

Grimes Dyke Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107924
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	319288
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Brenda McIntosh

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Pace
Headteacher	Mrs Diana Mann
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2006
School address	Stanks Drive Leeds West Yorkshire LS14 5BY
Telephone number	0113 2941066
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Introduction

When Grimes Dyke Primary School was inspected in October 2006 it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. Subsequently, Ofsted inspectors have made four visits to monitor the school's progress. This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than average. It serves an area of some considerable social and economic disadvantage. The majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average; the number with a statement of special educational need is well above average. In addition, the school has a speech and language resource provision for eight pupils who have statements of special educational need. These pupils are taught in classes alongside other pupils. A sizeable proportion of pupils are vulnerable and a small number are in the care of the local authority. The school has had significant staffing difficulties over a number of years and has suffered a very high turnover of staff. It is now in a position to start the new academic year in September 2008 with the same teaching staff as for the current year.

The school has received the Inclusion Charter Mark, the Healthy School Award and the Stephen Lawrence Education Award Level 1. It was successfully accredited with the Investor in People status for the third time in November 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school now provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and satisfactory value for money. When it was inspected in 2006, fundamental aspects of its work were not good enough, these included pupils' achievement, attendance, teaching, and leadership and management. Despite the instability in staffing, there have been significant improvements in all these areas. As a result of better teaching and sharply focused management, gaps in pupils' learning caused by past underachievement are gradually being overcome. Consequently, all pupils, including those in the speech and language resource provision, are now making satisfactory progress. In working towards this goal the headteacher has been very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. They have drawn together an energetic, enthusiastic committed senior leadership team and together they have established robust systems to check pupils' progress and enable the school to move forward. Thorough monitoring of lessons and pupils' work has led to improvements so that the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory and improving. The best teaching keeps pupils fully engaged in their learning through practical, imaginative activities set at the right level of challenge. However, sometimes teaching lacks these good qualities which the pupils need to maintain their interest and get the most out of their learning.

Although standards are improving, they remain below average overall and could still be higher. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Throughout the school some variations in standards and achievement are evident in different subjects due to the previous shortcomings in teaching. The school has understandably given priority to improving pupils' performance in English and mathematics and, in particular, to improving standards in writing. This strategy is proving particularly successful in English. School data indicate that for pupils in the current Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The school recognises that science has not received enough attention recently and is taking suitable steps to remedy this. The excellent systems for tracking every pupil's progress underpin the improving standards and achievement. Challenging targets are set for pupils and their progress towards these is checked through regular assessment. Those falling behind are quickly spotted and helped to get back on track through a range of effective programmes of support.

The school has made a start on redesigning the curriculum by giving a greater emphasis to linking different subjects to make it more exciting and responsive to pupils' needs and interests. However, it does not yet provide sufficient systematic opportunities across all subjects to help pupils develop and practise their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils receive a high level of care and pastoral support. The strong team of staff provides valuable support to those pupils who are particularly vulnerable. Consistent management of pupils' behaviour and improved systems of rewards and sanctions mean that pupils are clear about what is expected of them. As a result, pupils' behaviour is now good. Those pupils with specific behavioural difficulties are increasingly aware of how to control their emotions and stay calm. Pupils are responding appropriately to the improvements in school life. Their attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. Pupils have a good understanding about keeping safe and healthy and they love taking part in all the sporting activities and competitions on offer.

In bringing about the significant improvements seen in the school, the leadership, including governors, have demonstrated that the school has a good capacity to improve further. These improvements have had a positive effect on all aspects of school life and the environment for learning is much improved.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start the Nursery with skills that are at a low level, particularly their communication, personal and social skills. Parents value the way staff work closely with them to help their children settle happily into their new surroundings. Consistently good teaching enables the children to make good progress, although by the time they leave Reception their skills are still below those expected for their age. A high priority is given to developing the children's personal and communication skills by engaging them in purposeful dialogue and questioning. Consequently, the children achieve particularly well in their reading and writing skills and in developing their independence and social skills. Children enjoy learning. They persevere with their tasks whether they have chosen them for themselves or been directed to them by the staff. The classrooms are attractive, well resourced and provide a calm and purposeful learning environment. The Foundation Stage staff work very effectively as a team. They plan imaginative, exciting activities both inside and outdoors, which capture the children's interests and ensure they have fun. The assessment systems have been improved and now present a more accurate picture of children's achievements than in previous years. Close observations and careful recording of children's progress enable the staff to focus precisely on the next steps in learning for each child. At the start of this academic year there was extensive renovation to the Foundation Stage building and a complete new staff team. The Foundation Stage staff together with the headteacher have led and managed the developments effectively to ensure good quality provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in all subjects but particularly in science and mathematics.
- Ensure all teaching engages pupils fully and provides the right level of challenge to enable them to get the most out of their learning.
- Provide systematic opportunities across the curriculum to enable pupils to extend their literacy and numeracy skills.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In 2007, the results at Key Stage 2 were exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. This was no surprise to the school because its tracking data accurately reflected this picture. In this key stage, in particular, deficits in teaching and instability in staffing have led in the past to underachievement. This was especially so for the boys. It is no longer the case and all pupils now achieve satisfactorily. The school's data for the current Year 6 pupils show pupils are making good progress and reaching broadly average standards in English, and satisfactory progress resulting in below average standards in mathematics. Performance in science is lagging behind for this group of pupils. The data also show that boys have achieved better than girls

in all subjects. Present standards in Year 2 are well below average because of the lower starting points of a higher proportion of the pupils and, hence, these standards represent satisfactory achievement for this group of pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable groups make satisfactory progress overall and sometimes better because they receive effective support. The school is making effective use of challenging targets to accelerate pupils' progress and help raise standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils talk about improved behaviour, more interesting lessons and more exciting things to do. These improvements are increasing pupils' enthusiasm for school. Attendance is average and improving. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping fit and healthy and put this into action by making very good use of the wide range of opportunities for sport and playtime games. At lunchtimes the school field is a hive of activity with active supervisors overseeing and organising a whole range of physical activities. Consequently, pupils play safely and their behaviour is good. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and other adults. Their attitudes to work are variable but satisfactory overall. In lessons, they are generally interested in their learning, although sometimes, when an adult is not working closely with the pupils they find it difficult to remain on task and then their learning slows and they become distracted. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are developing positive self-esteem and have an increasing ability to make the right choices for their own actions and how to behave. The majority of pupils behave well. Very few pupils now display challenging behaviour due to effective support. The number of exclusions has reduced again during the current year. Pupils have limited opportunities to take on responsibilities but are keen to do so when given the chance. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils are relishing their task of organising a 'Mini Olympics'. Given that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are now progressing, they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching. Rigorous monitoring and effective support have led to a greater consistency in teaching and a sharper focus on pupils' learning. Lessons have clear learning objectives and teachers use questioning well to get pupils to think for themselves. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively and consistently. The best teaching is characterised by fast pace and a good variety of activities to keep pupils interested and engaged. Most teachers use assessment well to plan the next steps in learning but there are still some instances where the pace of learning is too slow and the level of challenge is not set at the right level to meet pupils' needs; work being too easy or too difficult. Sometimes, teaching also lacks the qualities which help the pupils to maintain their interest and get the most out of their learning. Teachers' marking provides helpful comments so that pupils know how to improve their work. Teaching assistants successfully support those who find learning more difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum gives due priority to literacy and numeracy. The success of the new approach to teaching writing this year is seen in the improved standards across the school. This has led to pupils' increased motivation for writing, particularly for boys. Throughout the school, teachers are providing more opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The school has recently reverted to the National Strategy for teaching literacy. Teachers are embracing it with confidence and great enthusiasm but it has yet to be embedded fully. The curriculum is supported well by a good range of enrichment activities, particularly in sports, which make a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment and adoption of healthy lifestyles. The school is at an early stage of making connections between subjects and, therefore, there are limited opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. A strength of the curriculum is the programme for developing pupils' personal, social and health education. The school makes good use of the outdoors to enhance pupils' learning as seen in the recent 'Environment Week' which included pond dipping, planting and recycling.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A high level of support is given to individuals or groups of pupils who are vulnerable or experiencing problems of any kind. Pupils say that they feel safe, and know who to turn to if they have any concerns. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils are secure and fully in place. The social and emotional aspects of the learning programme together with effective support from professional agencies contribute very well to pupils' well-being. Challenges such as 'I can change my behaviour for the better' are really helping pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and improve their self-discipline. The school has a small minority of challenging pupils. It is successfully including them by offering alternatives to exclusion, defusing situations and offering emotional and behavioural support. This is having a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviour. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the resource provision receive effective support so they achieve as well as others. The school is successfully promoting better attendance and punctuality. Highly effective systems for tracking the progress of all groups of pupils ensure that help can be targeted where it is needed. These systems are bearing fruit as seen in rising standards but they have yet to impact fully.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Exemplary systems for analysing standards and achievement provide a clear overview of pupils' progress and are helping to secure the necessary improvements throughout the school. Improved procedures and effectiveness of the leadership enable the school to evaluate its provision accurately, identify priorities for future development and plan how these will be achieved. However, the school recognises that it is as yet 'early days' and the full impact of these improvements has yet to be seen in rising standards. The school shares its successes with confidence. For example, its systems for tracking pupils' progress are now used in other schools. The school has been well supported by Education Leeds in developing robust procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching which have resulted in

improvements to pupils' learning. The development of leadership skills, including those of the headteacher, has been a key priority. The roles of senior and middle leaders are clear and understood. Well focused training and support is enabling them to carry out their responsibilities more effectively. This increase in the skills of leaders at all levels is having a positive impact on the school's vision to raise standards and its capacity to improve further. Systems for supporting vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are comprehensive and efficiently managed. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in governance, which is now good. Governors, too, have developed their skills well and are much clearer about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are using their expertise well to provide both challenge and support to the senior leaders.

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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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ 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	3

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	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	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Inspection of Grimes Dyke Primary School, Leeds, LS14 5BY

On behalf of the inspectors I am writing to tell you the judgements we made about your school following the recent inspection. Thank you for being welcoming and helpful to the other inspectors and me. As you know, your school has been in 'special measures' for some time now. You were keen to talk to us and tell us just how much it has improved and we agree. Your school has improved so much that it no longer needs 'special measures'. We think that you now get a satisfactory education. Your headteacher and all the staff and governors have worked very hard to make the changes that were needed. You told us how your behaviour has improved and we agree it is now good. Your attendance has also improved so keep it up. The staff look after you well and really care about how well you are doing and making the school a better place for you. The children in the Foundation Stage do well and make a good start in learning to read and write. We could see how much you liked all the activities at lunchtimes and how well you understand the importance of staying fit and eating healthily. Teaching has improved and is helping you to make better progress in your learning, this is especially so in English. Your writing is really coming on. The school is helping those of you who find it difficult to behave well. We were pleased to see how you are responding to the help the staff give to you.

It is our job to help schools improve so we have a few suggestions to help your school do better.

- We want you to do better in all your subjects, but particularly in science and mathematics.
- You told us that learning is better now because your lessons are more interesting, particularly when they are practical. We agree that when the teaching really captures your attention and the work set is not too hard or too easy you learn so much better. We want all the teaching to be like this so you can get the most out of your learning.
- We want you to have more opportunities to use your literacy and numeracy skills in your other subjects.

You, too, have really helped to improve your school as well as the adults. Please make sure you work hard, attend well and behave well for your teachers.