

# Grange Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108765
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	309794
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Graham HMI

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	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs A Rutley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pauline Wood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Swan Street Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR5 1EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5535570
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5535411

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors

## Description of the school

Grange Park Primary School is slightly smaller than average and the number on roll is declining. The area suffers from social and economic disadvantage and an above-average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average; the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above average, and a few pupils have very specific needs. The school has achieved Healthy School Status and the Active Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005 HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the education and care provided for a small proportion of pupils with very significant special needs, in the arrangements made to manage health and safety and identify risks, and in aspects of leadership and management.

The headteacher and assistant headteachers have tackled a number of longstanding and significant weaknesses in the school. A large budget deficit has been transformed into a surplus and the additional monies which are now available have been used imaginatively to improve the school building. A dance studio, children's kitchen and the very good use made of the school garden have done much to enhance the curriculum and make learning exciting and enjoyable for pupils. Alterations have been made to the building to allow adults or children with disabilities good access. Many parents are very pleased with the education the school provides and with the improvements which have been made.

Decisive action has been taken to improve the progress made by pupils. The results of national tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2007 were much better than in previous years. Standards were in line with national averages, not only at the nationally expected Level 4 but also at the more demanding Level 5. This is a considerable achievement and reflects the hard work of those pupils and their teacher. At Key Stage 1, the results declined significantly in 2006. Although the decline was corrected in 2007 with the most able pupils achieving particularly well, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels was below average. A significant legacy of underachievement remains, particularly in Key Stage 2. This means that, although pupils in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 make a good start and make good progress, the picture is not as positive in the rest of the school. Attainment in the core subjects in most classes in Key Stage 2 is below that which would normally be expected. Pupils make good progress when teaching is good and work is well matched to their needs, but this does not happen in every class. In some lessons pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher and too little time on their own work; in others the work is too difficult or not challenging enough.

There are secure systems to check on the academic progress made by pupils. The school identifies those pupils who are falling behind and provides additional support to help them catch up. However, some of this support is provided when pupils are withdrawn from their classes during the school day. While well intentioned, these withdrawal groups disrupt lessons when pupils leave or return and mean that some pupils do not receive their full entitlement to all curriculum subjects. For example, in a design and technology lesson, only six members of the class were present for the whole lesson. A large group of pupils were withdrawn for extra literacy for most of the lesson and a small group were withdrawn for extra numeracy during the key part of the lesson.

Although substantial improvements have been made to the education provided for most pupils, some serious issues remain in relation to the education and care of a very small proportion of pupils who have very specific needs. Teaching assistants provided for children with very specific needs are sometimes used to support additional children in small group situations. While this may well improve the progress made by most pupils it does little to support the child with the

most specific needs. During one session a group of pupils were collected but did not work on joint tasks or even at the same table so this did not promote social skills. The headteacher, governors and staff have not monitored the provision made for some pupils with statements of special educational need rigorously enough and have not responded quickly enough to emerging issues or to concerns raised by parents.. The school has provided good support for pupils with special needs in the past, but recent actions have inadvertently resulted in a reduction of care for a very small number of the most vulnerable pupils.

The senior leadership team has tackled a number of difficult issues effectively. However, the headteacher and assistant headteachers are responsible for too much of the leadership and management of the school. The roles and responsibilities of middle managers are not well enough developed and the governing body, while supportive, does not hold the school sufficiently well to account. Responsibility for some very important aspects of school leadership and management has been delegated to staff who lack the necessary experience and training. As a result, there are serious weaknesses in the care, guidance and support provided for pupils and in the management of risk. The school has tackled the areas requiring improvement at following last inspection and has improved much of its provision. It has therefore demonstrated the capacity to bring about further improvement. Value for money is inadequate.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Children make good progress because of the good teaching and support they receive. The staff know children well and provide exciting and challenging activities. Good use is made of all the resources which are available and activities are well targeted towards the needs of individual children. The every effective arrangements made for planning work and activities ensure that good progress is maintained throughout the key stage.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Strengthen leadership by identifying the roles and responsibilities of middle managers and ensuring they have the experience and training to carry out their tasks, and ensure that the governing body carries out its responsibilities.
- Take steps to monitor and improve the provision made for pupils with very complex needs.
- Take immediate action to ensure that issues to do with health and safety are eradicated and that potential risks are assessed.
- Ensure all pupils receive their full entitlement to the curriculum.
- Improve teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children start school with levels of attainment that are below average for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1. From Year 2 to Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress overall but this is not consistent from year to year. There is a considerable legacy of underachievement and current levels of attainment in most year groups are below that which might be expected.

