

Grafton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100406
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	276301
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2005
Reporting inspector	Nicholas (Nick) Butt

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms J King Mrs T Sergides
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Eburne Road Holloway London N7 6AR
Telephone number	02072723284
Fax number	02072725709

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an inner-city area whose socio-economic circumstances are much lower than those usually found. More than half of pupils are entitled to free school meals and a similar proportion have learning difficulties and disabilities. Slightly more than half of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being Black African and Caribbean. Three fifths of pupils have a first language other than English, predominantly Turkish. Attainment on entry is well below average. There is high mobility (over 50% in Year 6). A former Beacon school, it has Investors in People accreditation and the Arts Mark Gold award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

Develop the reception class outside play area and erect a shelter.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Following a rigorous monitoring programme, the school judges the quality of teaching to be good overall, but inspectors rate it outstanding. Teachers know how to challenge pupils of differing abilities and cater very well for pupils with learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English. The headteacher and her team of senior managers provide strong support, especially in promoting consistently high quality teaching across the school. Consequently all pupils in Years 1 to 6 make very good progress. Colleagues work alongside one another to develop individual strengths, and to increase subject knowledge. They manage behaviour very well, with a consistent approach. All support staff are very effective in working with groups and individuals to ensure they make appropriate progress. High quality displays, including many examples of collaborative work, value pupils' achievements and efforts. Initiatives have been successfully introduced to improve poor literacy skills, especially among the youngest children. Assessment information is analysed intelligently to monitor pupils' performance and intervene where necessary. Termly pupil reviews with the headteacher ensure every child's progress matters. Parents are offered a range of classes to develop their own skills and become more involved in their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school offers a dynamic curriculum full of life and energy. As one pupil said, 'Learning is the very essence of your life.' A Year 2 pupil said, 'Every time I come to school we're going to be learning something new.' All adults share a love of discovery and communicate their enthusiasm very well. The school reviews and analyses the impact of initiatives meticulously. It seeks out new ways to help pupils and raise standards, for example in recent successful developments in literacy and numeracy. Classes and corridors have an abundance of high quality children's work, with great mobiles and friezes full of colour and vitality. These often reflect the rich diversity of cultures shared by pupils and staff alike. There are life enhancing experiences, such as the annual trip to the seaside, when literally everybody leaves inner-London behind and has fun on the beach. A wide variety of visiting artists and performers enrich the provision, and there are many clubs and activities. Year 6 pupils have a residential visit to the Isle of Wight that helps them live together away from home.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The school is a haven for pupils, who feel safe and secure. Parents are delighted with the support offered to their children. One parent wrote, '[they] have created a loving caring environment that allayed any fears that we had as our children entered the education system.' The school places a high priority on helping children manage their own behaviour. Child protection procedures are now robust (an issue at the last inspection) and children in vulnerable situations are given excellent support. Pupils have very good role models in an ethnically diverse staff, creating a family atmosphere in which everyone is included and everyone's contribution is recognised and valued. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. There are excellent systems for tracking children's progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have clear targets and very good support from teachers and other adults. The provision for pupils whose first language is not English is outstanding, with a dedicated team meticulously identifying and meeting their every need.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and were especially pleased to talk to some of you about your work and what you like about the school. We think your school is brilliant! Everybody works together so well to make it a happy place where you can learn lots of new and exciting things. We especially liked:

- * The high standards you reach, especially in mathematics, science and art. We could see in this in your books and also in the beautiful displays around the school.
- * The way your teachers and other adults help you to do your best and get the most out of each day.
- * Your enthusiasm for learning and your hard work in lessons, including your good behaviour and respect for one another.
- * The many exciting things you pack in, including all the interesting visitors, your trips out and the clubs you can take part in.

We would like the children in the reception classes to have more space to play outside and a shelter so that they can still go out even when it is wet. Perhaps you could work with them to come up with some ideas for what could be included in their new play area? We know you will help your teachers to make your school even more wonderful than it already is. Thank you once again for looking after us so well on our visit.