

Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112584
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	310934
Inspection date	12 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Best

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	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bruce Bignell
Headteacher	Mr Mike Hannon
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Station Road Long Eaton Nottingham NG10 2DU
Telephone number	01159 734956
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' achievement in writing and science;
- the provision for more able pupils;
- the involvement of pupils in improving their work.

Evidence was gathered from observing lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's documentation and discussions with pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. When children start in the Nursery, usually on a part-time basis, their skills and experiences are slightly below those expected for their age. They become full-time in the Reception classes when they are four. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average but varies considerably between year groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need. Attendance is well above average and the proportion of children joining the school other than at the usual time is broadly average.

The school holds a number of awards, including Investors in People, Healthy Schools, and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is a Young Enterprise centre, a Teacher Development Agency (TDA) partnership development school, and an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) school. It was part of a pilot for extended schools provision and hosts a newly established Surestart centre. The headteacher took over at the start of this term. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher during the spring term following the departure of the previous headteacher at Christmas 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school providing a very high quality education for its pupils. Parents are delighted with the opportunities available for their children and they speak highly of the care and support of the staff. Comments, such as: 'We are proud to send our son to Grange School,' and 'The school produces well-rounded pupils with a great enthusiasm for learning,' are typical of parents' views.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their excellent attendance and exemplary behaviour. They are hardworking, confident, keen to take on responsibility and willingly engage in a wide range of activities. They especially value each other's friendship, and respect their peers' views and opinions. Led by the school's Mayor and the school council, pupils are fully involved in making decisions about, and playing their part in, the smooth running of the school. They also take an active part in the local community and raise large amounts of money for charities throughout the world. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping safe, support each other well through the playground 'buddy' system and say they have no hesitation in turning to adults when they need help or advice. Their enthusiastic adoption of healthy lifestyles reflects their involvement in planning healthy school lunch menus, running the tuck shop and participating in a wide range of sporting and other activities.

Outstanding leadership is at the heart of the school's success and sustained improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the way it has developed and implemented a first-class curriculum and extensive range of additional activities. These imaginatively promote pupils' achievement as well as their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and excellent personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work is outstanding because of their participation in Grangeton University, which includes courses in money management and running the school's radio and newspaper.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. The school has addressed successfully a dip in pupils' results in writing and science in 2006 and this improving trend has continued, with more pupils on track to reach the higher levels this year. Results at the end of Year 2 have also risen to above average levels and have been maintained despite the decline in the skills and experiences of children when they start school. Subject leaders have worked closely with class teachers to identify and develop the skills that pupils need to raise the standard of their work. The emphasis on promoting pupils' investigative and experimental skills and their writing for different purposes across the curriculum is enabling all pupils, and particularly the more able, to forge ahead. At the end of both key stages, boys are doing much better than boys nationally, reaching standards similar to, or above, the girls.

Achievement is outstanding. Pupils who work at higher levels maintain the momentum in their learning and a significant proportion makes well above expected progress, often overcoming learning difficulties to do so. This is because of the high quality of teaching and learning. Pupils have both the confidence and the will to learn because they are fulfilled by the school's provision. Pupils thrive on the justified praise staff give them for working hard and they take a real pride in their work. They are keen to share their thoughts and ideas, knowing that these are valued by adults and fellow pupils alike. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Lessons are very well managed and learning typically moves at a brisk pace. Across the school, there is a buzz of activity as pupils work independently and in small groups with adults. Pupils' targets

are challenging without being daunting, and they have an excellent understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and readily act on this. Just occasionally, however, learning goals are not focused enough on what pupils will learn. Staff cater very well for pupils' differing abilities and skills. Teaching assistants and volunteers are well briefed and give much valued support to pupils, particularly for those who find it hard to keep up.

Staff are highly committed to their pupils and know them well. Procedures for child protection and checking the suitability of adults are robust. Parents value the close partnership they enjoy with the school and the school maintains valuable links with a wide range of outside agencies and partner institutions, including local and national business and organisations. A strong and established leadership team has successfully steered the school through the change in headteacher and ensured an almost seamless transition, which has ensured pupils' continued improvement and progress. The new headteacher is settling in well and rapidly gaining the confidence and respect of pupils, parents and staff. All members of the school community enthusiastically articulate and share the leadership's vision. The school's priorities for development are challenging but achievable, and progress towards them rigorously checked. Self-evaluation procedures are robust, and involve all members of the school community and outside agencies. Judgements are accurate and well evidenced. However, the school recognises that the analysis of information about pupils' standards and progress, currently undertaken by both team and subject leaders, would be more efficient if a whole-school system for processing data was adopted. The governing body is very well led and does an excellent job in holding the school to account. The school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement and provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

When they enter the Nursery, children's skills and experiences are slightly below those expected for their age, particularly in their language and literacy development and in calculating in their mathematical development. They quickly settle into the Nursery routines and, as parents confirm, rapidly gain confidence and independence as the result of the wide range of interesting and engaging activities staff provide for them. The move to the Reception classes is carefully managed and children continue to make good progress in all areas of learning, with many making rapid gains in their communication and creative skills and in their personal development because of high quality teaching. The introduction of a new programme for teaching sounds and letters has been successful, particularly in helping boys to make faster progress in their early reading and writing skills. The Foundation Stage is well equipped but the designated area for outdoor learning is too cramped for the number of children involved, requiring many activities that would otherwise take place outside to be conducted inside. The Foundation Stage leader gives an excellent lead to the staff team who work very well together. They make regular checks on children's progress and use this information rigorously to plan the next steps in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision for outdoor learning in the Early Years unit.
- Implement a whole-school system for processing and analysing information about pupils' standards and progress.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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

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

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?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

13 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Primary School, Long Eaton NG10 2DU

When I met your Mayor and representatives of the School Council, I promised to write to you all to tell you about my visit to your school. I must thank you all very much for making me so welcome. I greatly enjoyed hearing about all the different things you do at school. I am very impressed by how mature you all are, both in lessons and in taking responsibility for so many jobs in your Grangeton community. And, what a superb range of courses you have to choose from at Grangeton University! I am truly delighted to hear how much you all enjoy your time in school.

When I visited the Reception classes, one of the boys told me that 'Grange Primary is the best school in England'. I think it is certainly one of the best and that is why I have described it as outstanding. You are absolutely right to be so proud of your school and you show this in your exemplary behaviour, excellent attendance and enthusiastic involvement in all aspects of school life. This is especially evident in the hard work you do in lessons, which is helping you achieve so well. Some of you find it difficult to keep up with everyone else but you try really hard and you tell me that you very much appreciate the extra help you get from the staff, volunteer helpers and your friends. That is great to hear. Others of you are able to work at a faster rate and your teachers make sure that you are challenged by the work they give you so that you can also achieve your very best. You get on really well with the staff. They care and support you really well. I am particularly pleased that you know what you have to do to improve your work and are determined to do so.

Mr Hannon has only just become headteacher at the school but you tell me he is listening a lot to what you have to say about your work and your ideas to help the school get even better. This is just the sort of help he needs to help him understand how the school works. He has a strong staff team and hardworking governors to help him maintain and further improve the school. I have suggested two things that may help them. First, the outside area in the Early Years unit is not big enough for the number of children in the classes and needs to be expanded. Second, although teachers have a really good idea of how well you are doing, they could save time and a lot of work if they all used the same system for keeping track of this information.

Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Mike Best

Lead inspector