In 2006, the results of national assessments taken by pupils in Year 2 declined significantly. Matters improved in 2007, with the more able pupils attaining particularly well, but too few pupils reached the level expected for their age.

The results of national tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 improved in 2006 and further improved in 2007, when standards were in line with those attained nationally at both Level 4 and the higher Level 5. The school has effective systems to track the progress made by pupils. However, not all pupils know their targets and their current level of attainment and not all pupils are given work which accurately meets their needs. Marking usually tells pupils what they have done well but does not always tell them what they must do to improve. Many pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress but not all the pupils with a statement of special educational need do as well as they should.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are very proud of their school. They are delighted with the recent improvements which have been made, especially the good range of resources and activities which are available. Most pupils have good opportunities to learn a range of talents and skills. They take part in activities as diverse as brass-rubbing and cheer-leading. They understand how to keep healthy, and they enjoy working in the school garden and cooking the fruits of their labours in the very well planned children's kitchen. Attendance is good, although affected to some extent by the increasing numbers of families taking holidays in term time.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of most pupils is satisfactory. Most pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy school. The behaviour of most pupils is good but a small minority of pupils occasionally hit or disturb others. This usually occurs when they find their own work too difficult or are not occupied sufficiently well. This often goes unnoticed nor is it dealt with effectively by staff who are supervising them. Pupils feel that bullying is dealt with when reported to staff. Some pupils do not give enough thought to their own safety and that of others. Pupils contribute to the school and the local community. They have taken part in local radio shows and appointment committees at a football club, and they have worked with a local newspaper.

Some lessons are dominated by the most able or confident pupils. While it is a pleasure to see these pupils gaining so much from their education, not enough is done, in some classes, to ensure that the views of more reticent pupils are valued.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

More than half of the teachers joined the school in 2007 and some of these are relatively new to teaching. They have brought much needed enthusiasm and expertise to the school but some are still adapting to a new school or class. Not all are familiar enough with the school's expectations to ensure that pupils maintain the good habits developed in previous years. Teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall and there were some lessons in which teaching was good.

In the best lessons, pupils made good progress because the tasks they were given were interesting and well matched to their needs. Teachers gave sharp, well focused explanations

and made good use of questioning to promote understanding and provide further challenge. The lesson moved along at a brisk pace through a series of carefully constructed tasks and explanations. Pupils had good opportunities to discuss their ideas with others and spent most of the lesson actively learning.

There were too few lessons of this quality. In some lessons, pupils spent long periods listening to their teacher and in others they were not well enough prepared for the tasks they were given. Pupils were usually attentive and eager to please but some were reluctant to start their work because they lacked the skills to tackle it effectively. Some pupils were given unnecessarily complicated tasks and, as a result, made very little progress. Sometimes pupils were encouraged to assess their levels of understanding and request help before they started but this did not happen in all classes.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced by a number of additional activities. Teachers link some subjects, when appropriate, in order to improve pupils' understanding and there are creativity weeks which help pupils to look at their work from a different perspective. Pupils are encouraged to develop their individual talents and specialist teaching rooms do much to support this. Very good provision is made for information and communication technology and this, combined with the increasing number of enterprise activities which are on offer, does much to prepare pupils for their future lives. While much about the curriculum is good, some pupils do not receive their full entitlement because they are withdrawn from some practical lessons, or lessons in which spiritual or cultural understanding is promoted, in order to spend extra time on English or mathematics. Although it is vital that pupils are literate and numerate, it is also essential that they understand the world in which they live.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 4**

