

Harrogate, Grove Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121395
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313974
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Liz Askew
Headteacher	Mr Tony Winfield
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Grove Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 5EP
Telephone number	01423 506060
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Grove Road is a larger than average primary school serving an area of above average socio-economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including a group with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, is much higher than average. The number of pupils holding a statement of special educational need is higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, as is the number of pupils who do not speak English as their first language. A significant number of pupils from other countries, speaking little or no English, arrive at the school at various times throughout the year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Grove Road provides an outstanding standard of education. It is recognised by parents as a first-class primary school and is described as a little community within the community. This is a truly inclusive school; no matter the ability or background of the pupils, all succeed extremely well. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and these comments sum up the views of many: 'I can't praise the school enough;' 'The school is a fantastic place in every way;' 'I would not hesitate to recommend Grove Road to any of my friends.'

The school has a diverse mix of pupils, including a significant number recently arrived in the country, few of whom, on entry to the school, speak English. While it takes those pupils a little time to settle in, the careful attention to their needs means that in time they achieve very highly. One parent commented, 'Although coming from another country with no English language, my children soon felt comfortable and caught up very fast.' From starting points that are very variable, but well below those typically expected overall, pupils reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 6. All pupils, regardless of ability, make exceptional progress because of the excellent focused support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Parents feel this too and say, 'The school and its teachers have had a hugely positive effect on our children's education.' Teaching is inspirational and, because pupils have such a positive attitude, this has a tremendous effect on their achievement. The work in lessons is very carefully tailored to the needs of all pupils. The most able are challenged particularly well. Pupils are carefully guided to reflect on how well they are doing. They know how to improve their work and support each other well. One pupil commented, 'This is a nice school to learn in - you learn lots of new things every day'. Pupils are confident, articulate and very respectful of adults and of each other. They understand very well what it means to be healthy and to be safe. They accurately rate behaviour as '10 out of 10'. They value the excellent range of enrichment activities and feel that the school values pupils. They are proud of the part they have played in getting new equipment for the playground, books for the library and scales for problem solving in mathematics. When asked to describe their school, pupils said, 'It's a nice, caring and kind school.'

Central to the success of the school is the dedication and hard work of the headteacher. Together with his leadership team and staff, he works tirelessly to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education. He has instilled a common purpose among all the staff of accountability, self-reflection and a determination to drive up standards. Governors know and challenge the school very well. The school is aware of what it needs to do to improve and has many strategies in place to help raise achievement even higher. While action plans to bring about improvements are very detailed, success criteria are not always clear enough. As a result, information about improvements is sometimes not shared effectively enough. The strong emphasis the school places on respect and the social and emotional welfare of its pupils has rightfully earned it accolades among other local authority schools. This, along with the many improvements that have been made recently, means that the school has an excellent capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age overall, but it is a mixed profile. There are many children who have spent a very short time in the country and speak no

English, and also a significant number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils make outstanding progress throughout Nursery and Reception and leave Reception with standards just slightly below national expectations overall. Pupils who spent all of their time in the Foundation Stage achieve more highly than those who enter throughout the two years. The outstanding progress is due to excellent teaching, an outstanding curriculum and exemplary care, guidance and support. Children learn readily from a very wide and comprehensive range of play experiences. Role play is particularly strong with 'cars visiting the petrol station' and 'washing being hung on the line'. Support for basic skills is very strong with imaginative writing areas. Children enjoy a wide range of creative experiences and are very proud of the outcomes of their work. Learning experiences are well focused to promote speaking, listening and independent thinking. Links with parents are particularly strong. Parents are encouraged to participate fully in the learning experiences and assessment of their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine action plans with clearer criteria against which success may be measured and thus communicated more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils, regardless of ability or background, make outstanding progress throughout their time in school. This includes higher-attaining pupils, those for whom English is not their first language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, along with a significant group of pupils who have social and emotional difficulties. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2 standards in all subjects are just below those typically seen nationally. This is particularly impressive given the number of pupils who enter the school during Years 1 and 2, many of whom speak little or no English. Progress from Year 2 to Year 6 is outstanding and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in all areas, including mathematics, science and English. This includes those pupils who started school speaking little or no English. This outstanding progress is due to the very mature attitude of pupils and to teachers encouraging them to be self-reflective about their behaviour and learning. The school has excellent tracking systems to identify any pupil who is underachieving and is addressing this with well thought out focused support of these pupils and their families.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. They are exceedingly proud of their school experiences, particularly new experiences in mathematics, spoken English and reading. Children feel exceedingly safe and secure in the school environment. They report that behaviour couldn't be better. They understand very well what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and the benefits of taking on responsibilities. For example, they enjoy being 'befrienders' in the playground. Pupils are determined to improve the level of their achievement and engage actively in the evaluation of their own work and that of other pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are very aware of how to behave and interact with others, because of the school focus on respect. Pupils have strong links with cultural and environmental issues through school initiatives such as sponsoring a child in Pakistan, fund-raising for local charities and a variety of links with local commercial enterprises and local schools. This, along

