



Griffe Field Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131798
Local Authority City of Derby
Inspection number 293850
Inspection date 5 October 2006
Reporting inspector Raymond Jardine

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Grosvenor Drive
School category	Community		Littleover, Littleover
Age range of pupils	3–11		Derby, Derbyshire DE23 3UQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 515 718
Number on roll (school)	444	Fax number	01332 516 542
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Susan Clover
		Headteacher	Miss Kate McRae
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average for a primary school and has doubled in size since its last inspection. It serves the district of Littleover and the surrounding area. Pupils come from ethnically and socially diverse backgrounds. Nearly half are from minority ethnic backgrounds other than White British but very few are at an early stage of learning English. Overall, their social and economic backgrounds are a little above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average. A higher than average proportion of pupils joins the school at times other than at the beginning of the year. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly typical of children nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Griffe Field Primary is a good school, a view that is shared by the school. It has some outstanding features and good potential to improve further. The overwhelming majority of parents are very pleased with their children's education. The very positive and encouraging atmosphere that pervades the school is a key reason why pupils do so well and reach high standards. The school provides good value for money. Standards have risen in recent years and by Year 6 are well above average. Mathematics standards have been exceptionally high since 2005. Pupils make good progress. In some areas progress is outstanding, for example in mathematics and English. In science, standards are above average but pupils' scientific enquiry skills are not extended enough in Years 3 to 6 to enable them to achieve standards as high as those in English and mathematics. Good provision is made in Foundation Stage where children learn in a stimulating and well structured environment. While girls do considerably better than boys in Years 3 to 6, the gap is closing as a result of the school's efforts. Relationships throughout the school are very strong and pupils greatly enjoy lessons and school life. Teachers plan interesting and challenging activities that involve pupils in learning for themselves. The good teaching is founded on careful planning and sharply focussed targets about what pupils are to learn. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play very harmoniously and behaviour is excellent. Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding, particularly the attention paid to helping them adopt healthy lifestyles. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is enriched through many out of school visits and through clubs and visitors. Pupils are highly involved in school life and contribute much to it and the community. Pupils' progress is monitored and reviewed regularly in key subjects and well targeted provision is made for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership and direction for the school and there is a strong commitment to improve further. The staff work closely and share common values that are reflected in the school's ethos. While the school's improvement plan has appropriate priorities, they are not sharply focussed through the use of clear and specific expected outcomes to enable governors and other senior staff to monitor how well the school is progressing towards them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that priorities in the school's improvement plan are focussed more sharply through the use of clear success criteria linked to challenging targets, and involve the governors more centrally in monitoring the school's progress towards them.
- Raise standards in science by developing pupils' scientific enquiry skills further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have risen considerably since the last inspection and are consistently well above average in the core subjects of English and mathematics and above average in

science. Above average proportions of pupils exceed the expected standards by Year 6. The school easily exceeded its targets in both 2005 and 2006. Taking account of the school's record of good achievement, the targets were not challenging enough. Pupils' standards of work in Year 2 have also risen in recent years and are typically a little above average. Children in Nursery and Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 progress well. Most pupils make good progress and achieve well by Year 6. Some make outstanding progress but this is not yet consistent among different groups or subjects. In 2005, overall progress in Years 3 to 6 was outstanding, but it was mainly due to very impressive progress made by girls and lower attaining pupils and particularly so in English and mathematics. Groups such as those from different minority ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties achieve well by the time they leave school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes are high so that pupils acquire a strong commitment to succeed in all that they do. Pupils enjoy school, '...because lessons are such fun'. Attendance is good. The atmosphere in school is warm and friendly so that pupils feel secure and safe. Bullying is very rare and pupils say that they are very confident that it is dealt with quickly. They learn how to be safe in many ways and their understanding of how to live healthily is excellent. Meals include salads and fruit as a result of pupils' requests through their very active and influential school council. Lunch times are very good social occasions. Pupils contribute much to school life and the community through, for example, their involvement in events that help raise funds for charity. They acquire a very good understanding of the many cultural traditions present in school and in modern society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A key feature of the good teaching and learning throughout the school is the attention given to learning through first hand experiences. This is very evident in mathematics where pupils, for example, practise their estimating and measuring skills in imaginative ways. In Year 5, two gifted and talented pupils thoroughly enjoyed using the data projector and whiteboard to lead the rest of the class in grouping numbers in sequences. One said, 'I really enjoyed that'. Pupils have specific targets in both literacy and numeracy which they find helpful for checking how well they are progressing. Good marking of pupils' work by adults also helps them to improve. The very good relationships ensure that a good pace of learning is maintained and teaching assistants work effectively with teachers to support specific groups. Pupils build their knowledge