There are significant weaknesses in the care, guidance and support provided for pupils. The leadership team does not adequately assess the potential risk posed by some activities or act quickly enough to manage those incidents which do occur. There are significant weaknesses in the care and support given to a very small proportion of the most vulnerable pupils. Some are not fully included in class or group activities and their needs are sometimes overlooked or neglected. Others are not monitored carefully enough to ensure that their behaviour does not cause distress or harm to others. The provision made for the very small proportion of pupils who have very complex needs is not monitored closely enough by the school and, as a result, emerging issues are not tackled quickly enough. Teaching assistants work hard and are committed to the pupils they support. However, they often deal with large groups of pupils with very diverse needs. This proves particularly difficult when one child in the group requires very intense one-to-one support but the remainder demand the time and attention of the teaching assistant. There is a trained counsellor on the staff and she provides support for pupils, carers and staff when appropriate. There have been some positive outcomes of the care provided by the school, most notably in the improved self-esteem and attendance of a small number of pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

The headteacher and leadership team have taken decisive and effective action to identify and tackle many key weaknesses in the school. Improvements are carefully planned and the extra funds which are now available have been used to good effect. There are effective partnerships with other schools, the local and wider community and most parents. These have enhanced the provision made for nearly all pupils.

The school does not monitor some of its actions sufficiently well and is not yet evaluative enough. Too much of the responsibility for leadership and management rests with the senior team and there are too few well established teachers to take on some of this work. As a result, some important roles and responsibilities are undertaken by staff who lack the training and experience to carry them out effectively.

The governing body is supportive of the school and pleased with the actions which have been taken. It is not yet acting as a 'critical friend' in order to ensure that the education and care provided for every child is of the very highest quality. As a result, leadership and management are inadequate because the provision made for a small proportion of the most vulnerable pupils is inadequate, potential risks are not identified rigorously enough and not all the necessary health and safety procedures are in place. However, the effectiveness of many of the actions taken in recent years, combined with the energy and determination of the leadership team, confirms that there is the capacity to tackle the few very important weaknesses which remain.



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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?	4
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?	3
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 <sup>1</sup> 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	4

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	4

<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>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
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?	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Grange Park Primary School, Sunderland, SR5 1EA

Thank you for being so helpful when I visited your school with Mrs Hilley and Mr Pattinson.

We were pleased with many of the things we saw. The school building is being improved and you have some very nice rooms in which to cook and have art, dance and drama lessons. Most of you are now making much better progress with your work and you have lots of opportunities to develop new skills during after-school clubs. Most of your parents are pleased with the improvements which have been made.

Some of you did not learn well enough in the past. This means that you have gaps in your knowledge and understanding. The headteacher and the staff want you to learn as much as you can so they arrange for you to do extra literacy and numeracy during the afternoons. Although this seems like a good idea, it means that you miss some very interesting and important lessons such as design and technology or RE. A group of children coming in and out of the classroom disrupts the learning of other pupils and makes things more difficult for your teachers. We think that many pupils could do just as well if they received some of this extra help during literacy and numeracy lessons. We enjoyed coming in to your lessons and looking at your work. We were a little concerned to see that some of you do not always do enough work during a lesson because you find it too difficult or, sometimes, too easy. I have asked the school to improve teaching so that you all learn as much as you can during every lesson.

You are very lucky at Grange Park because some very special children attend your school. It is good that they are included in your classes because they learn a lot from being with you and you can learn a lot from them. They need a great deal of determination and courage to do some of the very simple things that you take for granted and they have to work really hard all day long just to make sense of the world. By learning alongside them you will recognise that achievement and success can be measured in many different ways, all of which are equally valuable and important. Schools provide education and care. Although the education at your school is getting better the care, especially the care provided for some of the special children, is not yet good enough. I have asked the school to make sure that it improves.

We would also like the staff to do all they can to ensure that you are as safe as possible when you are at school. You can help with this. We were disappointed to see that a few children are not as caring towards others as they might be. This is not very nice even if it is done in 'fun'. I am sure that you and your parents would like everyone at Grange Park to feel safe, happy and valued.

Although a lot of very positive things happen in your school the things that need to be improved are very important. Because of this, we have decided to give your school a Notice to Improve. This means that inspectors will come back to the school later this year to make sure that things are getting better. We hope you will see the changes being made as quickly as possible.

We really enjoyed meeting you and listening to all that you had to say.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C E Graham HMI