



# The Grove Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110668  
**Local Authority** CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
**Inspection number** 288735  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Helen Ranger

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Campkin Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Cambridge
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		CB4 2NB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01223577017
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	177	<b>Fax number</b>	01223577018
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs P Crankshaw
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr C Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–11	13–14 December 2006	288735

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. It serves an area of the city that has a degree of social and economic deprivation and levels of free school meals are higher than average. Many pupils join the Reception class with standards that are well below the levels expected for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average. About 80% of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Twelve pupils do not speak English as their first or main language and the majority of this group is at an early stage of learning the language. A high number of pupils join the school part way through their primary education. For example, fewer than a third of the Year 6 pupils last year started their primary education at this school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The Grove Primary is a satisfactory school. Pupils get off to a good start in Reception. They make steady progress as they move further up the school. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are below average in the key subjects of English and mathematics, but achievement is satisfactory in relation to pupils' often low starting points. The below average standards reflect the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and the high number who join the school part way through their education, often having experienced some disruptions to their schooling. Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their behaviour, are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but vary too much, because lessons range from outstanding to inadequate. Teachers form good relationships with pupils and most lessons include interesting, well organised activities. In weaker sessions, activities do not cater well enough for the full range of ability in the class, particularly the more able pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory; it has benefited from improvements to the building and to provision in information and communication technology (ICT). There has been good improvement in how pupils' achievements are recorded and tracked across the school. This helps both the class teachers and senior staff to check how much progress pupils are making in key areas, especially literacy and numeracy.

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are satisfactory. Their pastoral care is good. Pupils' academic support and guidance is not as strong. This is because the arrangements for sharing learning targets with pupils and giving feedback through marking are not applied consistently by all teachers. There are examples of excellent practice but this is not widespread.

