

# Grove Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104352
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	286917
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Chris Kessell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	William Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gill Bonser
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Caledonia Road Wolverhampton WV2 1HZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558851
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558852

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Grove is an inner city school that is about average in size and serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The majority of pupils come from either White British or Asian Indian backgrounds. A number of other ethnic groups are represented. A few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average, as is the proportion having learning difficulties or disabilities. A high number of pupils either leave or join the school during the academic year. There have been recent changes in the school's management team. A significant number of staff are currently absent due to long-term illness.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is popular with parents who rightly say that it is a 'happy, caring school'. Pupils are provided with high levels of care and their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say, 'If you want any help, you can get it, you only have to ask.' They get on well with each other and enjoy activities in and out of the classroom. Attendance is above average. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children enter school with very low levels of attainment and get off to a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). This is continued in Years 1 and 2. Despite making satisfactory progress, standards are well below average at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are below average by the time pupils leave in Year 6 and this represents satisfactory progress for most pupils in relation to their starting points. In the 2006 national tests for Year 6, pupils achieved average standards in English, which was a significant improvement on previous years. Standards in mathematics and science were well below average. There is a trend of improvement and data provided by the school indicate that pupils are on course to reach higher standards in English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6 in 2007.

The pupils' achievement reflects the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning. There are examples of good teaching and learning but these are not consistent across the school. As a result, pupils' progress sometimes slows down. This is usually because work is not tightly matched to their individual learning needs or because teachers' expectations are not high enough.

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory curriculum that is enhanced by a good range of additional activities such as trips, interesting visitors and popular lunchtime and after-school clubs. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The care provided for pupils is good. Pupils feel well looked after because the school makes them feel 'nice and safe' and they have 'tons of friends'. The academic support and guidance offered to pupils are satisfactory. The school has recognised the need to track pupils' progress more rigorously and has recently introduced regular assessments of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. It is too early to judge the impact of these procedures on improving pupils' overall achievement and addressing the inconsistencies in pupils' progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school knows its own strengths and is clear about what has to improve. Senior staff have managed the high levels of staff absence well and have ensured that the effect on the pupils' education has been minimal. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory but the school acknowledges that the pace of change is not fast enough to bring about rapid improvement in pupils' achievement. The recent rise in standards in English shows that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide all pupils with appropriate levels of work and raise teachers' expectations so that pupils make more rapid progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Use the information provided by the more regular assessments in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that any signs of slow progress are rigorously addressed.

- Speed up the rate of school development by improving the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children join the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are at a very low level. Although they make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children do not reach expected levels by the time they join Year 1. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 but standards are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. A strong focus on improving pupils' reading and writing has been successful in this part of the school, with the result that pupils reached average standards in the 2006 national tests. For a significant number of pupils, this represented good progress. It was not replicated in mathematics and science. The school has introduced initiatives to improve standards in mathematics and the early signs show improvement. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities also make satisfactory progress. The few pupils who join the school at the early stages of learning English are supported well. Many of them make good progress in developing their language skills.

Boys do not always do as well as girls and the school has taken steps to make the curriculum more exciting and relevant to the boys to address this. Significant improvements to the school's procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics now ensure that staff are better placed to identify any individuals or groups of pupils who are not making sufficient progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Behaviour is good and has improved significantly over the last few years. Pupils move around the school sensibly and safely with broad smiles on their faces. Pupils enjoy their work and are polite, friendly and very welcoming to visitors. One parent commented that their child hated weekends because they wanted to come to school everyday. Pupils are willing to answer questions and join in discussions. They show a good understanding of the needs of others and respect for their views. Pupils work well together, whether as 'talking partners' or in larger groups. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they make a good contribution to the school and wider community. School councillors for example, were clear that they wanted 'to help the school'. They have played an important part in providing pupils with play equipment to keep them active at breaktimes and ensuring that everyone gets fruit 'to keep them healthy'. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. Pupils' steadily improving literacy and numeracy skills help to prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Relationships are good and this contributes strongly to pupils' enjoyment in learning. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to explain new learning or to consolidate skills previously

taught. The majority of lessons are planned effectively and pupils are keen to learn. Behaviour is well managed and a strong feature of most lessons. In consequence, pupils work with interest and enthusiasm. Variations in teaching, from satisfactory to good, result in uneven progress across the school. Not all teachers provide work or activities that are effectively matched to the needs of all pupils. Consequently, there is sometimes a lack of challenge and a slow pace to lessons. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils have begun to assess their own work and the level to which they have understood activities. This is at an early stage of development although pupils are enthusiastic about the process.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is considerably enhanced by after school clubs, visitors and visits, including a residential visit to Wales for older pupils and an overnight stay for younger ones. These contribute well to the pupils' good personal development. A particular strength of enrichment are the activities provided by outside organisations such as the 'Creative Partnership' and 'Believe 2 Achieve'. These opportunities help pupils to develop personally and to become motivated to learn. The curriculum in Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Good use is made of the outdoor area for teaching and learning. The school is beginning to link subjects together so as to strengthen the teaching of basic skills such as speaking and listening and writing.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for. They feel safe and know that if they have a problem or concern there is always an adult or classmate they can turn to. The school learning mentor plays a significant role in promoting pupils' welfare, good attendance and punctuality. She is held in high regard by the pupils. Parents have confidence in the school. One parent, representing the views of many, wrote, 'Issues and concerns are dealt with rapidly and without hesitation.' Parents are also pleased that their children settle into school quickly whether starting in the Nursery or joining another year group during the school year.

The academic guidance that pupils receive, to help them improve, is variable. Some teachers' marking is supportive and analytical, telling pupils what they need to work on. Other marking is uninformative and does not support pupils' learning well enough. Class targets to help pupils improve are often phrased in adult language that makes them hard for pupils to understand and remember.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and senior staff have been successful in promoting pupils' personal development and providing high levels of care. Links with outside agencies, charities and other educational settings are good and they benefit the school and specific pupils.

The school has a new management structure and is currently developing the role of managers in order to speed up the pace of change. Many new initiatives have been put into place to improve pupils' achievement and standards. There is no evidence yet of sustained improvement although there are already indications that standards in English and mathematics are rising.

The school has refined its systems for evaluating aspects of work, but the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet rigorous enough. Subject co-ordinators monitor the curriculum and learning in their subjects, but this is currently insufficiently robust to raise standards at a fast enough rate.

Links with parents are effective. Parents are very positive in their support for the school. The governing body offers a satisfactory level of support and challenge for the leadership and management in shaping the direction of the school.



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

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

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

Some of you will remember that we visited your school a little while ago to find out how well it is doing. This letter is to let you know what we found out. Firstly, thank you for welcoming us with lovely smiling faces and answering all of our questions so thoughtfully. It was a pleasure to join you for assembly where you all listened, sang and behaved so well.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Although you make progress because of the sound teaching you are given, by the time you leave in Year 6, the standards you achieve are not as high as those found in most other schools. They are beginning to improve, especially in English, and we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to help you all make even faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

All of the adults look after you well. You are provided with a satisfactory curriculum that provides lots of additional activities to help you keep fit and healthy. You also have other interesting and exciting opportunities like the Year 6 residential visit to Wales. Staff regularly check the progress you make in your work and we have asked them to make sure that anyone who is not making enough progress is given support so that they can learn more quickly.

The headteacher, staff and governors run the school satisfactorily and it has improved since it was last inspected. They are keen to make the school even better so we have asked them to improve it as quickly as possible.

Once again, thank you for the nice welcome you gave us and best wishes for the future.