

The Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119940
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	291576
Inspection dates	2–3 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Jackson
Headteacher	Adrienne M Holland
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	Asfordby Road Melton Mowbray LE13 0HN
Telephone number	01664 562554
Fax number	01664 562554

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an economically disadvantaged area in Melton Mowbray. Almost all pupils are from White British families and speak English as their main language. A high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. The school operates a daily pre-school and after-school club which is used by Grove pupils and also by pupils from a neighbouring primary 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 quality of education, leadership and management and the achievement of pupils are satisfactory. Children enter Reception with knowledge and skill levels below those typically found at this age. Good induction arrangements help children make a confident start and satisfactory progress in all aspects of their learning. However, by the end of Reception, many children are still working below the expected levels for their ages. In Years 1 to 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress but standards by the end of Year 6 remain below national averages. Although there was improvement in 2006, particularly in English, too few pupils attain the higher levels in national tests.

Care, guidance and support and teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school has begun to improve the way it identifies pupils who are making less than expected progress and those with learning difficulties. This system is used well to target extra support and this helps pupils make satisfactory progress. Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory but subject leaders need further training and guidance in these to enable them to take greater responsibility for progress and improvement in their subjects. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school, focused on improving pupils' achievement and personal development. She has arranged good quality training and introduced appropriate initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, checks on how effectively these initiatives are implemented are not sufficiently rigorous and this results in inconsistencies in teaching and learning. For example, the school has introduced a good system to give pupils ambitious targets to aim at in English and mathematics and to give a clear idea of the features of a good piece of work, but this system is not used in all classes. Consequently, in some lessons, pupils themselves are not able to evaluate their work against clear criteria or are not provided with enough guidance on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school is beginning to link work in different subjects in order to make learning more purposeful but this is still in the early stages of development. Good partnerships, such as those with other schools and sporting organisations, enhance learning opportunities. The curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for lower and middle attaining pupils but the higher attaining pupils are not always provided sufficiently demanding work. The school is highly regarded by parents, who recognise that it is very successful in caring for individual pupils. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They attend regularly, enjoy and are proud of their school. Many older pupils behave maturely and rise well to the challenge of taking responsibility for younger pupils and for the smooth running of the school.

A small proportion of the 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.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that higher-attaining pupils are provided with sufficient challenge in all lessons
- rigorously monitor recent initiatives to check that they are improving the consistency and quality of teaching and learning across the school
- ensure that all teachers set challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics and help pupils understand how to assess and improve specific aspects of their work

- improve the effectiveness of subject leaders by developing their skills in monitoring and evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children make a sound start overall in Reception. Progress is best in language development because systematic teaching of letter sounds helps to establish early reading skills. However, some potentially higher attaining children do not achieve as well as they should because adult expectations are too low.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Results in national assessments and pupils' current work indicate that standards are below average at the end of Year 2. As in Reception, some higher attaining pupils could be doing better. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress from Years 3 to 6. Although there has been recent improvement, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 remain below national averages. The main reason for this is that the higher attaining pupils are not challenged to reach the standards that they should. Most pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress in most lessons, although they do better when being given extra support outside the classroom. Those with the greatest learning difficulties often achieve well, due to good quality individual support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school, describing it as 'happy' and 'fun'. They enjoy lessons and the good range of clubs and visits, including residential visits. Pupils take care to act safely and show good consideration for the safety of others. They are friendly, polite and confident when they meet visitors. Behaviour in lessons and relationships are mostly good. Occasionally a few pupils lose concentration, especially when teaching lacks a degree of challenge or when they spend too long listening to the teacher. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show good awareness of a range of cultures and traditions and enjoy visits to a variety of places of worship. Pupils develop understanding of, and make good contribution to, the local community through participation in projects as a recent one with Age Concern about the history of Egerton. Pupils know how to stay healthy, and most take frequent exercise and eat carefully. Their basic skills and ability to work cooperatively provide sound preparation for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most teachers form good relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Teachers often provide interesting resources and starting points for learning, such as out-of-school visits or inviting visitors to share their experiences with pupils. These help pupils enjoy learning and see the relevance of lessons. However, because leaders do not ensure that all teachers fully implement school policies, the quality of teaching is too inconsistent. For example, in some classes, pupils are given very clear guidance and helpful checklists of the key features of a good piece of work. These are used to help pupils evaluate their work and see how to improve particular aspects. In other classes, pupils receive too little guidance on how to assess their work and they lack clarity on how to make improvements. Some teachers expect pupils to

