



Greystoke Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119941
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 283983
Inspection dates 28 March 2006 to 29 March 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Wheeldon HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Thornton Drive
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leicestershire LE19 2GX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2862286
Number on roll	300	Fax number	0116 2862286
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Mavis Battell
Date of previous inspection	11 January 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Mary Thornton

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	28 March 2006 - 29 March 2006	283983

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Greystoke Primary is an average sized school with 300 pupils on roll. Most children attend a nursery or other pre-school setting before they start school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is slightly lower than average. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school was inspected in 2004 and was found to require special measures. Since then there have been substantial changes in staffing, leadership and management. For example, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed at Easter 2005. There have also been improvements to the school buildings.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Over the past couple of years Greystoke Primary School has been through some tough times but it now provides an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school has a new management team and is now well led. The headteacher has a strong sense of direction and is determined that the school will continue on the path of improvement. That same determination is evident amongst other school managers, including the governing body, and amongst all the teaching staff. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and recognises where there is more to be done. Priorities for action are well planned.

Shortly after the last inspection there were significant improvements in the financial planning, the deployment of resources and the monitoring of expenditure. These aspects of the school's management remain good and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The teaching is at least satisfactory with some that is good and occasionally outstanding. As a result, pupils are making satisfactory progress and higher attaining pupils are beginning to find themselves stretched. They really enjoy those lessons where they find the work decidedly challenging even though, as one pupil said, "This maths stuff makes your head hurt."

Those positive attitudes to work are commonplace amongst most pupils but there are still a number of 10 and 11 year olds who have suffered from unsatisfactory education in the past. Whilst they are now making satisfactory progress, their attitudes to learning are ambivalent and the standard of their work is still too low especially in English, mathematics, science and in information and communication technology (ICT). At the other end of the school the quality of provision is good in the Foundation Stage, children make steady progress and standards are generally good.

The school has come a long way in a short time. The staff and governors have worked hard to make the changes needed and they know there is still a good deal more to be done. For example, there is still too much teaching that is satisfactory and arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress are still developing. The school has set itself some exacting targets for national tests in summer 2006 and is likely to meet most of them. However, the target for the number of pupils expected to get Level 5 in mathematics tests is overambitious. Even so, the school clearly has the capacity to continue on the path of improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- make sure it analyses and meets the learning needs of all Year 6 pupils so they are well equipped for the move to secondary school
- continue to raise standards, especially in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT)

•continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good •continue to improve the monitoring of pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are improving and the progress of pupils is much better now than it was when the school went into special measures in 2004.

At the time of that inspection standards were above average in the Foundation Stage and they remain good. Attainment on entry is broadly average and from the time they start the school until they reach the age of five children make good progress. Standards are good in language, literacy and mathematical development.

When teachers assessed seven year old pupils in summer 2005 standards were average in reading, low in writing and above average in mathematics. In lessons pupils aged six and seven are currently making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Results in tests taken by eleven year olds in summer 2005 show that standards in English and science were just above average and those in mathematics were good. Currently, average and lower ability pupils aged eight to eleven are making satisfactory progress in mathematics and English lessons. The progress of higher attaining pupils is often good. In general, girls are doing slightly better than boys especially in writing. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science standards of pupils aged eight to eleven are often slightly lower than average. This reflects the emphasis the school has given to raising attainment in English, mathematics and science and the teachers' lack of expertise in the other subjects. A history of inadequate provision means that standards are still low in information and communication technology (ICT), especially amongst older pupils.

The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is at least satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud to be at Greystoke and they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is good and pupils behave well when moving around the building and out on the field or playground. Social and moral education are good. Pupils are courteous and respectful, for example willingly holding open the door for others to pass.

Amongst pupils aged four to nine attitudes to learning are generally positive, as they are amongst higher attaining pupils aged 10 and 11. These pupils want to learn and are keen to find out more. They apply themselves well in lessons and their behaviour is good. There are, however, some middle and lower attaining pupils aged 10 and 11 who are disenchanted with education. The school has more to do to ensure that, by the time they move on to their secondary schools, these pupils have more positive attitudes to their education.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory and have improved in the last few months. For example, assemblies have time for quiet reflection, and teachers are doing more to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures.

