

# Grasmere Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100252
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	307338
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Steven Hill

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	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Sharon Sullivan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Derrington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	92 Albion Road London N16 9PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7254 4564
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7249 7278

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school with a Nursery, which has a diverse intake. About a third of pupils are of White British origin, with the others coming from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The social circumstances of pupils are very diverse, but are slightly less favourable overall than average. Relatively few pupils are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities, although the proportion with statements of special educational needs is high. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has won a number of awards including Investors in People, Active Sports Mark, Healthy Schools and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Grasmere is a good school where pupils thoroughly enjoy learning, in large part because of the outstanding curriculum. Their personal development is outstanding, and they achieve well. Teaching and learning are good, and there is good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support.

Children make a happy start to their education in the Foundation Stage, where they settle in quickly and make good progress. By the end of the Reception class, they achieve standards that are varied, but overall somewhat above those found nationally. Pupils continue to make good progress in the older classes. Standards are consistently above average by Year 6, and in some years are well above average. Recent work by the school has boosted writing standards, which had previously lagged behind those in reading.

Teaching is mostly good but varies from satisfactory to outstanding. Pupils are managed well and a calm, orderly but relaxed atmosphere pervades lessons, enhanced by the very positive relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers are successful in making lessons interesting, and are particularly effective in involving all pupils through collaborative work. A few lessons are just satisfactory, often because the challenge of work is not closely enough matched to pupils' different abilities. Pupils get good support from the many skilled teaching assistants. This is a particularly significant factor in the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who are new to learning English.

There is good support provided for pupils who have social and emotional difficulties, particularly from the learning mentors and the counsellor. Pupils in Year 5 were confident that there is '...always support from teachers and friends if you have problems.' Good systems are in place to track individuals' academic progress, and extra help is provided to any who start to fall behind.

The outstanding curriculum covers all the basics well, and is enhanced by a wide array of extras, including excellent provision for sport, and the outstanding range of clubs which take place in school time. Year 2 pupils said that these are '... loads of fun ... but you're still learning when you do it!'

Good leadership and management underpin the good provision and give an excellent sense of direction for school development. Teaching is monitored carefully, principally by the headteacher, and colleagues are given clear pointers about how to improve their practice. Standards and achievement are tracked carefully, and action taken to address any issues that arise. Subject leaders provide very helpful advice and set clear direction for development. However, their involvement in monitoring lessons is limited, and they do not have enough opportunities to use their specialist expertise to support colleagues in class. Strong links are built up with parents, and they very much appreciate what is done for their children. This is typified by one who wrote '...all in all it is a great school, open to ideas from parents...'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that pupils are always challenged at the right level by their work, particularly by making clear what is expected of them as individuals.
- Give subject leaders more opportunities to work alongside their colleagues in the classroom.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Children start in the Foundation Stage with standards that cover a wide range but which are broadly similar to those found in others of their age. They make good progress and go into Year 1 with standards that, whilst varied, are better than those found nationally. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily for several years from below average in 2002 to above average currently. A comparative weakness, in the number of brighter pupils reaching high standards in writing in 2006, has been addressed well, and writing results in 2007 are likely to match those in reading. Standards at the end of Year 6 have also risen and are above average, and were well above average in 2006. Results of national tests are likely to fall slightly in 2007 because there are differences in the abilities of this group. Achievement remains good in the light of pupils' starting points. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are a particular strength throughout the school.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Their very positive relationships with each other and with staff contribute to their exceptional enthusiasm for school. Older pupils confirmed that they liked school because it was 'good for learning ... and good for socialising'. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community through systems such as the school council, peer mediation and the 'friendship stop'. The effectiveness of these is plain and pupils in Year 2 say the friendship stop is not really needed any more because '...everyone has friends now.' Pupils are convinced that the staff listen to their views and respond fairly. They are particularly pleased that something is to be done about their only real grievance, the outside toilets, described as '...seriously not very nice!' Older pupils are caring and helpful to younger ones, and the regular 'reading partners' scheme contributes to the learning and social development of all. Pupils feel safe in school. They are adopting healthy lifestyles eagerly, joining in the extensive sporting provision with enthusiasm, and expressing delight at the improvements made in school meals. Their good achievement and their excellent attitudes and social skills mean they are very well prepared for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good, but varies from satisfactory to outstanding. In the Foundation Stage, a good balance between work led by the teacher, and opportunities for children to choose for themselves, leads to high levels of enjoyment and good progress. Teachers throughout the school are particularly good at enthusing pupils, engaging them through interesting work, lively explanations, and good opportunities for practical and collaborative work. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated their enthusiasm, teamwork and good rhythmic skills when practising for a musical production during the inspection. The many opportunities pupils have to discuss things in pairs boost their speaking and listening skills, as well as their understanding of particular topics. In the minority of lessons that are just satisfactory, the reasons vary, but often this is because all pupils are given the same task, and are not given clear criteria for success.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum covers the basics well, leading to good achievement in literacy and numeracy. Very good provision for speaking and listening leads to high standards. Cross-curricular themes add to pupils' learning and enjoyment, such as their recent opportunities to try 'Ancient Greek' food. Pupils say they do '... so much sport.' which is '...fantastic.' and the school's trophy cabinet is full of the results of their success. There is excellent enhancement to the curriculum from visits and visitors, and the school joins in many festivals and events, such as the imminent 'Prom in the Park'. As well as a good range of extra-curricular activity, including breakfast and after school clubs, the curriculum is enlivened by a range of weekly clubs in school time. These are very wide ranging, and all pupils participate in six different ones over the course of the year, joining in with different classes from across the school. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is greatly enhanced by the philosophy project which, pupils agree, helps them sort out arguments and make up quickly.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are looked after well so they feel safe and happy in school. There are very strong support systems to help pupils who may feel worried, or who have particular problems, and staff and other pupils all play a part in this. Pupils' academic progress is carefully monitored, and extra help is provided to any who are not achieving as expected. The regular support in reading and mathematics, provided to individual pupils by staff from a large merchant bank, makes a considerable contribution to their learning. Pupils are given a clear idea of what they are going to learn about in lessons. However, they are not always told clearly what would constitute success for them personally, based on their individual attainment.

