

Grovelands Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125056
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328275
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	316
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Julie Harnett
Headteacher	Mrs Liz Nichols
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Terrace Road Walton-on-Thames KT12 2EB
Telephone number	01932 227816

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2009
Inspection number	328275

Fax number

01932 269590

Age group 3-7

Inspection dates 1-2 July 2009

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Grovelands Infant and Nursery School is of above-average size. Children start school at the age of three in the part-time Nursery classes. Most of the pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is average. An acting headteacher managed the school from October 2008 and a new headteacher joined the school four weeks before the inspection. The governing body manages out-of-school-hours care in the before- and after-school clubs. The school has received the Healthy School award, the Activemark, the Litter Free School Gold award and the DCFS International School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Grovelands Infant and Nursery School is a satisfactory school. The school has been through a difficult period since the last inspection, which resulted in considerable disruption and changes to the senior management team. However, under strong new leadership, and with effective support from the local authority, the school is working hard to improve. Parents, while being understandably concerned about the changes in senior management and the disruption caused by current building work, are very supportive of the school. One parent wrote, 'I have been a parent at Grovelands for four years and have been very happy with the education.'

Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are in line with those typically found. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory so that, by the time pupils leave Year 2, standards are average overall in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. Pupils clearly enjoy learning, behave well in lessons and around the school and speak with pride about the school. Their moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of eating healthy food, keeping fit and staying safe. However, attendance is below the national average and the school realises it needs to do much more to encourage more regular attendance. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community and develop suitable skills for their future lives and well-being.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils really enjoy the good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sports, which contribute to their adoption of healthy lifestyles. However, best use is not always made of learning time. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there is still too much variation in quality, with not enough good teaching to improve pupils' achievement more quickly.

Arrangements for the pastoral care of pupils are good. Children say that staff respond quickly and effectively to any concerns. The school is now systematically gathering accurate information on individual pupils' progress and using it effectively to identify any pupil who is falling behind or not making suitable progress. Although the new headteacher has approached her analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses with great energy and skill, she is aware that her plans are only at an early stage of beginning to secure improvements. Consequently, at this stage, the capacity to make any necessary improvements is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress, so that, by the end of the Reception Year standards are in line with those expected. Children enjoy school. They play well together and individually. They undertake a variety of whole-class and group activities and co-operate well when working with others. For example, when making a garage, with different small characters, they were very enthusiastic and helped each other. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are effective. Consequently, children are safe, well cared for and aware of how to be healthy. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and are well integrated into the activities. Children's personal development is promoted well and, as a result, they make good progress and their behaviour is good. Although the school has excellent secure outdoor areas for Nursery and Reception children, there is insufficient equipment to allow children to explore things with purpose and challenge. Opportunities are missed for children to select activities for themselves as 'free choice'; this hampers the development of their independent learning

skills. Staff have positive relationships with children and activities, such as the music and movement session, are fun. Children delight in learning and seeing new things, for example, there was a great sense of wonder as they observed a butterfly emerging from a cocoon. Some progress has been made in improving systems for the assessment and tracking of children's progress. However, systems for assessing children's levels of attainment on entry to the school and, hence, the analysis of their progress during their time in the Early Years are still insufficiently detailed or rigorous.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve levels of attendance by strengthening the school's systems for promoting good attendance.
- Improve teaching and learning so that it is at least good and helps children to make good progress.
- Improve assessment and tracking systems in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that teachers have a secure understanding of children's skills when they join the school and the subsequent progress they make.

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

When children enter the school, their levels of attainment are broadly in line with those typically found. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that, by the time they enter Key Stage 1, standards are in line with those expected. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils make good progress in their reading skills, which are above average, and satisfactory progress in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in Key Stage 1 are improving, owing to more consistent teaching and more rigorous assessment and tracking procedures. For example, initiatives designed to improve the attainment of less able pupils during the current school year have been successful and standards for these pupils are now in line with expectations. There is no difference in the progress and standards between different groups of pupils within the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with moderate learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils behave well, act responsibly and get along very well together. Pupils feel safe in school. They demonstrate a good understanding of right and wrong. Links with a school in India have had a positive impact on pupils' awareness of different cultures. They know about the similarities and differences between British and Indian life. However, overall, they do not have enough opportunities to broaden their cultural development. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and say they enjoy coming to school. However, attendance is below the national average and the school realises it needs to improve the rigour of its attendance policy. The school's work to gain the Healthy School award and the Activemark has resulted in pupils' understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking regular exercise being good and they are keen to take part in physical activities. One pupil was very keen to find out when