Leadership, management and the value for money that the school provides are satisfactory in most respects. Improvements since the last inspection in how pupils' achievements are monitored and analysed mean that senior staff and subject leaders have a sound evaluation of how well the school is doing and what needs to improve. The headteacher has high aspirations for the future. However, he and the rest of the senior leadership team do not present a united vision for the future, and individual members of the team have different priorities. This means that improvement is rather piecemeal and not as rapid as it could be. The governing body is in a stronger position than in recent years because competent new governors have been recruited to fill vacancies, but they are not given a clear enough steer for their work by the senior staff. In one important area, governors do not fulfil their legal duties. To safeguard pupils, checks are made on all adults working in the school but governors have not ensured that these are summarised into a central record, as required. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, the extent to which the senior leadership team sets clear direction leading to improvement is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Agree a plan for the school's long-term development which identifies the joint and separate roles of the leadership team in realising their vision for the future of the school.
- Ensure that staff vetting checks are kept in a single central record.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils from all backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties, achieve satisfactorily. They do well in the Reception class, especially in basic language, communication and social skills. In Year 2, attainment has risen over the past three years. In 2006, when fewer pupils than usual in this age group had learning difficulties, they reached above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in the current Year 2 class which, for this school, has a more typical number needing extra support, are working at below average standards. Results in the Year 6 national tests have been below average in recent years and especially low in mathematics, although pupils make sound overall progress by Year 6 compared with their results in Year 2. The pupils who are presently in Year 6 are working at below average standards.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, although their spiritual awareness is not as well developed as the other elements. Behaviour is satisfactory and attitudes to work are mostly positive. However, some pupils have not learned to be consistently good listeners or efficient learners and there are a few who are unable to sustain their concentration in lessons where the work does not interest or challenge them sufficiently. Attendance is good; it has improved steadily to an above average level, although some parents persist in taking term-time holidays. Pupils adequately understand the importance of having healthy lifestyles and how to keep themselves safe. They say that any incidents of bullying are generally quickly dealt with. Nearly all enjoy school and value their friendships. The school council gives them a voice in the running of the school and they are pleased with the changes they have made, for example new litter bins and improved markings on the playground. Pupils' involvement in activities such as fund raising combines with their satisfactory academic and social standards in helping to lay sound foundations for their future lives in education and the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are good in the Reception class, where activities are practical and exciting and staff work well together to establish good attitudes to learning. Good use is made with this age group of the indoor space and there are well considered plans to develop the 'outdoor classroom' further. In the rest of the school, lessons vary in how well activities are planned to cater for the full range of attainment in each class. Teachers also vary in how well they manage pupils' behaviour or interest them sufficiently in their work to ensure that attitudes to learning are consistently good. Examples of this being done very successfully were seen in Key Stage 2. Teachers work well with the team of teaching assistants to support pupils as needed, especially those with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Staff are gradually developing a more interesting curriculum by forging relevant links between subjects. ICT activities are increasingly included, following the very recent installation of computerised whiteboards. Use of the local environment, such as the recent visit to the local church for pupils in Years 1 and 2, helps to bring learning alive. A weakness in the curriculum is a lack of consistency in the approach to teaching reading and writing skills. A good range of clubs and out-of-school activities enables pupils to extend their interests and skills, especially in sport. Pupils benefit from a very extensive building and outdoor site which have been improved very well in recent years.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are strengths in pastoral care and most parents are pleased with the support given to their children. The ABC club provides useful 'out-of-hours' care. Staff know the pupils and their families well. The site manager is rigorous in ensuring safe, clean and well maintained accommodation. There are effective arrangements to support pupils with learning difficulties and those learning to speak English. The school works well with relevant external agencies to provide specialist help for these pupils if needed. The staff are vigilant about raising any child protection concerns they may have. The ways in which pupils' academic learning is guided and supported vary across the school. While pupils know what their learning targets are, staff are inconsistent in how well they use the targets to help pupils improve their work. Teachers' marking, while positive, does not consistently inform pupils how well they are doing in sufficient detail or provide clear information on how they can do better.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents' and pupils' views are mostly positive. The school is making effective use of support available from the local authority, especially in raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The track record of development, such as good provision for pupils who need extra help, better assessment arrangements and the extensive improvements to the building, demonstrate an adequate capacity to improve further. The senior staff are capable individuals. For example, they check standards and the curriculum in separate subjects effectively. However, they do not work well enough as a team and this does not sufficiently encourage the efforts of other staff and the governors. Important documents such as the main development plan, subject action plans and the school's self-evaluation form do not reflect a clear enough overall strategy.

With the exception of correctly collating the checks made on staff, governance is satisfactory. The experienced and supportive chair of governors has provided stability during times when governor recruitment and retention were difficult. The school now has a fuller complement of governors than for some time and they are supporting its development, for example by setting up a strategic committee to oversee progress towards a long-term vision.

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## 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	2
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>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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.

## 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	4
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?	No
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

15 December 2006

Dear Children

The Grove Primary School, Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2NB

This letter is to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school just before Christmas and to tell you what we found during our visit. Special thanks go to the group of pupils who gave up their time to tell us about your school and about the work of the school council.

We think that you make sound progress in your work and in how you grow into mature young people. The children in Reception are given a good start to their time in school. Those of you who need some extra adult help with your work or behaviour are cared for well. We would like the staff to keep helping you to reach higher standards in English and mathematics, as these subjects are important for the rest of your lives. Some of your lessons are really good. Your teachers make them fun and interesting and plan activities that help you all to learn well. Some lessons are not as good as the rest and we have asked your school to keep trying to make sure you all are taught as well as possible. Dr Watson and all the staff have worked hard to improve the building. You are lucky to have so much space and the building is looked after very well. Your new ABC club rooms are super!

Your teachers and governors have lots of ideas for how your school can improve. We have asked them to do plenty of talking together to make sure they agree on the best ways for the school to get better. In that way we hope they will make sure you get an even better education.

I enjoyed watching you practise your nativity play and I hope the evening performance went well. Happy New Year to you all.

Best wishes,

Mrs Helen Ranger

Lead inspector