and skills systematically, but more emphasis is needed on teaching higher scientific enquiry skills in Years 5 and 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad and interesting curriculum is planned well to meet the needs of the great majority of pupils. The many partnerships with outside organisations add relevance and excitement through visits, visitors, themed days and events. Pupils learn to work independently and in teams. This, with the very good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills pupils acquire, prepares them well for their future lives. There is a well established and effective curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education. The school is currently working to improve the curriculum further. The focus, rightly, is on establishing closer links between subjects through the use of common themes and to enable pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills more extensively in different subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good care is taken of pupils throughout the school. Staff know their pupils well and the warm relationships that exist ensure that pupils can confidently turn to an adult when the need arises. Arrangements for pupils' safety and security, such as child protection arrangements, are robust and the school meets current guidelines. Pupils' academic progress is monitored and reviewed regularly in some subjects but this approach is not extended into other areas, such as their ICT skills. Information about pupils' attainment and progress is held centrally and it is used well to guide the support for pupils who need it. There are good partnerships with specialists, who help staff assess and plan for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities so that they make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The shared leadership amongst the staff and the common values that guide their work are key to the very positive learning environment within which pupils do well. The headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and soundly based on analyses of patterns and trends in pupils' performance and comparisons with other schools nationally. The school acts on relative weaknesses and the current drive to raise boys' achievement is showing some signs of success. Teaching is regularly monitored by several staff so that training and support is given appropriately. Senior staff encourage teachers to build on each other's good practice and to work in teams. The school manages finances well and governors strongly support the school's work. They know the school well and are informed in a variety of ways but they are not involved enough in monitoring school priorities in order to fully hold the school to account for what is happening. The school improvement plan sets out

some clear areas for improvement and actions to take. However, the plan is not specific about the outcomes the school hopes to achieve to enable progress to be monitored effectively by key staff or governors.

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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2

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

6 October 2006 Dear Pupils Griffie Field Primary School, Grosvenor Drive, Littleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE23 3UQ Thank you for the warm welcome that I received when I visited your school recently. I spoke with many of you in lessons and in discussions. Your views helped me to confirm what the staff, governors and parents had to say about your school. I would like to share with you what I found out about the quality of education that you receive. I was impressed with: - Your excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. - Your thorough enjoyment of school life. One pupil summed up the views of many when he said, 'Everything that we do here is fun'. - Your hard work and commitment to do your best in lessons. - The progress that you make in subjects like English and mathematics. I think you go to a good school. It has some excellent features and I know that Miss McRae agrees. The respect that you show each other and to adults is very impressive and these very good relationships are a key reason for the school's success. You told me how much you like your teachers because they make lessons so interesting. You also appreciate the clubs and activities, both in and out of school that are provided. I was impressed with the importance that you attach to living healthy and fit lives. Through your very lively school council, you have made sure that snacks and meal times are even healthier. I hope your current efforts to complete a friendship garden are also successful. You told me that you receive good guidance about how you can improve from your teachers. You can help them by thinking about how well you are progressing towards the targets displayed in your classrooms. The staff and governors are always looking for ways of making the school even better. I have agreed with Miss McRae that the school should help you to do even better in your science investigations. Governors are also going to become even more involved in checking how well the school is doing. With all good wishes for your future at Griffie Field Primary. Ray Jardine (Additional Inspector)