present their work well, but in other classes, not enough is expected. Consequently, in these classes, pupils show too little pride in their work and leave pieces unfinished. Teaching assistants give good support, mainly to lower-attaining pupils and those who have learning difficulties. However, they are not always given tasks which make the best use of their time, particularly while the teacher is taking a whole-class lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In Reception, children are given a wide range of opportunities to broaden their experiences. A recent visitor recounted his experience of an African safari and this fascinated children and enthused them to find out more. Whole-school projects such as work with the Philharmonic Orchestra and the regular programme of visits by theatre companies and musicians has extended pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology because they are systematically taught the skills they need and are then given good opportunities to use these effectively in other subjects. The curriculum generally meets the needs of the pupils. However, some higher-attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they could because teachers do not always expect enough or provide sufficiently challenging work. Where lower- and middle-attaining pupils are underachieving, the school uses effective programmes to help them catch up quickly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good care of pupils and nurtures them well so that, as they grow older, they develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem. Child protection and arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good. Pupils are confident that they can speak to an adult, including the school nurse, if they have any personal concerns. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall but practice is inconsistent. The school has recently introduced a clear policy on how teachers should mark pupils' work. Despite this, the quality is variable. In some classes, marking is specific and challenging and helps pupils see exactly where improvement is needed. In others, marking is often over-general and does not provide clear guidance for pupils.

The school has recently improved the way that it monitors the progress of individuals as they move through the school and effectively uses this information to provide extra help for those at risk of underachieving. However, the school lacks an effective system to enable leaders to monitor the progress of each year group towards the targets set.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory and provide the school with a sound overview of where improvement is needed and further staff training is necessary. The headteacher provides good direction for the work of the school. She has ensured that staff are provided with appropriate guidance and training on how to introduce new practices, such as the recently introduced system for setting targets to guide pupils' learning. However, follow-up checks on new developments are insufficiently rigorous and this leads to inconsistencies in the way that such initiatives are implemented. Consequently, in some classes, pupils know their targets and show good understanding of where to improve their work and are making good progress but

in other classes, many pupils show limited understanding of their targets, especially in mathematics, and this slows their learning. Subject leaders provide good general support but do not systematically check on the quality of provision and standards in the subjects for which they are responsible. The significant improvement in Year 6 results in English in 2006 demonstrates that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further. Governors dedicate substantial time and energy to engaging with current changes in the school's curriculum and other areas of education. However, they have not fully challenged the school to evaluate how consistently and effectively staff implement changes and the impact of these on improving pupils' learning.

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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?	3
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Grove Primary School, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0HN

Thank you for making Mr Moody, Mrs Warburton and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that you like school so much. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is properly run and is giving you a satisfactory education. Adults provide satisfactory teaching and care for you so that you make sound progress. Your behaviour is good and most of you attend regularly. Many of you are developing into mature and responsible people. You know right from wrong, show consideration for others and show good understanding of what it means to be friendly and helpful to each other. We were impressed by how older pupils take responsibility for helping others within your school and by what you do to contribute to the community, such as fundraising for charities.

There are four things that we have asked your school to work on:

- make sure that those of you who are quick to learn are given hard enough work in all lessons
- check that all teachers work in a similar fashion, for example by marking your work in the same way
- check that you all know your targets in English and mathematics to help you understand how to make particular aspects of your work better
- help subject leaders to find out more about how well you are all learning.

With very best wishes for the future,

Mr Sadler Lead Inspector