

Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102723
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	308101
Inspection dates	29–30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Daniela Jung
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Carter
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Suffolk Road Plaistow London E13 0HE
Telephone number	020 7476 5146
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is now an average size primary school, having gradually made the transition from its previous status as an infant school. Many pupils come from households with very high levels of social need, as exemplified by the high proportion eligible for free school meals. They also come from a diverse mix of ethnic backgrounds. Around a quarter of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Mobility is high, including a number of pupils joining the school as refugees and many with little English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is a little above average. The school operates a breakfast club.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Grange Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although their progress is good in the Foundation Stage and infant classes, standards are low in Year 6 because pupils have not previously made enough progress in the junior years. In part, this is because the school has less experience in catering for older pupils and teachers' expectations of them have not always been high enough. Pupils have targets intended to help them improve their work, but these are not always matched closely enough to what each pupil needs to learn. Although the school keeps careful track of each pupil's progress as they move through the school, their progress is usually compared only with the previous year. This means that where a pupil falls behind, there is not the push there should be for them not merely to catch up but also to further build on that achievement.

The low standards in the school's first ever Year 6 national tests, in 2007, have jolted the school to reorganise its management arrangements. New staff have joined the headteacher in leadership roles and others have taken on new responsibilities. The headteacher, governors and leadership team have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and those areas where improvements are needed. All show a shared commitment to raising standards so that pupils are better helped to build on the progress they make in the infant years. They demonstrate the school's sound capacity for further improvement. Though many changes are only very recent, pupils are now making satisfactory progress in lessons in the junior classes. School leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning has given them a clear picture of how teaching could be made more effective, particularly by ensuring a better match of work to pupils' different capabilities. They have correctly identified that, although those with additional needs, including those at an early stage of learning English, are catered for well because they are closely supported, more able pupils have not been set challenging enough work.

Grange is a caring school that caters very well for pupils' welfare and, as a result, pupils feel safe and secure. The introduction of a breakfast club, free to all, has proven a great success. It has helped to better settle pupils to learning while providing a fillip to attendance and punctuality, both of which are much improved since the last inspection. Pupils are enthused by the way teachers succeed in making the good curriculum interesting and fun, for example, by giving them lots of practical activities in what has been developed into an attractive, stimulating school environment. As a result, pupils are keen to learn. Pupils from the many very different ethnic backgrounds mix and get on very well together. Though standards in the juniors remain too low, pupils' attitudes and behaviour at Grange show they certainly succeed in living up to the school's acronym motto: 'Growing together; Respect each other; Always try our best; Never give up; Good manners; Everyone works together'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

From a very low starting point, children make good progress, particularly in their social and emotional development. Although standards are below average by the time they enter Year 1, especially in English and mathematics, all children achieve well. They settle into school quickly and concentrate hard. They make friends and work together well. Teachers have begun to use a national initiative to help children in the Reception class to develop early reading and writing skills and this is starting to raise standards in literacy. The recent reorganisation into one unit, where children in the Nursery class integrate with those in the Reception Year, is successful in

making the best use of the available space so that all areas of learning are covered well. There is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that the children choose for themselves. Assessments are thorough and based on careful observations of children at work. Children are encouraged to explore a wide range of tasks but there is no clear system to track which children have experienced each activity.

What the school should do to improve further

- Better match work in lessons to pupils' different capabilities, particularly for more able pupils in the junior classes.
- Ensure that pupils' progress in the junior classes is compared not just with the previous year's but also with pupils' Year 2 scores, and that each pupil is set targets that drive them to achieve their full potential.

