

Greengate Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107056
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	287698
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Hardwick HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Axe
Headteacher	Mr Nigel Codling
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2002
School address	Greengate Lane High Green Sheffield South Yorkshire S35 3GT
Telephone number	0114 2848322
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Age group	3–11
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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

The school is situated in High Green, a suburb in the north-east of Sheffield. Most pupils are White British. The school is smaller than average; there are 171 pupils in the main school and 75 part-time children in the Nursery. It has spare capacity arising from a fall in the number on roll. There are currently four pupils in the school's integrated resource for those with physical difficulties; two attend for only part of the week. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, reflecting some socio-economic disadvantage in the area. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The school gained the Investors in People award in 2004, and Activemark and Healthy Schools status in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Greengate Lane provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, and gives satisfactory value for money. There are strengths in the good care provided for the pupils and in their personal development, but standards, although higher than they were, need to be improved further. This is recognised by the school and remains its key priority.

Overall, standards are below average at both key stages. Pupils' progress, though uneven, is satisfactory, given their starting points in the Nursery and the results they achieve in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. There are, however, some anomalies in the national test results for the school to address. Scores at Key Stage 1 have been consistently better in mathematics than in English whereas the reverse is true at Key Stage 2.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are underpinned by well judged learning objectives and by sound preparation and planning. The better lessons are consistently demanding of pupils' concentration and effort but there are others when the pace of learning and quality of activity drop at times. This accounts in part for the pupils' uneven progress.

The pupils are well behaved, and act responsibly, though they are sometimes obedient rather than enthusiastic learners. Good measures are in force to secure the pupils' safety, health and general well-being. The school works well with other agencies, particularly to cater for the needs of those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Much effort has been directed towards raising attendance, which falls just short of the national average.

The curriculum is good. Proper account is taken of the need to teach basic skills within a programme that gives due emphasis to all the required subjects and is enriched by French and a good range of extra activities. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, allowing pupils to make appropriate progress towards the national goals for five-year-olds.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported by the governors, has taken the school forward against a backdrop of a falling roll, a reducing budget and the need to make staff redundant. Parents are appreciative of the headteacher's approach and the changes that are being made. There has been satisfactory progress over tackling the issues arising from the school's inspection in 2002; for instance, in the way pupils' progress is tracked and action is taken over any weaknesses. The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and is well used to identify the priorities in its strategic plan. Monitoring is comprehensive but some aspects of performance are not checked systematically enough, particularly teaching. The school has accordingly drawn up a programme of monitoring activities for each term next year. The progress that has been made since 2002 and the actions that are planned demonstrate that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching.
- Establish the programme for systematically monitoring the key aspects of the school's performance, in particular teaching.
- Sustain efforts to raise attendance.

A small proportion of schools, whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. On entry to the Nursery, their attainment is generally below that typical for their age but by the time they leave the Foundation Stage most are close to achieving the nationally set goals for five-year-olds. The school's results in the national tests at Key Stage 1 improved in 2006. They were below average, having been well below average for the previous three years. The results have been consistently better in mathematics than in reading and writing. Overall around two thirds of the pupils have reached at least the basic standard expected for their age, and in 2006 a significant proportion gained the higher levels.

The school's results at Key Stage 2 have been broadly similar for the last four years, and relatively better than at Key Stage 1. They have been just below average, with around three quarters of the pupils reaching at least Level 4, the standard expected for their age, and about a quarter gaining the higher Level 5. In contrast to Key Stage 1, the scores have been better in English than in mathematics.

Based on their results when they were in Year 2, pupils make average progress during Key Stage 2. There is little overall variation in the performance of different groups, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, although in 2006 the girls fared considerably better than the boys in terms of the results they achieved and the progress they made.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Social and emotional aspects of learning are given a high profile and make a significant contribution to pupils' development. Pupils enjoy good relationships with teachers and have positive attitudes towards one another. Most pupils enjoy coming to school but, despite the school's best efforts to improve them, rates of attendance are just below average. This is mainly a result of parents taking pupils out of school for holidays. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with particular strengths in the moral and social aspects.

Pupils' good behaviour and relationships ensure they keep themselves safe, play together well and are polite and friendly. School councillors have a voice and are confident that their ideas are considered by adults. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy and this has been recognised by the school gaining a national award in this area. The pupils know that it is important to keep fit and they enjoy the many opportunities to take part in physical exercise through a wide range of curricular and after-school activities. Older pupils receive sex education and are aware of the dangers associated with drugs. The pupils are suitably prepared for the next stage of education and their future economic well-being through acquiring basic skills in literacy and numeracy, learning to work productively together, and organising enterprise activities. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through taking on a range of responsibilities, such as distributing and accounting for playtime equipment, and to the wider community through an area-wide schools' council and fundraising activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Planning is thorough and the learning objectives for lessons are appropriate, straightforward and shared with pupils. Teachers' preparation is good, so that materials are to hand and explanations benefit from the regular use of interactive whiteboards. There are times when classroom assistants are underused but in general they make important contributions to learning, especially during group work. In the better lessons, pupils remain focused on their work, complete a good deal and make secure gains based on what they have already mastered. The weaknesses, in otherwise satisfactory lessons, stem from uneven pace to the learning. In some cases, for example, too few pupils are required to contribute in whole-class sessions, and in others there are tasks that demand too little of pupils who are expected to work largely on their own.

