



Granard Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101028
Local Authority Wandsworth
Inspection number 285948
Inspection dates 9–10 November 2006
Reporting inspector Jane Chesterfield

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cortis Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		SW15 6XA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02087883606
Number on roll (school)	330	Fax number	0208 785 4515
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Marston
		Headteacher	Mrs Glynis Cobb
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Granard Primary is a bigger than average primary school situated in a large council managed housing estate. Most pupils live in flats on the estate. More than half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national figure. Almost half come from minority ethnic groups and over a third are learning English as an additional language (EAL). These are very high proportions compared with the national picture. The largest minority groups represented in the school are Pakistani and Somali. More than a third of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) and the number with statements of special needs is above average. There is a learning support unit (LSU) for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils from this and another local school. Mobility of pupils is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Granard Primary is a good school where pupils feel happy and safe and are eager to enjoy the wide range of exciting opportunities available to them. As one pupil said, 'School's like a big bubble and all our troubles are left outside.'

Good improvements in leadership and management since the last inspection have created a strong team of staff who are focused on meeting the needs of each individual pupil. This means that the high proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or who are new to English are well supported. The LSU gives outstanding help to those children who have problems coping in their lessons and helps them to make the progress of which they are capable.

The welcoming and secure environment of the Foundation Stage helps children to settle quickly and feel ready to learn. Most enter the nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. Their language skills are particularly low and many are at the early stages of learning English. They make good progress though their language skills are still below average as they leave Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 1 and standards here have shown improvement recently, reaching average levels last year. In Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress from their individual starting points, though last year's results were affected by exceptionally high mobility in the year group. Pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations in science, just below in English and below in mathematics. The school has recognised that standards in writing and mathematics are not high enough and has begun to address the issues they have identified. Some pupils do not fulfil their potential because of their poor attendance, as a small number of families fail to ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time.

In class, pupils learn well because teachers focus well on helping them develop much-needed language and social skills. 'We learn skills in school to help us deal with life', explained one pupil. Good pastoral care and chances to experience new activities, such as the projects for learning brass instruments and modern dance, boost pupils' self-esteem and give them the confidence to believe that they can achieve. The school works hard with parents to draw them into their children's education, and parents are very pleased with the school and what it has to offer themselves and their children. The headteacher and senior staff are very outward looking and keen to improve the school's provision wherever they can. Recent issues in science, for example, were quickly identified, targeted and tackled, leading swiftly to good improvement in science results. Good management structures have been established and subject co-ordinators are committed to raising standards. School self-evaluation is good, showing that senior staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In light of this, and the improvements since the last inspection, the school has a good capacity for future improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing and in mathematics at Key Stage 2

- Work closely with specific families to improve attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good, though their standards are affected by their low levels of language skills. The school has identified this and has introduced strategies to improve pupils' speaking and listening and writing skills. This has already had an impact in Key Stage 1 on pupils' standards in literacy, but has not yet had time to make a difference all the way through Key Stage 2. Here above average pupils attain well at the higher levels, but many average and below average pupils lack the vocabulary, grammar and understanding of style to write well at length. Most pupils are making good progress and those with LDD or with EAL do equally well. This is because they are well supported, particularly by the LSU, and because teachers' strategies in their drive to improve language skills are well geared to their particular needs. In mathematics, below average pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, have difficulties with calculations, especially as the methodology needed to tackle these becomes more complex. This is depressing the standards they reach.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils behave well because adults provide good role models, and because the LSU successfully raises pupils' self-esteem and gives them strategies to cope with difficult situations. Pupils are confident, friendly, and very courteous. An exciting, vibrant Black History assembly revealed a genuine understanding of and respect for the cultural differences of others because, 'We know inside of us what people are feeling'. Relationships are good. Pupils are emphatic that there is no bullying. One said, 'It feels as if we are all connected in a special way, like magnets'.

