

Grazebrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100258
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	335169
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) 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 of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Belk
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2008
School address	Lordship Road Stoke Newington London N16 0QP
Telephone number	020 8802 4051
Fax number	020 8442 5202
Email address	contacts@grazebrook.hackney.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of the Interim Executive Board, representatives from the local authority, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils in English, mathematics and science
- the effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that it challenges all learners
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement
- the impact of the school's work in addressing the key issues for development from the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Grazebrook is a larger than average primary school. It serves a diverse area of inner London. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak a first language other than English. The school has a high number of pupils with statements of special educational needs although the number of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties, and behavioural and emotional difficulties is below the national average. When this school was inspected in March 2008, it was judged to require special measures. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school no longer requires special measures. Grazebrook Primary has made significant improvements and is now providing a good quality of education. When Grazebrook was inspected in March 2008, standards overall were below average. Pupils were not making enough progress and attainment in science was exceptionally low. This is no longer the case; pupils' achievement has significantly improved and is now good overall. As a result, pupils are now attaining standards in English and mathematics that are in line with the national averages. Strategies to stretch higher-ability pupils are paying dividends in some classes, although this is not yet consistently the case. In science pupils have too few opportunities to develop independent learning skills by pursuing their own ideas.

The new headteacher provides a very clear direction. She has established high expectations and, along with the deputy headteacher, has worked tirelessly and to good effect to improve this school. The headteacher has used the challenge and support provided by the local authority to help create a leadership team which demonstrates significant influence and has a positive impact in all areas of school life. The school's good capacity for further improvement is underpinned by a shared and challenging culture of accountability which has, during the past few months, delivered rapid progress in the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection. In addition, the interim executive board systematically monitors the impact of its work in the school, and holds the school rigorously to account for the implementation of its own coherent and well-prioritised improvement plan.

All senior and many middle leaders now play a crucial part in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. Their lesson observations are securely and correctly rooted in determining how much progress pupils make. Leaders provide relevant feedback to staff, and ensure that teachers get the support and training they need to act upon this feedback. As a result, teaching and learning have improved significantly and are now good. This good teaching has been the key factor in accelerating pupils' progress and improving standards. Teachers' identification of pupils' learning needs has improved. This combined with better-targeted practical and interactive tasks for pupils, is having a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. Pupils now receive good and, in some classes, outstanding guidance from teachers on how to improve their work. The role of teaching assistants in supporting this progress has also improved, although at times they miss opportunities to support pupils through targeted and challenging questioning.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress by:
 - ensuring higher-ability pupils are consistently challenged
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills in science by pursuing their own ideas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When children join the school, their skills, knowledge and understanding are in line with those normally expected. In recent years the progress made by successive cohorts of pupils over time has been below the national average and standards have declined. A greatly increased focus on gearing teaching to learners' needs has secured good progress for the majority of pupils. During this inspection, the progress made by all groups of pupils, including those from different ethnic heritages and speaking English as an additional language in most lessons was good, and it was never less than satisfactory in others. As a result, attainment is rising steadily.

Teachers have readily taken on board new initiatives. In particular, they have higher expectations of pupils; they plan interesting activities which pupils enjoy. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, a combination of excellent subject knowledge and secure relationships ensured pupils thoroughly enjoyed the task of making cartoon strips to illustrate the process of pollution. Additionally, the teacher provided exceptionally judicious guidance to individuals which ensured they addressed their weaknesses and built on their strengths. As a result, pupils made excellent progress.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They say how they enjoy and are proud of their school. Their behaviour and attitudes throughout the school are good. Consequently, by Year 6 pupils are lively, thoughtful, responsible and sensitive young people. Attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils make a sound contribution to the school community through raising money for a number of charities and they demonstrate a responsible attitude through the roles they have in school. In particular, the Year 5 pupils are proud of their roles as playground friends for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and are eagerly awaiting their identification badges to wear in the playgrounds. Pupils know the importance of staying fit and healthy. They take advantage of opportunities for sport in after-school clubs and enjoy the healthy options that are available at lunchtime.

