

# Griffydam Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119918
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313444
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Dakin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ursula Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	Top Road Griffydam Coalville LE67 8HU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 222281
<b>Fax number</b>	01530 222281

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small rural primary school takes pupils from the hamlet of Griffydam, but most come from further afield. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion identified as having learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. Children's attainment when they start school is similar to that found nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils flourish both socially and academically. Pupils' achievement is good and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. Good teaching means that children get a good start in the Reception Year and then continue to make good progress in the rest of the school. Throughout the school, teachers have caring relationships with the pupils, are generally well organised and plan interesting activities. Teachers work hard to ensure that the differing needs of pupils are met in most lessons. However, occasionally there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils, and this slows their progress. The school provides these pupils with additional activities outside lessons, such as the 'Mega-Maths' club to ensure that they are given good challenge at other times. Pupils who are struggling or need additional help are supported well by skilled teaching assistants. The effective use of targets helps pupils to understand how to improve their work. Members of staff care well for the pupils, ensuring that personal development is good. Working within the school's calm, happy and welcoming atmosphere, pupils develop good social skills and grow in confidence and self-esteem. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education and quickly develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a good range of activities outside lessons which, as they say, 'make school fun' and enrich the already good curriculum. Pupils especially enjoy their residential trips that are available to even the youngest pupils. The school is working hard to develop links between different subjects in order to make learning even more purposeful and this is very well established in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils do not get enough opportunities to write purposefully in different subjects, which limits opportunities for practising and improving writing skills and slowing progress in some classes.

The headteacher knows the school well and her purposeful leadership has been instrumental in its success since the last inspection. There are good systems for finding out how well the school is doing, which include extensive use of data to check pupils' progress from year to year. There are many new subject leaders. They are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring provision but this is not yet rigorous enough to ensure that minor inconsistencies in provision are picked up quickly. The school sets itself challenging targets for improvement, and standards continue to rise. There are ambitious plans to develop provision further and the school is well placed to realise its aspirations.

Parents contribute well to their children's achievement by supporting learning at home. Inspectors agree with the views of parents that in some classes, the gap between parent and teacher consultation meetings is too long and this has occasionally hindered communication between home and school. Nevertheless, most parents are very happy with the school. One parent summed up the views of many by writing, 'I am impressed by the warm and friendly atmosphere and the frequent activities that involve all pupils and foster a sense of belonging and responsibility'. This comment accurately captures the essence of this successful school.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception Year. By the time they start in Year 1, most children are working at or beyond the levels expected for their age. Teaching is good because members of staff explain tasks clearly, enabling children to gain good knowledge and to become confident about asking questions. For example, children talk authoritatively about what they have just learnt about the lives of penguins. Interesting practical activities, linked to a shared

theme, help children to enjoy school and take part in purposeful work, both indoors and outside. However, there are occasions when teachers over-direct activities. At these times, children have insufficient chances to develop independence by making choices and thinking for themselves. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good, and members of staff work together well to create a calm working atmosphere. This helps children to work together sensibly. Teachers maintain thorough assessments of children's progress, which helps them to plan well. There are good links with parents before children start school and clear plans to extend links with pre-school providers to make transition even smoother.

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

- ensure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of the most able pupils and challenge them appropriately in their work
- give pupils in Years 3 to 6 more opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects
- strengthen the role of subject leaders in monitoring the work of the school so that minor inconsistencies in provision are picked up quickly.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress in the Reception Year, where individual needs are met well. This good rate of overall progress is maintained in Years 1 to 6. Consequently, standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and rise to well above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. In English, progress is more even across the school in reading than in writing. This is because opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in subjects across the whole curriculum are not consistent from class to class. Good quality support means that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well. The school is particularly successful at making sure that nearly all pupils reach nationally expected levels by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. More able pupils make good progress most of the time but there are occasions in lessons when the work they are given does not stretch them enough. When this happens, their pace of learning slows. Pupils' listening skills have improved since the last inspection and are now good.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well at work and at play. Their good attendance demonstrates their thorough enjoyment of school. Pupils are keen to learn and work hard, although occasionally they become a little restless towards the end of lengthy whole-class discussions. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and show this, for example by exercising vigorously in the adventure play area during the playtimes, which they say they especially enjoy. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, they explain clearly how to cross safely the busy road near the school. Good relationships ensure that most pupils are confident in approaching teachers or other adults if they have any worries.