The school is careful in ensuring pupils are safeguarded and child protection procedures are thorough. However, the administration of how the relevant information is filed does not comply with current government regulations. Action is currently being taken by the headteacher to establish the required single record.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The good leadership and management result in strong provision, including an outstanding curriculum, which leads to good achievement and excellent personal development. A very clear and consistent sense of direction is provided at all levels, so all staff work together as an effective team. Self-evaluation is good and leads to an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses. Rigorous and successful action is taken to address issues that arise. This has led to improvements in many areas since the last inspection, including higher standards. The effective monitoring of lessons, principally by the head teacher, has led to clear feedback to teachers on how to improve their practice, and better quality teaching. However, there is not enough involvement of subject leaders in monitoring lessons, either to give them a clearer picture of how their subject is doing, or to enable them to share their expertise fully with colleagues. The school has plans to increase this in the near future. Governors play a full part in leading the school, helping set the agenda and holding it to account for results. The school's record shows that it is well placed to improve further.

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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>	<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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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?	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**

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grasmere Primary School, London, N16 9PD

Thank you for all your help when I came to inspect your school. You told me you enjoy school and I could see that you did, in lessons and out at play.

I think that Grasmere is a good school. I was particularly impressed by how well you all get on with each other, your excellent behaviour, and how you help to take care of each other. You are making good progress because your teachers are good at helping you learn, and give you lots of exciting things to do. They are particularly good at helping you to talk and to listen, and the adults take careful notice of your views. I could hear the results of this when I spoke to the Year 5 and Year 2 pupils about school. You were a great help. I told your headteacher how much you enjoyed everything about the school, except for the 'horrible' outside toilets. I know you will be pleased that he has plans to make them much better soon. I was very impressed by how much sport you are able to do, and by the wonderful range of clubs that you all said you enjoy.

I enjoyed watching you working hard in lessons. I thought that some of you might do even better if teachers explained more clearly exactly what each of you needs to do to make progress. I have agreed with the headteacher that staff are going to work on this.

The adults in the school take great care of you, and they help you to catch up if you get left behind. Some of your teachers are real experts in particular subjects, and I have asked them to spend more time in each other's lessons, so they can give each other tips about how to help you learn even more.

I really enjoyed meeting you, and hope you carry on working hard and enjoying school. Thank you again for your help.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill. Lead Inspector.