The school acknowledges that although some pupils have good levels of self-confidence, the next challenge for the school is to develop more opportunities for all pupils to develop skills in organising, planning and showing initiative; plans are in hand for this. The improved progress and achievement in English and mathematics help to prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The continued drive for improvement has resulted in much good teaching. Teachers have become increasingly skilful at accelerating the progress of all groups of pupils. In lessons, teachers are creative, ensure activities engage all learners and make good use of information and communication technology. A particular strength is teachers' good subject knowledge. A greater focus on developing literacy has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement. Increasingly teachers are ensuring that work is matched to the differing needs of pupils in their lessons. However, this practice is not yet fully consistent, and lessons do not always challenge more-able pupils in particular. In addition, in some lessons, mostly in science, teachers do not always build opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning skills.

Lesson plans now generally indicate the role to be played by teaching assistants. In some cases teaching assistants work effectively with the class teachers but in others the focus of their work is not as sharply defined.

Over the last year the school has, sensibly, focused its attention on English, mathematics and science. It has recently introduced the International Primary Curriculum. This is strengthening links between subjects and making a good contribution in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents comment very favorably about the enthusiasm their children demonstrate when discussing the topics they are studying at school.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Care, guidance and support are good and enhanced by the good links with a range of external agencies and with parents. Pupils are well supported in their personal development. Staff know individual pupils well. A range of different intervention strategies are used to support pupils' different needs, including their social and emotional development. The work of the learning mentor has been particularly effective in improving attendance and punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She leads the school with enthusiasm, dedication and a clear commitment to improvement, especially in relation to the progress pupils make. The senior leadership team has grown in its authority over the past few months and is committed to improving further all aspects of the school's work. Staff are knowledgeable and well deployed, and work effectively as a team to provide continuity in learning and care. Changes to the accommodation have ensured it is bright and welcoming and used effectively. The headteacher delegates responsibilities extremely well. Her highly successful style of management has drawn together a team of committed staff who feel empowered to make improvements to the quality of provision. The school has developed the contribution of middle managers to school improvement; some are now very skilled in this.

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils meet government guidelines. At the time of the inspection, there were, for example, effective procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school. A particular noteworthy feature is the weekly safeguarding audit conducted by the headteacher.

The interim executive board continues to support and challenge the school. During the past year members of the board and senior leaders have worked on a range of successful initiatives to involve parents in the life of the school. Parents with whom inspectors spoke report they feel welcomed and increasingly involved in the life of the school.

The school is strongly committed to inclusion and removing barriers to success. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a strong cohesive community within the school. However, senior leaders acknowledge the promotion of cohesion within the wider community is at an early stage.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are generally in line with the expected levels for their age. Improved induction procedures help children settle quickly and happily into the class routines and become confident learners. As a result of good teaching, effective assessment and a well-planned practical curriculum, children make good progress so that they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are in line or above those expected.

Children's personal development is good. Their behaviour and interactions with each other and adults are very positive; children are respectful, friendly and independent. The welfare needs of the children are a priority. Parents comment favourably upon the good links which exist between the parents and the school and which underpin the good provision for children's welfare from the time that they start school and throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Members of staff work together closely and are sharing their expertise. A good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities motivates children and supports their developing reading, writing and numeracy skills. The curriculum enables children to learn from first-hand experiences. Much thought has gone into developing the outside area in the Nursery and this is now developing into a natural extension of the classroom, which the children happily use. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and a parent governor, with whom inspectors spoke, report they feel welcomed and increasingly involved in the life of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grazebrook Primary, Lordship Road, Stoke Newington, London N16 0QP.

Thank you for making the inspection team feel so welcome and helping us during the inspection this week. As you know, I have visited your school several times and have always enjoyed talking to you. I shall not be returning to your school because of all the improvements the school has made.

My colleagues and I enjoyed this visit in particular and thought you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could be even better.

- Many of you told us that you enjoy school and you showed this by your good behaviour and hard work. The school is now a happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other. You are always polite and welcome visitors warmly into your school. You are very proud of your school.
- The school is now working hard to make sure you all make better progress and you are now reaching higher standards in your work.
- Your teachers are working very effectively to make sure they tell you how to improve during lessons.
- Your headteacher runs the school really well. She wants to keep on improving it and she and the teachers know just how to do that.

We have asked your school to improve some things to make it even better. In particular, we want your teachers to help you to make even better progress in English, mathematics and science by making sure all of you have work that is matched to your needs and you have more opportunities to work independently and test out your ideas, especially in science.

We know that you will play your part in helping your teachers to keep improving the school and hope that you continue to enjoy coming to school, work hard and do well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector

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