the climbing frames (which are out of commission because of ongoing building work) would be back in use, as they like engaging physical activities. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community and are pleased to be able to suggest ideas, through the school council, for improving the school, such as the new outdoor playhouses, bird bath and herb garden. Pupils' average standards and good reading skills, along with their positive attitudes and good behaviour, ensure they are satisfactorily prepared for junior school and the world beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school has made effective use of support provided by the local authority and the quality of teaching is now consistently satisfactory and sometimes good. This improvement is reflected in the increased proportion of pupils achieving the expected level for their age in literacy and numeracy. Good management of classes means that pupils are well behaved and apply themselves to their work. Lessons have a clear focus, which is shared with pupils so that they know what they need to do in order to complete their work successfully. The teaching of reading skills is well organised, with regular practice and effective use of letters and sounds (phonics) to help pupils to achieve well. However, at times, the pace of lessons is too slow and opportunities to match work more closely to pupils' needs are sometimes missed. For instance, pupils are taught in ability sets for English and mathematics, and, although work provided for each set is different, most teachers provide the same work for all the pupils in the set. Learning is reviewed at the end of lessons but pupils are not being encouraged enough to evaluate their own learning or that of their peers. However, the work of teaching assistants supports pupils well, particularly when working with groups or individuals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is effective in enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress and to develop a positive attitude to learning. National initiatives and guidelines are used appropriately to ensure that learning is built upon year by year. However, time is not always used to best advantage. For example, pupils line up outside classrooms for too long waiting to go into their classes and this limits their learning time. The curriculum promotes healthy lifestyles, keeping safe and being considerate to others well. There is a wide range of interesting visits and visitors, which make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. Pupils take part enthusiastically in a good range of before-school, lunchtime and after-school activities. Teachers are working to develop more links between subjects to make learning meaningful and fun for pupils by ensuring participation in community events such as the Dream House/garden competition and community-wide computer design competition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to ensure that pupils are protected, safe and secure are rigorously applied and the school looks carefully at how it can make the environment safe for pupils. The governing body manages a before- and after-school club, which has won an award for the quality of its provision. Although assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sufficiently rigorous, there have been recent improvements to the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment

and progress in Years 1 and 2. As a result, teachers in Key Stage 1 now have a much better knowledge of how pupils are doing and what they need to do next. Arrangements for children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities ensure that they are fully integrated into the school community. However, the school has not fully developed a system of learning targets, so that pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their skills. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and sometimes make constructive comments so that pupils know what to do to improve; however, this practice is inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has developed a very good understanding of what needs to be done. With the effective support of the local authority, she has begun to take the necessary steps to improve the school's provision. For example, she shows great determination and strength of character in the quality of the new appointments of senior staff and in her analysis of the main areas for improvement. Middle managers are developing their roles in a suitable way. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. There are satisfactory and rapidly improving links with the local community as the school readies itself to become a children's centre in the near future. The school also has good links with a school in India but realises it could do more to improve its links with other schools in the United Kingdom. During a prolonged period of considerable staff upheaval, governors have discharged their responsibilities appropriately. Parents are very supportive of the school. One wrote, expressing a view that was typical of many, 'The school has a welcoming, friendly, warm atmosphere. My child has made excellent progress and more importantly, is happy and enjoys school.'

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
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 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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grovelands Infant and Nursery School, Walton-on-Thames, KT12 2EB

Thank you for helping my colleagues and me to find out about your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You go to a satisfactory school. Your headteacher and staff have lots of ideas about ways to improve your school and your teachers work hard to make sessions interesting. They care for you well and listen to you thoughtfully. You all try hard with your work; you behave well and enjoy all the things that you do at school.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things better. The most important things your school should do are to:

- do everything it can to make sure you all come to school as often as possible
- make sure that all lessons are as interesting and challenging as possible so that you can do even better
- make sure teachers check how much the youngest children know when they start school, so that they can keep a close eye on how well they get on.

Yours faithfully

Clive Lewis

Lead Inspector