



# Grovelands Community School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114393  
**LEA** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 279376  
**Inspection dates** 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** David Collard RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Dunbar Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Hailsham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		East Sussex BN27 3UW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 840062
<b>Number on roll</b>	648	<b>Fax number</b>	01323 840062
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marion Lace

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279376
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Grovelands Community School is a very large primary school with 616 pupils. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. A higher-than-average number of pupils joins and leaves the school during Years 3 to 6. There is a small number who have very little spoken English when they start at the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

As agreed by the school and the inspection, this is a satisfactory school providing sound value for money. The school is effective in knowing its strengths and realistic about where improvements are needed. It has successfully tackled pockets of underachievement and standards are now improving. However, there remain some pupils, particularly the higher attaining ones, who could achieve more if teaching was more demanding. Children in the Reception classes make a sound start and reach standards that are close to those expected for their age. Pupils in the rest of the school make satisfactory progress and standards in reading, mathematics and science are in line with the national average although not as high in writing. Teaching quality varies between classes, but is satisfactory with a number of strengths. A recent programme of training has raised teachers' expectations and has improved the quality of teaching. Leadership and management are satisfactory with several good aspects. The headteacher and deputy have correctly identified that the recently formed and large senior management team and governing body now need to take on more responsibility for ensuring that all pupils make the very best progress. Clearly, the school is well placed to make the improvements that will sustain the progress made already.

Grade: 3

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- raise the rate of progress of those more able pupils who are capable of reaching higher standards
- improve the quality of all teaching to that of the best
- use the expertise of the whole management team to rigorously evaluate and improve the school's provision.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards both in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 are in line with the national expectations and most pupils make the progress that they should. The decline to well-below-average results in Year 6 national tests in 2004 was reversed in 2005. This was due to the effective measures put in place such as the work being targeted at improving the progress of a high number of pupils who have joined the school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, those with English as an additional language as well as a group of children with gifts and talents in particular activities are achieving well. Due to the variability in the quality of teaching, some of the more able pupils could make better progress. The majority of pupils are now achieving at the expected levels in the core skills of English and mathematics. These skills are influencing their work in all other subjects where progress is at least satisfactory and often good. The interesting and challenging 'Learning to learn' programme, is improving pupils' thinking skills and encouraging them to have a deeper understanding of how they can be better learners. For instance, in class discussions teachers use expressions

such as "Come on, be brave, have the courage of your convictions!." Achievement overall is improving, albeit not as fast as the school would like. However, there are a number of examples in books where below average progress was being made in the past and it is at least satisfactory now.

Grade: 3

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 2**

Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good grasp of right and wrong and a strong sense of belonging to the school. They welcome their responsibilities on the school council and in organising the 'shop' at playtime, all of which are providing good skills for the future. Older pupils are able to recall their favourite work in art, music and history. One teacher's extended holiday in India was used very well to give the class a first-hand insight, including exchanging emails. Work in religious education and friendships with pupils in the school enhance pupils' knowledge of life in multi-ethnic Britain but, overall, the way in which displays around the school reflect this is more limited. Pupils' personal development is good and they behave well. The pupils are friendly, welcoming, and very well mannered. Nearly all parents stated that their children enjoy coming to school and they are well cared for. Attendance is similar to that found in primary schools nationally. Pupils are well aware of the importance of staying fit and healthy and were particularly inspired by a visiting coach who worked with them in gymnastics. In lessons, pupils collaborate very well when working with others. They show a great deal of determination when presented with challenging tasks.

Grade: 2

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

The satisfactory teaching and learning have a number of good features, although their quality is too variable. The main variation is in how well lessons meet the needs of all pupils. In the good lessons, pupils are clear about their targets and higher ability pupils have to work very hard. This was characterised in one outstanding lesson in Year 4 where pupils were challenged to think about how Catherine and Henry VIII felt about their pending divorce. By contrast, in the less successful lessons, the work does not meet all pupils' needs. For instance, the higher attaining pupils are given work that is too easy and results in them not doing as well as they could. Improved assessment is leading to a better focus on matching work to pupils' capabilities. Marking is good and teachers' comments and questions encourage pupils to think more about what they are doing. The numerous teaching assistants are confident, well trained and provide good support. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an

early stage of learning English benefit particularly from the extra help provided during lessons.

