punctuality.

The school has a high proportion of pupils who are vulnerable learners in a variety of ways. Some of these pupils exhibit significant behavioural and emotional difficulties at times. The school works hard to support these pupils and their families. This is done through close links with the on-site children's centre, external agencies, the nurture provision and the very effective work of a Parent Liaison Support Assistant. Parents and carers are generally confident in approaching the school and in seeking help when needed. For example, a number have overcome their uncertainty with mathematics to train as 'maths angels' to support children at school and at home.

Pupils say that behaviour is good in lessons, and usually at other times as well. They have a good understanding of what constitutes different types of bullying, and are confident that if there was any it would be dealt with well by adults. They talk confidently about the adults they trust and would go to if they had a concern. Parents and carers say that their children feel safe and the school helps them to support their child's learning. Relationships between pupils, teachers and parents and carers are good.

Leadership and management

The good leadership demonstrated by the headteacher is having a positive impact on raising standards and improving teaching through focused staff training. There is a

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good team spirit and all staff are proud to be members of the school. The senior leaders are developing a clear vision that is suitably focused on raising standards, and their self-evaluation is accurate. The school has made good use of local authority support in recognising and confirming areas for improvement, and successful recent developments in mathematics reflect the determination to raise standards further. Significant staff changes have meant that some leadership roles have changed. Even so, the leadership of literacy and numeracy is effective, and the leadership and management of the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes are good. The headteacher has introduced a detailed tracking system that enables staff to see clearly how well their pupils are progressing. This means any underachievement can be more quickly recognised and addressed, and extra support and expertise provided to suit the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs appropriately. They talk enthusiastically about how they enjoy the cross-curricular and topic work, especially the topic on the Titanic. The school successfully promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of opportunities locally and through links with two other schools. The members of the governing body are working to improve their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school is effective at promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements fully meet current government requirements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Community Primary School, Felixstowe, IP11 2LA

Thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit, reading your questionnaires and talking to many of you. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. This is important because it helps the teachers provide you with some interesting work, as well as keeping you safe and happy in school. Keep it up.

Grange is a satisfactory school. You are all working hard together to improve it further. You work well, and are reaching higher standards than you have in the past. Even so we think more of you are capable of achieving even more, especially in speaking, writing and mathematics. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to talk in different situations, and to extend your vocabulary so your writing becomes more interesting. In mathematics we have asked the school to make sure those of you who are good with numbers are given difficult enough work, and for all of you to have more chances to solve problems.

The teachers are working hard to help you learn. We have asked them to give you more time to look at the marking of your work and reflect on what they are telling you to do next. We have also asked teachers to let you have more time to assess how well you think you are learning, and to share work with your classmates so that you learn more from each other. Your headteacher provides good leadership and the leadership of other staff and the governing body is improving. They seek ideas from outside the school and this is helping make your school even better.

Thank you again for your friendliness and help. We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Grange and keep working hard.

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms
Lead inspector

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