

Grange Park Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102432
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	308004
Inspection dates	9–10 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Emma Sullivan
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Guest
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2004
School address	Lansbury Drive Hayes UB4 8SF
Telephone number	020 8573 3638
Fax number	020 8561 7716

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school serves a diverse community. Almost 90% of pupils are from minority ethnic families. Over half have an Asian heritage, and a quarter have a Black African background. Around 70% of the school population has English as an additional language, with a high proportion at an early stage of acquiring English. There is a high level of pupils joining and leaving the school at unusual times as many families move to the area on a temporary basis. A fifth of the pupils are from refugee families or those seeking asylum. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The majority of these pupils are falling behind in their work or have behaviour, social or emotional problems.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Grange Park Junior School provides a satisfactory education for all pupils and is improving across all areas. The school has experienced considerable turbulence in recent years but strong shoots of recovery are emerging. It is a safe and happy place where pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds learn and enjoy coming to school. A recent fall in standards has been addressed successfully although attainment remains below average. There remains a legacy of underachievement. This means that, although pupils are now making good progress in lessons because of consistently effective teaching, all lost ground has not yet been recovered. Consequently, achievement over time is satisfactory. Good headway has been made in addressing the underachievement of groups of pupils, although the school is rightly concerned that pupils from Black African backgrounds do not do as well as other pupils.

Parents appreciate all the school does, particularly its success in promoting pupils' good personal development. One said, 'The school has instilled in my child that learning is fun', another commented, 'My child has grown not just academically but has developed self-confidence'. The school is a harmonious community where cultural backgrounds and faiths are accepted, and understood by all. Pupils know what they should do to keep healthy and enthusiastically join in physical activities. They are proud of the school and willingly take on extra responsibilities. A Year 6 pupil wrote to the inspectors saying, 'My school is 11/10 but you will see that when you are here and you won't want to leave'. Pupils develop good social skills and work well together. However, their literacy, numeracy and computer skills are not secure enough to prepare them fully for their subsequent education and to enhance their future life chances.

Good care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel welcome and valued. The school goes to great lengths to support new arrivals, especially those who might otherwise be overwhelmed by starting at a new school in a new country. Pupils receive clear guidance about what they need to do to improve and those who need additional help are well supported.

The quality of teaching and learning are good, having improved as a result of strong monitoring and evaluation by senior leaders. Pupils now benefit from lively lessons, where teachers provide challenging work and involve pupils in deciding the next steps in their learning. The curriculum is satisfactory and includes a good range of extra activities. Work is adapted to meet the wide variety of pupils' needs, although the school has identified the need to broaden the range of cultural traditions studied, in order to stimulate the interest of pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. Some work is related to a central theme, but opportunities to link subjects are missed, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. This means that the learning is not as meaningful to the pupils as it could be.

Leadership and management are good. Recent improvements owe much to the insightful leadership of the headteacher. He has the confidence of staff and governors and plays a pivotal role in maintaining the inclusive ethos. The enthusiastic and confident senior leadership team is moving the school forward at a good pace. Governors are knowledgeable and well informed, and play a full part in supporting school improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by ensuring that all groups make good progress.
- Extend the range cultural traditions studied in order to further engage and stimulate pupils, especially those with a Black African heritage.

- Increase links between subjects, including the integration of ICT across the curriculum.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pupils' attainment on entering the school is generally below average. In recent years, standards reached by Year 6 pupils have been exceptionally low and pupils across the school were not making the progress they should. Pupils with learning difficulties, are now making good progress towards the challenging targets set for them. The standards reached in mathematics and science by Year 6 pupils improved significantly in 2008. The weakest subject was English, but the proportion of pupils making the expected progress in English from Year 3 to 6 rose from below half in 2006 to 90% in 2008. Effective intervention strategies, including enhanced support for pupils at an early stage of learning English, has accelerated the achievement of most pupils, but the progress that Black African pupils make remains slow. More able pupils are benefiting from targeted support and mostly are reaching their potential. The many pupils who arrive at the school at various times of the year with little or no English soon become fully integrated into their classes. Most rapidly develop oral communication skills but find reading and writing more difficult.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They demonstrate their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through knowledge and understanding of national and international concerns such as violence and global warming. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school, particularly the opportunities to develop friendships with children from different cultural backgrounds. Attendance is improving through imaginative methods to encourage punctuality and reduce unauthorised absence. Pupils feel secure and safe in school and know there is someone to speak to if needed. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles including a balanced diet and exercise. They make a positive contribution to community as members the school council, classroom helpers and monitors. They are proud of the way they helped to persuade the local authority to provide a crossing warden outside the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils respond eagerly and are well engaged because teachers have strong subject knowledge, explanations and questions are focused and teaching is well supported by visual resources. This approach particularly benefits pupils who are acquiring English and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For instance, the use of an interactive white board pupils in helped pupils in Years 5 and 6 to identify key features of poems and provide opinions on them using technical vocabulary. Opportunities for actively involving pupils, such as paired talk activities and writing ideas on 'mini whiteboards' engage pupils well. However, in some lessons there is too much teacher talk and not enough emphasis on group discussions to allow to pupils to share and rehearse ideas and to present their findings. Pupils are fully involved in evaluating