Grade: 3

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

The broad and balanced curriculum caters satisfactorily for the needs of most pupils in all years including the Foundation Stage, but because the different levels of learning are more variable, not fully for the most able. It is enriched very well through a good number of visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs, which contribute effectively to learners' enjoyment. The youngest pupils settle in quickly and soon become part of the school with the support of their teachers and older pupils. Good use is made of the extensive school grounds to support learning, particularly in science, sport and practical investigation. Pupils especially talk about their enjoyment of art and physical education. Lesson plans include teaching pupils how to stay healthy and safe. Pupils are developing a good awareness of caring for their environment, for instance through their commitment to recycling food waste. The school makes good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual education plans clearly identify needs and support is targeted well.

Grade: 3

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

Pupils are very well cared for, guided and supported. Pupils clearly understand the school rules, which they consider are 'sensible.' Any elements of bullying are dealt with swiftly and appropriately and pupils feel safe while at school. Child protection issues are closely monitored and staff are fully trained. During well supervised playtimes, pupils are encouraged to exercise, basketball being very popular at the moment. Older pupils have been trained to help younger pupils in the Reception class and Year 1 to play, which they do conscientiously. All pupils feel that they can share problems with their teachers or helpers. There is good provision and support for pupils with physical disabilities during lessons and around the school building. Grade: 2

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory with several good aspects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have addressed the most urgent problems associated with underachievement. There is a clear vision about how learning can be improved and good strategies for consulting with staff, parents, pupils and the wider community. Individual pupils are now aware of what should be learnt in each lesson. The 'Learning to Learn' initiative has rightly focused teachers' attention on providing appropriate challenge resulting in many more pupils receiving well focused support.

Thorough analysis of the teaching in mathematics by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher has resulted in overcoming all the main weaknesses. There are equally effective checks on how well English is taught although these have not yet fully transferred into higher standards. Other subject reviews takes place but is not as systematically organised. In the past, the monitoring and evaluation has relied too heavily on the expertise of the headteacher and deputy with the senior management team sharing responsibility for implementing any initiatives. Lately, there have been clearer plans to involve these staff more in monitoring and evaluation, enabling them to gain a better view of how the new developments are working. The school improvement plan has realistic targets but the detail is not specific enough for teachers to check how successful they have been. Resources are deployed efficiently and the accommodation provides an outstanding learning environment. Governors receive regular reports and year group links successfully involve them in the life of the school. However, they need to be better informed about how well pupils are doing.

Grade: 3





## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Grovelands Community School Dunbar Drive Hailsham East Sussex BN27 3UW

17th October 2005

Dear Children,

Thank you for looking after the inspection team so well during our recent visit. We enjoyed joining you in lessons and talking to you about your work. We hope we did not interfere too much with the preparations you were making for the lovely harvest festival. No doubt you would like to know what we have said about your school so I have written a few of the main points below.

you certainly have wonderful buildings in which to learn. The displays are very exciting and all those outside areas are great for you to play in. What a good idea the school council came up with to have a toy car ramp in the playground. None of us had seen one of those before

the work in your books, particularly those in English and mathematics, was very well presented and there were lots of comments to help you improve. We have asked your teachers to check that all your lessons are as good as the very best ones

you are all very well behaved and obviously enjoy school. We don't think we have had so many doors opened for us before

your headteacher and the other senior teachers have worked hard to make things better and we think they are succeeding. Most of you are getting better marks in your tests and we can see how you have improved since last year. We have asked everybody to make sure this continues.

Again, thank you all and can we wish you all the best for the rest of your time at the school.

Yours sincerely,

David G Collard Lead Inspector