



Grange Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131579
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 282230
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Alison Pangbourne LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Elder Avenue
School category	Community		SS12 0LR
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01268 734420
Number on roll	305	Fax number	01268 571745
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Mark Parish
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Wayne Harris

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 6 February 2006 - 7 February 2006	Inspection number 282230
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils come from White British families with a few from minority ethnic heritages. A small number are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. When children start school, standards are below those typical of 4-year-olds, particularly in social and language development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Grange Primary School rightly thinks of itself as a good school and Inspectors agree. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about it and the pupils cannot identify anything that they would like to be changed. When children start school, standards are below those typical of 4-year-olds, particularly in social and language development. They get off to a good start and make good progress but do not reach the standards expected by the time they start Year 1 because of their low starting points. By the time they leave, when they are 11 years old, standards are above average, particularly in English. Pupils do well because of the consistently good quality of teaching and the many opportunities to find things out for themselves. Interesting activities encourage them to work hard and they want to succeed. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they enjoy coming to school. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 do well in reading and exceed the expected level in the Year 2 tests. They do not do as well at the higher level in writing and mathematics but the school has identified this issue and made a good start in resolving it. Marking of pupils' work does not always help them to understand what they need to do to improve. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, ably supported by his deputy and senior staff. They strive continually to find ways to help pupils do even better and the things that have significantly improved since the previous inspection show that the school has a good capacity to improve further. It gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve the proportion of pupils that exceeds the level expected for their age in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. - Ensure that teachers' marking helps pupils know what they need to do, to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The youngest children make good progress because of the good teaching and the exciting things they have to do in lessons. By the beginning of Year 1, most children have not reached the level expected for their age because they have a lot of catching up to do. In recent years standards have been broadly average for 7-year-olds and pupils make good progress. Although a high proportion exceeds the level expected for their age in reading, the proportion exceeding this in writing and mathematics is lower than in many schools. The school has already identified this issue and begun to put measures in place to address it; for example the headteacher takes groups of higher attainers for mathematics and there is a mathematics club for pupils in Year 2. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science as they move through the school. Standards have been above average in recent years. In 2005, pupils did particularly well in English. The number of pupils who exceed the expected level is high, showing that the school meets the needs of its higher attaining pupils well by the time they leave the school. Those pupils who left last year exceeded the already

challenging targets set for them. They do so well because tasks are closely matched to their needs and they are given many opportunities to explain their reasoning. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language also do well because tasks are carefully matched to their needs and they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are promoted well. They are taught effectively to recognise their worth as individuals. Relationships and behaviour are outstanding. For example, pupils use the staircases sensibly and the very youngest children walk between the two school buildings without fuss. Teachers value pupils highly and this contributes strongly to developing high self-esteem and positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils really enjoy coming to school and attend regularly because they want to succeed. Particularly good attention is given to pupils becoming independent. They are given an effective voice in the running of the school through the school council. They contribute regularly to charities and have good links with local churches and homes for the elderly through various performances throughout the year. Pupils know how to live safe and healthy lives. They choose healthy meals at lunchtime and are proud of the school's advanced 'healthy schools' award. Pupils enjoy good opportunities for exercise and sport. The emphasis on literacy, numeracy and computer skills provides a good basis for their future economic well-being. The spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils is good. There is good emphasis on cultural diversity through learning about different faiths and in music and art. Ongoing contact with a school in Ghana makes a real contribution to their understanding of other societies.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good as staff continually strive to improve their practice and raise standards. All staff have high expectations of pupils. This, together with the good quality assessment, recording and lesson planning results in activities that are well matched to pupils' capabilities. Consequently, pupils achieve well. Staff are particularly successful at meeting the needs of those pupils who find learning difficult. Teachers give clear explanations and encourage pupils to draw on their previous learning when answering questions. Teaching assistants are very effective at working with individual pupils so that they fully participate in lessons and do the best they can. Teachers make skilled use of questioning and discussion to develop pupils' self-confidence and to widen their understanding. Within this safe, yet stimulating ethos, pupils are encouraged to 'have a go'. One of the key features which helps pupils to learn is the practical nature of many activities where they are encouraged to explain their thinking. Because the lessons are interesting, pupils enjoy their work and are well motivated.

Since the last inspection, staff have become far more confident with the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and this has helped to increase the pupils' rate of learning and raise standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and the needs of pupils. Staff have focused successfully on making the topics studied more exciting and links between subjects more relevant. There is a buzz of activity and enjoyment in the school, for example, in a Year 5 lesson where links between literacy, geography and ICT were particularly effective. Art has a high profile across the school and is used very effectively to support learning, for instance, the use of textiles to confirm pupils' understanding of the Ancient Greeks. The curriculum for the youngest children is good and helps them to take full advantage of learning through discovery and investigation. The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of those pupils with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff are strongly committed to widening the experiences of all pupils and provide a good range of clubs, visits and visitors. These enrich the curriculum and help pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle and learn new skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a healthy and safe environment. Child protection procedures are rigorous and risk assessments are undertaken regularly. Pupils say that they feel safe, enjoy school and are happy to approach staff to discuss any problem. They consider that there are few incidents of bullying or harassment. They are confident that the school takes these very seriously and has effective procedures for dealing with those few that arise. Younger pupils enjoy Year 6 pupils acting as play leaders during the lunchtime break. Pupils are guided well in their emotional and personal development, and, where necessary, individual support is provided. Vulnerable pupils are closely monitored by a designated teacher and strong partnerships with outside agencies bring expert advice to the assessment and planning for the needs of those with learning difficulties. Staff are also well trained to assess and support pupils. Staff monitor pupils' performance well and give them sound advice on how to improve their work or behaviour. Comments that teachers write in books do not always help pupils to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has been the driving force behind the significant improvements made since the previous inspection. His commitment to nurturing the talents of all can be seen in the many prestigious awards both for academic, artistic and sporting achievements that the school has received recently.

He knows what needs to be done to improve further and is setting about this with energy and dedication, well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. Co-ordinators do not make sufficient checks on the way that teachers mark pupils' work. The school has identified the right areas for improvement in the good school improvement plan. This shows that the school's self evaluation is effective. The school has rightly identified that more pupils in Year 2 could reach higher levels and is working towards this. The school works very effectively to include pupils from all backgrounds and this contributes to the family ethos. The views of all members of the community are welcomed and parents speak extremely highly of the school. A large number of parents returned questionnaires before the inspection and none showed any dissatisfaction and many spoke very highly of the school. One parent wrote, 'I couldn't wish for a better school for my children. 10/10 for Grange!' There is a very good team spirit among the staff and governors that is helping to drive the school forward. The governors watch over the school well and are constantly seeking ways to help each pupil succeed. They are fully involved in helping the school to gain many of its recent awards. The lack of complacency, the constant desire to do better and the improvements that have taken place shows that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	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	2	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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Following our visit to your school, we would like to thank you for helping us. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. What your school does well: - your behaviour is excellent and you all get on very well together - we were impressed by your good manners and the way you greeted us when we met you around the school - all the grown-ups work hard to make sure that you get the right sort of assistance to help you learn - the way your headteacher runs the school is excellent and he wants you all to succeed in whatever you do - you have lots of interesting things to do in lessons - you are learning well because teachers give you the right things to do in your lessons - you and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school. What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better: - help more of you to gain a level 3 in your Year 2 tests in writing and mathematics - we have asked your teachers to make it clearer in your books what you need do to improve your work. We wish you all the best with your learning. Enjoy your time at Grange Primary School.