Pupils make good progress in learning about keeping safe and healthy. Those who have made a real effort to eat healthily are proud to sit with the headteacher on a special table. Pupils' views are valued. School councillors proudly cite the refurbished toilets as an example of their influence. Involvement in fund raising and local projects helps pupils acquire the social skills they need for the future, and the school's current focus on literacy and numeracy is helping to boost pupils' basic skills. The school uses a variety of strategies to encourage good attendance but these have not been fully successful and there is a minority of families whose children have persistently low levels of attendance and punctuality.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, because most teachers know their pupils well and make good use of assessment to plan their work in order to meet the wide range of needs in every class. There is a consistent approach to developing speaking and listening skills throughout the school, and drama and role-play are used to good effect to achieve this. In mathematics, the support of an outside consultant is helping teachers to target and overcome the difficulties with calculations which some pupils experience. Teachers set tasks that focus and challenge their pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and they expect, and achieve, high standards of behaviour. Visual aids are well used to capture pupils' attention and teaching assistants are well deployed to provide unobtrusive support where it is most needed. Most marking is good, making clear to pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, but this is not consistent across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good. It is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers make creative links between subjects and plan topics which take account of pupils' interests and capabilities. The introduction of French has enhanced the curriculum and there are good opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to take part in master classes in other languages provided by the local high school. Provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT is good.

Clubs and other activities are well-attended and wide-ranging, from fencing to guitar playing. Trips, visits, visitors and special events enrich the curriculum very well. Older pupils enjoy experiences of a lifetime on the residential farm visit, for example, while all pupils get the chance to meet famous authors and show them their work during Book Week. The brass tuition and dance workshops are outstanding. Pupils enjoy these activities and they contribute greatly to the development of their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Adults know the pupils well and have a high level of concern for their well-being and consequently pupils thrive. As one pupil commented, 'Everyone treats you with respect; they don't throw you in a corner if you don't understand.' Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are effective and well understood by staff. The invaluable work carried out by the LSU and good support for pupils with LDD or with EAL ensure that everyone can join in all aspects of school life. Outside agencies are used well whenever necessary to support vulnerable pupils.

Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is good and most teachers use this well to set targets for their class. A careful check is kept on pupils' personal development and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and make decisions enhance their social skills. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides the school with good, purposeful, energetic leadership. She is ably supported by the newly appointed deputy and by the senior staff. The management structures that were missing at the time of the last inspection are now firmly established and working well. The roles and responsibilities of co-ordinators are clearly defined and all feel confident about leading their subjects. The Foundation Stage and provision for LDD are well led and managed. The literacy and EAL co-ordinator is imaginatively deployed to lead the subject by teaching with colleagues across the school. Her dual responsibility benefits all pupils. Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out systematically and is having an impact in enabling senior staff both to recognise and spread best practice, and to identify and support areas of weakness. The school has worked with determination and enthusiasm at tackling the issues identified in last year's test results, bringing in outside help where needed, as in mathematics. Pupils' performance is tracked and monitored effectively, but newly introduced computerised tracking programmes are intended to help senior staff to do this more quickly and efficiently. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfil their duties well.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting and talking to you. We agree with you and your parents that Granard Primary is a good school and we know that you enjoy going there. You are doing well in your lessons, because your teachers have got to know you well and know how to give you work which is right for you. This means you can get on with it and learn new things. Your lessons are interesting, and you are lucky to have such a good range of clubs and other activities available, like the brass and the dance projects.

We were impressed with your behaviour in class and in the playground, and we thought that those of you who help the school and other people, like the school councillors, buddies and house captains, are doing a good job. The staff take good care of you, and those of you who need extra help are well supported, so that everyone has the chance to do their best.

Your headteacher and her staff run the school well and know how to make it even better in future. We have agreed that the school is going to help those of you in Key Stage 2 to do as well as you can in your writing and your mathematics. This will mean some of you learning more words and ideas to help you express your thoughts in English, and spending more time understanding how to do things in mathematics. We have also agreed that the school will work more closely with some of your families to make sure that you are not absent or late. You can help by reminding your families that you should only miss school if you are ill.

Well done to you all and best wishes for the future,

Jane Chesterfield

Lead inspector