

Grove Children and Family Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100771
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	323342
Inspection date	28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Smart
Headteacher	Ms Dee Haddon
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2006
School address	Tower Mill Road Peckham London SE15 6BP
Telephone number	020 7701 6629
Fax number	020 7701 6629

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and particularly investigated:

- any differences in provision for or progress of particular groups
- the impact of gaps in the leadership team
- the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by governors and leaders of all that the school provides.

The inspectors talked with children and met with some staff and governors. Parts of lessons were observed, parents' questionnaires were examined and school information, including its self-evaluation, was scrutinised. The inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

The children who attend this Nursery and Children's Centre come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Some attend full-time and some attend just in the mornings or the afternoons. The largest groups are Black British and White British. Around 12% of the children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A similar proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities covering a range of different needs. Through its Children's Centre, the school offers care before and after the normal school day, as well as in the school holidays. The headteacher was appointed in January 2008 but, at the time of the inspection, had been on long-term sick leave since February 2009. The deputy headteacher has been in charge in her absence.

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. Throughout both the Nursery and the Children's Centre, the Grove provides a stimulating learning environment where children feel very happy and secure. They develop well in confidence and self-esteem, readily making independent choices for themselves as they learn and develop well through purposefully planned play. As a result, children of all abilities make good progress, so that, in the words of parents, 'They come on in leaps and bounds'. From a generally below average starting point, children go on to join the Reception Year in other schools with standards that are in line with those expected for their ages in all of the areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

It is a measure of the robustness of the leadership and management in this well run school that staff have been successful in working together to limit any negative impact of the headteacher's long-term absence. This, in turn, shows the Grove's good capacity for continued improvement. Many parents comment on how well the school has coped through its recent difficulties. School leaders' monitoring, drawing well on support from the local authority, has given leaders and governors a very accurate picture of provision at the Grove and has helped to maintain the good learning and development. Even when children are choosing activities for themselves, adults are closely on hand, offering help and posing questions that help the children to think and to express themselves more clearly. Skilled questioning, for example, helped an able boy to accurately predict whether fruit or coins would float and, in a group teaching session, some of the older children showed very good recall of what they had learned before about caterpillars, describing the different stages of their transformation into butterflies. Children enjoy joining in with counting songs, although, as leaders have themselves identified, opportunities are sometimes missed to move some of the older children from counting to calculation. Children who need extra help because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or because they are new to learning English, benefit from good support that helps them to join in fully and to achieve well. Throughout the Grove, relationships are very good. Adults get on very well with the children in their charge. The children's good personal development is evident in the way children from different social and cultural backgrounds get on so well with each other.

There are comprehensive arrangements for ensuring children's safety and welfare. Parents are especially pleased with the way staff help their children to settle into what several describe as 'a safe and nurturing environment'. One wrote to explain that, 'My son is shy and found it hard to settle at first but the staff worked with us in easing him in'. Parents are united in their view that their children greatly enjoy coming to school, even though not all of those whose children attend part-time ensure that their children attend as regularly as they could. The children's enthusiasm is evident in everything they do, whether working inside with art, books or computers or learning and playing in the excellent outdoor facilities. A parent commented, 'I am very pleased to see my child being allowed to get messy and encouraged in lots of physical play'. Another parent wistfully pointed out, 'My daughter was devastated to learn she would have to leave the Grove to go to and;quot;Big Schooland;quot;!'.

Key workers keep a careful track of the progress of the individual children assigned to them. Their assessments of each child's progress are comprehensive, and are used to keep parents fully informed of how well their children are doing and of what they need to focus on to move their learning on. Although these individual assessments are of very high quality, the Grove has not brought them together to identify objectively whether any particular group might be performing better or less well than others. This limits the scope for school leaders to analyse

where any changes need to be focused, for example to meet more closely the needs of boys, girls or children from a particular ethnic group.

The Children's Centre has placed the Grove at the very heart of the local community, providing high-quality support for families. Governors are rightly proud of the Grove's contribution to community cohesion, celebrating the diversity of children's different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and helping to broaden the children's awareness of other countries and ways of life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Gather individual children's assessments together and use these to more clearly identify whether any particular groups of children are doing better or less well than others.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS 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/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

12 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Grove Children and Family Centre, London, SE15 6BP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We greatly enjoyed our day with you, and we could see how much you all enjoy the super facilities at the Grove. Many of your parents told us that the Grove is a good school. We agree. It is a school where you are looked after well and helped to make good progress as you learn through play and the many exciting activities that the staff provide. It was good to see how carefully you listen to the adults and do your best to answer the questions that they ask you. Keep it up! You get on very well together, which helps to make the Grove such a friendly place to be.

The Grove is well run and managed. Your headteacher has been away because she has been ill, and we join with you and your parents in wishing her better so that she can soon return. Nevertheless, it was good to see that other school leaders, staff and governors have been able to successfully carry on all the good things that happen at the Grove.

We were impressed by how well the staff keep track of how you are doing so that they and your parents know what you need to do next to make progress in your learning. This means they have a very clear picture of how well you are all doing individually. We have asked them to bring this information together, however, so that they can quickly spot whether there are any groups of boys or girls who do better or less well than others. With that information they will be better able to focus any future changes.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector