

Greyfriars Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121021
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313841
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Penny Holden

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Plant
Headteacher	Mr Paul Shanks
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	London Road King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 5PY
Telephone number	01553 773087
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Greyfriars Primary is a larger than average sized one and a half form entry school in King's Lynn in Norfolk. Pupils enter school with well below average attainment. An average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language is just below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Fifteen pupils transfer into the school in Year 3 from a separate infant school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'We could not have picked a better school than Greyfriars', is one of the many positive comments from parents received by the inspection team. Greyfriars Primary is a good school. Teamwork and consistently good support for the pupils are key characteristics. Since the last inspection there has been considerable change in the school; many staff are different and there are more pupils with complex learning needs. Effective steps have been taken to bring about improvements since the previous inspection. Since taking post four years ago the current headteacher has worked persistently with staff to improve teaching, assessment and the curriculum to raise standards. The senior leadership team and the governing body have worked well together for these developments and thus leadership and management are very good. It has not been easy to achieve improvements in results quickly, it has required considerable determination to persevere. However, these efforts have paid off; from very low starting points, pupils now make good progress throughout the school. There is a very detailed and accurate system for tracking pupils' achievements to check they make enough progress. This includes analysing the rate of progress of different groups of pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. If progress appears to be slower than expected, pupils receive extra or different support. Pupils learning English as an additional language take advantage of all that is offered and make very good progress. Standards are rising and are now broadly in line with the national average.

The school is very effective in ensuring all pupils, including those who have complex needs, are included in all aspects of school life. Some have challenging behaviour and are managed with warmth, respect and dignity. A parent stated, 'My child has special needs and receives a high standard of support.' Great care is taken to induct the pupils arriving in Year 3 from the nearby infant school to help them settle well. In the oldest classes, pupils are taught in ability sets for core subjects to enable teachers to focus the difficulty of work accurately. Whilst reading and writing standards have improved, pupils' skill in talking formally about their ideas is not strong. Regular observation, monitoring and development of teaching have made teaching good overall. Some individual teachers have reacted well to coaching and become very effective teachers, but not every teacher has learnt as much as possible from the good strategies used by others.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and contribute strongly to the improvements in standards. This is because the pupils take responsibility for the part they play in school life and for their learning. School life is made interesting by a rich and exciting curriculum. Many exceptional adults visit the pupils and share their experiences and ideas. Pupils take part in activities beyond the school curriculum and outside the school that bring their work to life and expand their horizons. Pupils are developing their skills as citizens and becoming well-rounded and thoughtful young people.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into the happy environment of the Reception classes. This is because of the support of staff who make children feel valued, secure, increasingly confident and ready to learn. As a consequence, they begin to thrive and make at least satisfactory progress. In some areas their progress is good. Many are on target to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Interesting activities are planned, based on careful assessment, which contribute to effective teaching and good support from teaching assistants. Staff are