with their excellent achievement in all basic skills and independence in learning, prepares them extremely well for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The combination of enthusiastic and highly effective teaching along with pupils' readiness to learn results in teaching and learning that is excellent. Respect for others has a high focus throughout the school, including in lessons. Pupils listen carefully to instructions from the teacher and to the views of other pupils so that they achieve highly. Thorough lesson planning and proactive support from teaching assistants ensures that the needs of all pupils are met very well. Pupils show a high level of interest and enjoyment in learning. They are enthused by interesting lessons and one remarked, 'We get to do fun things in lessons like maths games.' Pupils are encouraged to play an active part in lessons, through initiatives such as 'response partners'. They feel that they are in charge of their own learning by assessing how well they have met their learning outcomes. In an outstanding lesson on writing, they were carefully guided to assess sensitively how well others had achieved. In addition, many were able to offer their peers detailed points for improvement. Books are marked regularly and comments inform pupils clearly of the next steps they need to take in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an extremely well thought out range of learning experiences, linked well to the needs of all pupils. The excellent links between subjects and the incorporation of literacy and numeracy targets in all areas enhance learning very well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy using information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons, particularly the interactive whiteboards, and say that this makes learning fun.

An integral part of the curriculum is teaching children about being socially and emotionally ready to learn. They are taught how to respect others and express their feelings in a most sensitive way. Being reflective about the consequences of what they do and how this affects their learning has a clear impact on the progress of all pupils, not just those who have emotional and social difficulties. Pupils benefit greatly from a wide range of enrichment activities. After-school clubs range from many sporting activities to drama and 'Urban Funk' dance. Pupils talked most enthusiastically to the inspectors about word patterns such as 'fish and chips' or 'stick it up your jumper' to help them learn rhythms during a visit from an African drummer. The extended school involves both parents and pupils exceptionally well. This actively improves parents' knowledge and participation so that there is a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding care and support in a family-like environment, along with very strong academic guidance, ensures that pupils' achievement and personal development are both excellent. Parents recognise this and their views are summed up by the comment, 'The head and all his staff are to be commended for their care and support.' The culture of respect and the emphasis on getting children ready to learn are a core part of the school's ethos. This, along with praise and positive rewards, leads to pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are encouraged

to look after one another and they say that an adult is always available if they have any concerns. Staff pay careful attention to health and safety, including risk assessments, which are regularly monitored. Child protection arrangements are robust and the school works extremely well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Throughout the school, pupils are fully involved in assessing and evaluating how well they are doing. They are given very clear advice on how to improve their work, using child-friendly 'clouds and bricks'. There are outstanding partnerships with parents, who are strongly encouraged to play a major part in their children's education. The quote, 'I go to different activities for parents and take my baby with me, which is OK with school,' exemplifies this partnership well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Parents are in no doubt that leadership and management of the school, under the clear direction of the headteacher, play a most important part in the school's success. They value the extremely effective communication from the school and express this through these comments, typical of many, 'The staff, including the headteacher are exceptional' and, 'The headteacher's door is always open and he is never too busy to discuss any matters.' The headteacher leads by example. He has a high profile around the school and his enthusiasm is mirrored by all the staff. Middle leaders feel empowered, valued and very well supported, so that there is a common purpose in wanting to drive up standards. Pupils are set targets that are challenging and there are rigorous systems in place for identifying any underachievement early. The school has highlighted the key areas for improvement and has detailed action plans in place to address these. However, improvements are not easily communicated to others as these plans do not have clear ways of measuring success. The school works extremely well in partnership with others to maximise the achievement of its pupils. Governors know the school extremely well and are increasingly holding it to account.

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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	2
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	2
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

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

We really enjoyed our inspection of your school. You made us feel very welcome. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing all the interesting work that you do. You said that your school is an excellent school and we agree with you.

Here are some of the things we liked best about your school.

- You really look forward to your lessons and your behaviour is excellent.
- You are developing excellent personal skills - we particularly liked the way you are very polite and look after each other.
- You know how to stay healthy by eating the right food and by taking plenty of exercise.
- You have very interesting lessons and many opportunities for clubs after school.
- Your teachers give you very good advice on how to improve your work so you can achieve very well.
- Adults in school make sure you are safe and very well cared for.
- The leaders and teachers have improved the school and are always trying to make it even better.

There is one thing that we have asked the school to improve.

- We would like the school to have clearer ways of measuring how well it is doing.

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us during our inspection. We would like to wish you all the very best for the future.