Pupils are friendly and thoughtful. This is evident in the way that older pupils organise events to raise considerable funds for charity. Pupils happily take part in worthwhile projects such as a recent 'Trinidadian Carnival', and this helps to ensure that their awareness of cultures other than their own is satisfactory.

Diligently collecting fruit waste as part of their 'Little Rotters' scheme and older pupils supporting younger ones well in mathematics by spending five minutes each day as their 'number buddies' are both illustrations of the responsibility shown by pupils to each other and the wider community. These activities, along with pupils' good progress in developing basic skills, prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers provide interesting activities that ensure that pupils enjoy school. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils were very enthusiastic because the teacher made imaginative use of a computer program about dogs to improve their understanding of punctuation. Members of staff use praise well and this contributes effectively to the good relationships they have with pupils. Pupils know what they are expected to do because explanations and instructions are clear and teachers ask good questions to aid understanding. However, there are occasions when teachers' expectations for the more able pupils are not high enough and at these times, these pupils make less progress than they could. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for small groups, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, ensuring that they make good progress.

A few parents raised concerns about the quality of homework. Inspectors found that homework is used well in most year groups, but this good practice is not consistent from class to class.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school places a strong emphasis on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills and this has a good effect on standards. Links between subjects are being established and are an especially strong feature of work in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, this is less well developed and pupils have too few opportunities to write independently, rather than copy write, in different subjects. Nationally recognised programmes are used well to support less able pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils' learning is brought to life by a wide range of interesting additional activities. For example, residential visits for all year groups, including children in the Reception Year, support personal and academic skills effectively. Special themed days give pupils good opportunities to work together and to learn new skills. For example, pupils made very attractive masks during a recent Italian day. A good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education effectively contributes to pupils' personal development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Members of staff know each pupil well and, as a result, they provide good pastoral care. As one parent noted, 'Adults are very caring and the family atmosphere in the school is a huge factor in ensuring that both the social and educational needs of each child are met'. The school has good links with outside agencies and robust systems for safeguarding pupils' well-being.

Academic support is good. Pupils' academic progress is monitored carefully, especially in English and mathematics. Most pupils know their targets in these subjects and this gives them a clear

understanding of how to improve their work. The school is correct in identifying the need to improve the rigour in monitoring progress in science. The school identifies and supports pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities well and sets them clear individual education plans that are regularly monitored and reviewed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The drive and commitment of the headteacher have been key factors in the good improvements in the school since the last inspection. Her high aspirations for the school are shared by all members of staff. Systems for finding out how well the school is doing are good and the headteacher has an accurate picture of overall school effectiveness. Members of staff work together well and a new team of subject leaders is beginning to take a more active role in monitoring teaching and learning. Their involvement in other monitoring by, for example, sampling work or analysing data is less well developed. This means that minor inconsistencies in provision are not being always picked up quickly enough. For example, the variations from class to class in the use of writing skills to support learning in different subjects have not been identified by leaders.

Governors are very supportive and they take a good part in planning for school improvement. Good financial planning has helped the school to extend accommodation significantly over the last three years. The positive impact of this can be seen, for example in the greatly improved sporting provision in the school.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## 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?	2
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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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

<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	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 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?	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

4 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Griffydam Primary School, Coalville, LE67 8HU

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly and you behaved well. We are pleased that you attend a good school and are able to learn in such a lovely setting.

Some of the things we found out about your school:

- Good teaching helps you to learn well and to make good progress overall.
- Younger children get a super start in the Reception Classes, where you work together well and adults plan exciting work for you to do indoors and outside
- You are taught all the things you should be and you thoroughly enjoy school, especially the many clubs, visits and visitors. The residential visits sound as if they are great fun.
- You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. The 'Little Rotters' club helps you learn about taking care of the environment.
- All adults in school are very kind and caring and they give you good help with your work.
- Your headteacher and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.
- Most of your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- make sure that teachers always give you work that is hard enough, especially for those of you who learn quickly
- give pupils in Years 3 to 6 more opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects
- give teachers who are in charge of subjects more opportunities to find out what needs improving.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard at all times.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Capper Lead Inspector