working hard to offer a better balance between teacher-led and meaningful child-initiated activities. This includes increasing the number of activities, which follow themes, and giving children opportunities to practise what they have learnt in a variety of ways. There is now an attractive outdoor area. Leaders recognise that the quality of the planning and resources offered for children's work outdoors do not yet match their indoor experience.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the balance between planned, child-initiated and independent work, indoors and outdoors, to reinforce newly acquired skills in Reception.
- Develop pupils' ability to speak clearly and confidently, explaining their ideas in a variety of situations.
- Share effective teaching techniques, such as how to use the interactive whiteboard as a learning tool not just a board, more widely.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In 2007, standards for pupils in Year 2 and for those in Year 6 were below average. However, attainment throughout the school is now broadly average and improving with school data showing that this year pupils are predicted to achieve the national average. Most children achieve well in the Foundation Stage in relation to their starting points. Pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress in lessons. There is little variation in the achievement of different groups, including those who join the school in Year 3, as progress is generally good and standards are broadly average. Many of the pupils with complex needs make significant progress. A clear example of the improvements made in standards is seen by comparing Year 3 in 2005 and 2007. In 2007 twice as many pupils made good progress in writing than they did in 2005. Local authority data shows that pupils at Greyfriars make significantly better progress than those in other similar schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Children behave well. They enjoy their education, especially in creative, practical and physical activities and in the many clubs that they attend. Attendance is satisfactory. The school is working hard to reduce absences; the attendance rate is improving steadily helped by the work of the parent support advisor. Children know how to make safe and healthy choices. They tuck into nutritious lunches when they are available and willingly take part in a range of physical and sporting activities. Children have a good awareness of the risks of drugs, alcohol, traffic and strangers. Many act as prefects, corridor 'Watchers' and represent their classmates extremely well on the school council. Children learn how to work together and follow instructions. They are extremely keen and willing to contribute to the community through charity work and other activities. The good personal and basic skills they develop help to prepare them well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. There is a strong team approach which includes teaching assistants and their effective contribution to pupils' progress. Staff deal with pupils respectfully, enthusing and encouraging them to work hard. Lessons are interesting, planned thoroughly and subsequently evaluated to check what worked and what did not work for each pupil. This ensures that good learning takes place. Marking is thorough and consistent. As a result, pupils know what they have done well and how to improve further. Staff use pupils' individual targets, which pupils know and understand well, to focus effort on what is most important. Teachers reinforce literacy and numeracy skills well throughout the curriculum. The rigorous focus on each pupil's achievement ensures that no pupil is overlooked. Pupils are keen to answer questions and share their ideas but too many lack the confidence and articulation to do so with the fluency they show in their writing. Sometimes, pupils sit and listen for too long because the teacher focuses on setting a task rather than on the learning that is to take place. Some teachers use interactive whiteboards as substitute blackboards rather than learning aids. In Reception classes there are too few child-initiated or planned, independent activities to let children practise new skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. It goes beyond the required subjects, with themed topics and projects giving opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in a variety of ways. The inclusion of active and practical learning brings topics alive and provides lasting memories for pupils. For example, pupils talk with glee about dressing in costume and re-enacting historical battles. Many notable visitors, including well-known authors and trips to places of interest add to the quality of learning. The pleasant library adds considerably to pupils' love of books and reading. Strong partnerships with local schools, colleges and parents bring additional experiences, resources and voluntary support. A well thought out programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is highly successful in helping to ensure the remarkable progress in pupils' personal development. There is a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities, including sports, the arts and environmental pursuits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The very detailed, termly tracking of pupils' progress is a great tool for improvement. There are clear procedures for promptly identifying barriers to progress and outlining appropriate intervention strategies to support pupils who are failing to make sufficient improvement. There are regular and effective reviews of these interventions. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are robust and staff play their part in the process well.

There is a robust pastoral system with good PSHCE provision. All pupils are integrated into class work and routines however challenging their behaviour. Pupils have good opportunities for personal development. They are given real responsibilities and take part in a wide range of

activities all of which help them understand the world in which they live and give relevance to their work in class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is a thread that runs through the work of the school. The senior leadership team and subject leaders ensure that provision is consistent and effective through rigorous monitoring and development. The headteacher skilfully makes the most of each individual's strengths so all contribute fully. Staff feel valued and clear about their roles in helping learners to be taught and protected well. The school is using challenging targets to raise standards for all learners very effectively. Governance is good. The governing body, senior leaders and staff demonstrate good capacity to improve even further. The focus on Greyfriars being an inclusive school ensures that learners are able to achieve their potential.

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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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

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?	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

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

10 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greyfriars Primary School, King's Lynn, PE30 5PY

Thank you so much for telling us about the school and your work. It was fun coming on World Book Day and seeing so many pirates, princesses and Pucks. Even some of your teachers and lunchtime staff were dressed up as book characters. It gave us an insight into how everyone tries to make Greyfriars an interesting place so that you enjoy your learning. We noticed all the exciting visitors you have had and the great trips you go on. So many of you and your parents told us what a happy school it is and how you enjoy being there.

We were very interested to hear from the school council how they applied for their jobs and do their best to represent you all. Many of you, including the 'Watchers' and the prefects, showed us how keen you are to do your jobs and take responsibility for helping others. We noticed you are very kind to other children and want to behave well for the adults. You have a good choice of food at lunch and know what is the healthiest. You like sport, making things and performing, and love taking part in all the activities the school gives you. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons and looking at your work. So many of you take great care with your work, try hard and make good progress. We were amazed how well you all know your targets and what they mean; this really helps you to learn. Your teachers keep a very close eye on how well you are learning and if you have difficulty they give you extra help or different work to make sure you understand. They plan interesting lessons for you and are good at helping you learn. We agree with you that Greyfriars Primary is a good school.

We have asked the teachers to give Reception children more work that lets them practise new skills. We want you to have more opportunities to talk formally about your ideas. We want the teachers to swap good teaching ideas, such as ways of using the interactive whiteboard.

Thanks you for making our visit to Greyfriars so enjoyable.

Best wishes,

Penny Holden,

Lead inspector