their progress from the previous lesson and in making decisions about the level at which they need to achieve during the current lesson. This sets high expectations for learning and is a key factor in the good progress they are making. Good teaching has not been embedded long enough, however, to ensure good achievement over time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The strong emphasis on personal and social skills has a good impact on pupils' personal development and this is evident in the positive learning atmosphere across the school. A wide range of small group programmes, including ICT activities, provides good support for pupils with different needs. This results in good achievement for pupils with learning difficulties and those who are at an early stage in acquiring English. Individual programmes and a 'Bright Sparks' after-school club provide challenging activities for pupils who are gifted and talented. Year 6 pupils engage in discussions about civil rights and take part in events such as Black History week. However, the school has not yet developed the curriculum to include a wider range of cultural traditions in order to further engage and stimulate pupils, especially those with a Black African heritage. Although some links are made between subjects, such as history and English, the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to engage in learning in relevant and meaningful ways. Opportunities are missed to use ICT in other subjects. Extra-curricular activities and school trips enhance learning well, for example, pupils spoke animatedly about a recent visit to Kew Gardens during their art project on sculptures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Children trust adults and this bond helps them to achieve well in lessons. The school is particularly successful in supporting new arrivals. Newcomers are assigned a 'buddy', often a pupil who speaks their home language, and staff take great care to assess their individual needs. A 'pyramid club' in Year 3 and a 'transition club' in Year 6 provide sensitive help for pupils who lack self-confidence or are anxious about changing schools. The warm and enthusiastic approach of the learning mentor is much appreciated by pupils and she provides valuable support for vulnerable children and their families. Pupils receive good feedback in lessons and through marking. Their progress each term is carefully monitored and their individual needs are identified. The special educational needs coordinator manages this process extremely well. Bilingual staff provide valuable support, but children at an early stage of acquiring English say they sometimes find it difficult to understand their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has come through a period of turbulence, during which the pupil profile changed significantly. The school has had to adjust to receiving a rapid increase in the proportion of pupils from refugee families or from abroad with little or no spoken English. This has stretched its resources but it has responded well. It is welcoming and a safe haven for children from refugee families and plays a valuable role in promoting community cohesion. Staff are newly energised, there is a shared vision for the school and the quality of teaching has improved significantly over the last year or so. Many pupils were underachieving. Pupils are now reaching the standards consistent with their

attainment on joining the school. Drawing on a wealth of assessment information, senior staff accurately evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan is of good quality and is strongly focused on raising standards and improving pupils' attainment at an accelerated pace. Governors are well informed, supportive and committed to improving the school after difficult times. A number of middle managers are newly in post and they are still developing their skills. However, the school's track record in raising standards, the well established cycle of self-review and development planning, and the expertise of key staff mean that there is good capacity for further improvement.

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Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?	2
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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

22 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Park Junior School, Hayes, UB4 8SF

Thank you for making us so welcome during our visit to your school. The most striking thing we found was how children from so many different backgrounds get on well together. The school is a really friendly place and it was good to see how you welcome newcomers and help them settle in. All the adults in the school have your best interests at heart and they take great care to ensure that you know how to keep safe and know the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. You do a lot to help the school run smoothly and we enjoyed talking to the school council about their ideas and suggestions. At the moment, the school is satisfactory overall but because there have been so many advances lately, we are confident that the school is well placed to improve further.

Teachers and the support staff are doing a good job in making lessons interesting and you told us how much you enjoy school. It was good to receive a letter from a girl in Year 6. She said, 'The teachers are all nice and kind and make our lessons fun'. We were pleased to see that, at the beginning of most lessons, you think about what you have learned so far and what you need to do next. This is helping everyone to make good progress. There is still room for improvement because standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. You can do your bit by continuing to work hard.

Work in lessons is generally well planned and we know you enjoy and learn from a wide range of visits and clubs. We have suggested that some subjects could be linked up to make work more interesting. Also, we think you would benefit from using ICT more frequently in your day-to-day work. Children come from such varied backgrounds, we think that you would find it interesting to find out about different cultural traditions.

Your parents told us how much they appreciated all that the school does and they had special praise for the headteacher. We found that the school is well run and that the headteacher, staff and governors work together successfully to help you get the most you can from school life.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Crompton

Lead Inspector