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

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and they continue to progress well in the infant years, attaining standards in the Year 2 assessments that are close to the national average. Pupils have not done as well in the junior classes during the school's transition from an infant to an all-through primary school. The standards attained in Year 6 in 2007 were exceptionally low. Standards in the current Year 6 are a little higher, with pupils now making satisfactory progress in lessons in the junior classes, but they are still very low because of a legacy of underachievement from past years. Few pupils are on track to attain higher levels in the national tests. Progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good for those pupils with additional needs because of learning difficulties or because they are new to the school or at an early stage of learning English. This is because these pupils benefit from individual support that is tailored to their needs. It is the more able pupils who have not done as well as they should, because they are not set challenging enough work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school. They are attentive in lessons and take part with growing enthusiasm. New pupils are welcomed and settle in quickly because they are assigned time with staff who give them support. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils value and respect each other, their teachers and the traditions and beliefs of different groups. They look after one another, with 'buddy leaders' who actively seek out pupils who are alone in the playground. Pupils also take responsibility as play leaders for organizing playground games. Behaviour is very good. Incidents of bullying are rare. As a result, pupils feel safe. They know about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, make sensible choices about eating and enjoy taking part in physical activity. They are rightly proud of the contribution of their school council, one noting that this is a school where '...we get things done by having ideas'. Though pupils are involved in choosing their own targets for improvement, they often choose easy options rather than targets that will challenge them to tackle harder work. Although pupils have weaknesses in their basic skills, their strong social skills mean that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and they manage their classes well. They generally start each lesson by setting out its purpose, but sometimes these lesson objectives detail the task to be carried out rather than what it is the pupils should be learning. Lessons are often briskly paced, with lots of varied activities that keep pupils interested and involved, so that lots of hands go up when the teacher asks a question. Teachers do not always capitalise fully on pupils' enthusiasm, however. Progress in the junior classes, in particular, is limited where pupils of very widely differing capabilities are set essentially the same work. Where work is pitched as appropriate for the average ability in the class, pupils who need extra help because of language or learning difficulties often cope well with the extra challenge because they benefit from good support from teaching assistants. More able pupils, however, do not make as much progress as they should because they are not challenged enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an attractive and spacious stimulating learning environment which makes pupils keen to attend and contributes to their good personal development. Enrichment activities, including visits and visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum, are appreciated by pupils. There are many well attended clubs and other extra-curricular activities, including an enthusiastic after-school singing club involving children of all ages that sang with gusto during the inspectors' visit. Links to a local sports college have led to sporting success. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good, and there are interactive whiteboards in every classroom, although sometimes these are merely used as projection screens with opportunities missed for interactive activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff take great care to ensure that pupils are safe and welcomed into school. Child protection and welfare requirements are fully met. Pupils who join the school partway through their primary education benefit from very good induction procedures. Their needs are accurately assessed and they are helped to quickly settle in. Pupils who join the school with little English receive good support so that they make good progress in learning the language. Pupils with learning difficulties similarly benefit from good support in class so that they are able to make similar progress to their peers. Teachers track the progress pupils make over the course of the year, and set class and group targets. Much of their marking engages pupils in a helpful dialogue about their work and encourages them to think for themselves what they need to do next to improve. Teachers do not, however, set and regularly review individual targets for all pupils to help drive improvement in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, school leaders and governors have been successful in creating a school with a climate for learning where pupils feel happy and secure and are keen to learn. The transition from an infant to all-through primary school has been a difficult one. Staff have not always had a clear enough appreciation of the standards of work to be expected of pupils in the junior years as, until this year, every successive year has meant a new older class. School leaders have been careful to track progress from year to year but have not routinely compared this with the standards that might be expected in relation to pupils' scores in their Year 2 assessments. This means that pupils who fall behind in one year are not always pushed enough in the next, so they are not all doing as well in the junior years as they have in the infants.

School leaders appreciate this and have already put in place measures aimed at boosting performance in the junior years. Although these changes are too recent to show through in measurably improved standards, they have already resulted in pupils making better progress in lessons. The many staff with new leadership roles are enthusiastic. With the headteacher, all are keen for the school to build on its success in the infant years and with pupils' personal development.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well 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 the learners' needs?	3
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.

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

12 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Primary School, London, E13 0HE

Thank you for making us so welcome when the other inspectors and I came to visit your school. I am writing to tell you what we found. The school is giving you a satisfactory education but there is much about your school that is good. We were especially pleased to see how very well behaved you are and how well you all get on with each other. It is a friendly school where you are happy. You feel safe because the school looks after you so well. It is great to see how much attendance has improved. Well done!

You told us how much you enjoy all the practical things that teachers give you to do, and it was good to see so many of you attending the clubs and other activities. We particularly enjoyed hearing the singing club's latest version of 'It's Our Dream'. We were impressed with how keen you are to join in activities in lessons but we were sorry to see that you have not made as much progress in the junior classes as in the Foundation Stage and infants. We have asked the school to make sure that you are all set challenging work in lessons in the juniors so that you make better progress. For some of you, the work is too easy when everyone in class is doing the same thing.

It is good to see that you have targets, but it is disappointing that when you choose your own targets you often choose those that are easiest for you rather than those that will stretch you. You can help do better by picking targets that are more challenging. We have also asked the school to give you more individual targets that help you to improve your work, again especially in the juniors. In addition, we have asked the headteacher and other school leaders to make sure that when they check how well you are doing, they make sure you are all making as much progress as you should.

Best wishes,

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector