

Granby Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112571
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	319447
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Drew

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Morgan
Headteacher	Mr Brian Allsopp
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2007
School address	Heanor Road Ilkeston Derbyshire DE7 8DX
Telephone number	0115 9322424
Fax number	0115 9322971

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average, serving the urban area of north Ilkeston. On balance, most pupils' backgrounds are economically disadvantaged, though attainment on entry is broadly average. More pupils than average have learning difficulties. The great majority are White British, with very few coming from minority ethnic communities. At its last inspection, the school was given a Notice to Improve.

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 legislation HMCI is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement.' Overall effectiveness and value for money are now satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school has made steady improvement since the previous inspection. It has established secure monitoring arrangements leading to greater consistency in teaching, better use of tracking and further gains in the achievement pupils make. In each of these areas, the school is right to see scope for further development, but it has demonstrated a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The headteacher has prompted these improvements and involved colleagues effectively. The governing body is now considerably better placed to lend support because it is more effectively organised and has far better knowledge of the school than at the time of the last inspection. Its current impact on the school is satisfactory, but improving strongly. Coordinators of literacy, numeracy and science have each helped their subjects improve but they are given too little responsibility for setting and meeting expectations in their subjects. Their capacity to assist the headteacher in this way is underused.

More and better use is made of assessment information, which has helped raise standards so that they are now broadly average. Consequently, achievement is satisfactory, and continues to improve steadily. Some data is still not accessible to all staff and pupils show variable understanding of their targets. Targets are generally adequate, good in some areas, but not consistently as high as they could be. However, the work of Year 6 is now broadly average, matching national levels in English and marginally exceeding those in mathematics and science. Younger pupils are reaching significantly higher standards than previously. Recent weaknesses in writing, especially that of boys, have been reduced, though not fully eliminated.

Improved teaching and learning also promote these improvements. The overall quality is satisfactory, and although some inconsistencies persist in aspects of marking, pace and expectations, good lessons are becoming more common and outstanding practice exists. In the best lessons, pupils' work rate and enjoyment are impressive and teachers set very challenging tasks. A similar proportion of lessons is satisfactory and here relationships and subject knowledge remain good, but pace tends to be steady and expectations modest. The curriculum benefits from a well-planned emphasis on pupils' skills and greater scope for creativity, but it also has some limitations and is satisfactory overall. Teaching starts considerably later than it might each morning and time loss at other points is significant.

Personal development is good. Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around school. They report that they feel safe at school. They lead increasingly healthy lifestyles through ample sports provision, twice-daily warm up sessions and better school diet. Many contribute well to the school and wider community through buddy systems, the School Council and charity fund raising. Their enjoyment of school is strong and preparation for future economic well-being satisfactory, reflecting strengths in care,

guidance and support. The overall quality here is satisfactory: tracking academic progress is less effective than the promotion of personal development. Parents' support is generally strong. A significant minority express reservations about several aspects of the school's work, but these concerns are not borne out by the inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by setting more challenging targets and ensuring that assessment data is collected more often and shared more widely.
- Take additional steps to increase consistency in teaching, so that the strong pace and high challenge in the best lessons become standard practice.
- Give coordinators a central role in setting and meeting whole-school targets in their subjects.
- Use teaching time more efficiently, especially in morning sessions

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

Because the school has improved provision since the previous inspection, standards are now broadly average and achievement satisfactory. A steady rise is taking place in the standards in English, mathematics and science. Weaknesses in boys' writing have been adequately addressed, though there is still room for further improvement. While standards in the current Year 6 continue a gradual upward trend, the work of younger children shows even greater improvement.

These gains have been achieved through better teaching and a more systematic, if not yet fully embedded, use of assessment data. Achievement levels have by no means reached their limit and the good learning attitudes of pupils can be further exploited. Targets are generally appropriate, but are not as demanding as they could be.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils work well together in class and support each other in their learning. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They like their teachers because they 'make learning fun'. They trust the adults at school and know that they can turn to them and find help. Pupils say that the anti-bullying work the school has done has made it a much better place. Behaviour is good. Pupils have healthy lifestyles and talk confidently about their rejection of smoking and substance abuse. They enjoy their responsibilities, which may be in the playground to ensure all pupils are involved, or supporting new Year 3 pupils. The School Council provides a pupil voice and they feel that their ideas, such as fund-raising for Romanian children, which they planned and managed, are valued.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Recent strategies introduced by the school are having a positive impact, with the quality of teaching more consistent and the rate of learning across the school improving. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects taught and pupils have many opportunities to work in pairs and groups. The variety of methods used promotes interest and the time limitations given to tasks assist the pace. Teachers create an environment in which pupils are ready to learn and contribute.

Learning is less successful in a minority of lessons in which pupil participation is limited or the pace steady rather than swift. Tasks that challenge pupils of all abilities are generally, but not always, provided. The quality of marking has improved, but does not always explain how to improve or review targets frequently enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides opportunities for all learners, including those who find learning more difficult, to progress and perform at a suitable level. It has rightly concentrated on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and is now bringing in more activities to develop skill areas and promote creativity and enjoyment.

There is a good range of enrichment activities, with good use made of visitors. Extensive use is made of visits to places of educational interest, especially those in the local area. The new music partnership is already producing competent musicians and the new range of physical activities contributes to developing understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Provision for gifted and talented pupils is at an early stage of development. The structure of the school day does not make the most use of learning time. For example the length of registration, assembly and the warm-up routine means that, although all these elements have a value in their own right, almost three quarters of an hour passes before formal learning begins.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school works hard to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. They are rewarded for good attendance and for bringing a nutritionally balanced packed lunch. Those who find learning difficult are supported by a team of teaching assistants and make satisfactory progress. The school has good relationships with Local Authority agencies, helping pupils who require extra support. Safeguarding and health and safety provision meet national requirements. The provision for pastoral support is good and has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. While academic monitoring is satisfactory, pupils' individual targets in English and mathematics are not understood or used as consistently as they could be. The best marking is informative and supports pupils' learning, but again, this is inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

This is an area of recent improvement and is now satisfactory. The capacity for further improvement is already satisfactory and expanding.

Crucially, the headteacher has improved systems for monitoring the school's work so that they are more systematic and extensive and have an impact on standards and teaching. The school is aware that further consistency is required. Data is also handled more effectively and has helped shape provision. Expectations are now acceptable, but not as fully challenging as they could be. Staff and pupils know much more about standards and how to improve them, though there is scope for this to rise to higher levels of use and understanding. Subject coordination is satisfactory and the school is aware of the need to give coordinators greater responsibility.

The governing body has significantly improved its organisation and activity. Its impact on the school is satisfactory and rapidly improving.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	2
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
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

30 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Granby Junior School, Ilkeston, DE7 8DX

Thank you for your warm welcome when we recently came to inspect Granby Junior. Your school has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory overall. It doesn't need the 'Notice To Improve' any more.

There are already some good features at your school, for instance:

- Your own behaviour and general maturity are good.
- Lessons in some classes regularly have good teaching and learning. Occasionally the quality is excellent.
- The school provides good opportunities for you to become healthy, stay safe and contribute to others. When we spoke to some of you, your views about school were very positive.
- Standards are steadily rising.

If the school is to continue improving, it needs to:

- Lift standards even further by setting you really challenging targets and giving you and your teachers the very latest assessment information for checking your progress.
- Make sure all lessons have the liveliness and high expectations we saw in the best ones.
- Give teachers in charge of subjects more responsibility for helping to run the school.
- Use time more efficiently, especially in the mornings when your lessons start very late compared with other schools.

Best wishes for the rest of your time at Granby Junior.

Yours sincerely

Robert Drew

Lead inspector