Other aspects of pupils' personal development are good. For example, pupils know about healthy eating. When inspectors asked why they were drinking milk at playtime one eight year old immediately answered, "Because it helps grow strong bones and healthy teeth." It was the pupils who, through the school council, asked for more salads at lunchtime. In this and other ways pupils are increasingly making a contribution to the school and to the wider community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching has greatly improved in the last year and, consequently, learning is a least satisfactory in all classes. Weaknesses in planning have been addressed and teachers have a clear idea about what they want pupils to learn. As a result, there is an obvious pattern to each series of lessons, with each building on the next, and this is a key factor in the improved progress of pupils.

The school recognises that there are still too many satisfactory lessons which need improving because many pupils, particularly those who have been at the school the longest, have some catching up to do. In contrast, there are some outstanding lessons and teachers who provide good role models for others. These lessons are well structured and the teachers know how and when to intervene and provide extra support for pupils. Teachers expect much more from pupils in their classes. They use pertinent and challenging questions to encourage pupils to think harder and subsequently use marking well to let pupils know what they need to do next. These skills have been shared with others and this has helped improve provision as teachers realise pupils are capable of achieving that much more.

The gaps in pupils' learning are not always obvious and, a lack of detailed assessment information on pupils' progress, means that some teachers still find it difficult to pitch the work at the right level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has been greatly improved in the last year so it is now satisfactory. Following a substantial school review, the time given to individual subjects is now appropriately balanced. Inevitably, there has been a much higher focus on reading, writing and mathematics because of the low standards. As these have improved so the emphasis has changed towards encouraging pupils to think more for themselves. Work in books shows many instances where pupils are given a problem and then have to solve it. For example, in one lesson the class were asked to design a way to clean water after using a digital microscope to see the micro-organisms in it. Experiences such as

this are successfully providing pupils with practical ways in which to develop their wider understanding of the world around them. Younger pupils relish the independence they have been given but the oldest pupils have found it hard to adapt and do not always respond as well as they could.

Extracurricular activities have been extended and include clubs for all age groups. The school does not yet make enough use of special themes or days which would make learning even more relevant and exciting, particularly for the older pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares well for its pupils as it did at the time of the last inspection. There have been significant improvements in the way that pupils' academic needs are assessed but these systems are relatively new and, because of the lack of information from the past, teachers are not yet able to gauge the pupils' progress well enough over the longer term. Already, pupils are better challenged by the work they are set and say that they 'want to improve'. In addition, pupils' self esteem has been raised so that the overwhelming majority now enjoy their education. However, the school's survey of pupils and the inspection evidence indicate that this is not so evident in Year 6. In the school's survey some pupils were concerned about bullying but there is no evidence to suggest that it is a significant issue in the school. On the contrary, procedures to deal with this and with child protection are very robust.

After the initial thrust to raise achievement in the basic subjects, the school is integrating these basic skills within other subjects so that pupils are better prepared for their future schooling. Pupils commented on how much more relevant they felt the work was because, "Before, we just did all the same things."

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There have been significant and beneficial changes in the leadership and management of the school since the inspection in 2004. New management structures successfully focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership and management of the school are good and there are strong signs of continuing improvement. The school certainly has the capacity to improve further.

Members of the senior leadership team have a good understanding of the issues facing the school and are clear about their priorities. They are supported well by the governing body which sets clear goals for improvement. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching are very good, judgements are generally accurate, and information from the monitoring is used well to identify areas for future support, training and development.

The leadership and management have been strengthened with the appointment of three team leaders. These postholders successfully lead the planning of lessons, especially in English, mathematics and science, and help establish acceptable standards.

They also have a role in monitoring the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' progress, but there is still more to do on these aspects of their work and on the planning of subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Financial management is good and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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	3	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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	3	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

Some of you will know that I have been visiting the school regularly each term for the past year because it was in 'special measures'. This means we were concerned that you were not being taught well enough.

It was good to see you all when I visited just before Easter and the splendid news is that we now think the school can come out of special measures.

We found a lot of good things about Greystoke Primary. For a start we thought your behaviour was good and that you were keen to learn. We think Mrs Thornton is a good headteacher and all the teachers are working hard to make sure you do well.

We saw some really exciting lessons. I really wanted to stay much longer in the lesson on the Ice Palace with Years 3 and 4, and I thought that some work in Year 5 and 6 mathematics was tough, but you really enjoyed the challenge.

There is still a lot more to do to make this a really outstanding school. Some of the Year 5 and 6 pupils will need to work very hard to do well before you go on to secondary school. I know the teachers also want to do better and they will be doing more to keep track of your progress.

I shall miss my trips to Greystoke but I now know you are getting a good start to your education.

With very best wishes