Pupils are mostly well organised as learners. They listen, gather the equipment they need and move from one section of a lesson to another without fuss. At times, however, only small numbers volunteer an answer to a teacher's questions while others sit passively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets requirements. There is a focus on teaching basic skills but within an appropriate balance where, for example, the arts and physical education are well represented. The school is beginning to link literacy skills to other subjects to help pupils improve their writing skills in particular. The programme is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits and visitors, which broaden the pupils' experience. These include residential visits for pupils in Year 1 through to Year 4, where they have access to a range of activities which build on their social and physical skills. Older pupils learn French, which helps to prepare them well for secondary school. Education for personal, social, health and citizenship is good, ensuring that pupils gain a clear understanding of issues related to living healthily and keeping safe. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities follow the same curriculum as others and suitable arrangements are made to ensure their additional needs are met.

Provision for the Foundation Stage pupils is satisfactory and is planned according to the nationally set areas of learning. There is an appropriate balance between activities that pupils can choose for themselves and those that are led by an adult.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good care of its pupils. They feel safe and confident that there is someone they can talk to if they are troubled or upset. Peer mediators play an important role in helping everyone to stay friends. The school responds particularly well to the needs of the most vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Where pupils have specific needs, the school makes effective use of liaison with parents and outside agencies to ensure that they are well supported. A learning mentor works closely with individual pupils to help them to settle into class and working routines. Pupils feel valued and special because they are rewarded for their achievements in the weekly celebration assembly. There are established

procedures for safeguarding pupils, and careful attention is paid to health and safety and to child protection. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, informative and encouraging marking helps pupils to assess their learning, and know what they need to accomplish next. However, this is not consistently the case, which results in some pupils being given insufficient guidance on how to improve their work. Similarly pupils are sometimes uncertain about their personal targets for literacy and numeracy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior team has a clear and generally accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the quality of its performance. These are reflected in the priorities within a well-judged plan for improvement and in the work of the staff and governors. The school monitors each key aspect of its work but has recognised that checks on some aspects, especially teaching, need to be more regular and systematic. A termly programme has been devised to this effect from September.

Particular care has been taken to overcome a deficit budget, arising from reducing funds. Despite the need to make staff redundant, the school has continued to move forward through the efficient deployment of resources and a determination to offer equal opportunities for all. The governors bring a good range of expertise to their roles and fulfil their responsibilities. They have been instrumental in financial negotiations with the local authority and hold regular meetings with staff as a basis for reports to the full governing body on different subjects.

The school has made satisfactory progress overall on the issues arising from its inspection in 2002, demonstrating its capacity to continue to improve. Standards have risen, though they need to rise further; this remains the main priority. There are thorough systems for tracking the pupils' progress, and appropriate action has been taken to tackle areas of weakness, for instance early reading skills. Responsibilities have been deployed to the coordinators and senior staff. Their expertise and efforts are better harnessed to the school's needs though the time available for them to carry out their functions has been restricted by the need to reduce expenditure.

The need to draw parents into the life of the school was also an area to be addressed in 2002. Although the results have sometimes been disappointing, much is offered in this regard. For example, there are weekly coffee mornings for parents, as well as a steady flow of information about school events and the topics being studied in each class. In the questionnaires returned to the inspection team, parents were greatly supportive of the school, particularly over the changes the headteacher is making and in his approachability.

There are good links with a range of other agencies, notably over provision for the more vulnerable pupils. There is close cooperation with other local schools to ease the pupils' transition from one stage of education to another and to expand the activities that are available for pupils.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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?	3
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?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school recently. You were polite, well behaved and readily gave us your views. We found that Greengate Lane gives you a satisfactory education.

You told us that you enjoy school, particularly games, PE and the after-school clubs. You also said that you feel safe, know who to turn to for help and are rewarded when you do well. We agree. We think that the curriculum and the care you receive are good.

Overall, you make satisfactory progress from the time you enter the nursery to the time you leave for secondary school. However, your progress is uneven. We think some of your lessons need to be more demanding so that your standards are higher by Year 6. We have asked Mr Codling to make regular checks on your lessons to make sure this happens. So you should expect some changes in the next year.

You can play your part. There are times when some of you sit quietly in lessons, letting others do the work and answer your teacher's questions. You need to stay alert and give your best all of the time. Most of you come to school every day but, overall, your attendance is not quite as good as most primary schools. It is important that you attend regularly and do not miss some of the work that is planned for you.

We wish you all well for the future.