

Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102835
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	335977
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Arthur Leggatt
Headteacher	D P Webb
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 25 lessons, observing 17 teachers at least once, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and two members of the governing body. Informal discussions were also held with parents as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. They analysed 70 responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaires, 105 to the pupils' survey and 27 to the staff questionnaire.

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

- evidence to show whether the emphasis on improving writing is having an impact
- how well teachers engage pupils in learning, particularly through their questioning
- the extent to which children have opportunities for free choice and independent learning in the Nursery and Reception.

Information about the school

This large school serves a changing community that is becoming more culturally diverse. Two thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with the proportion from Bangladeshi families increasing most rapidly. The majority of pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. Free school meal eligibility is above average and considerably more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual ages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the number with a statement of special educational needs. Their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has received the Artsmark Silver award and has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school is undergoing an extensive rebuilding programme, which is due to be completed for September 2010.

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

Grove Primary is a good school. It has the support of its parents and carers and is serving its community well. It is a happy and purposeful environment where pupils and staff work together in harmony. It has strengths in its provision, the most notable being the quality of care, support and guidance, particularly for its more vulnerable pupils such as those with acute learning difficulties. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will resolve quickly any problems that might arise. This view is almost unanimously shared by parents and carers.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils show great respect for others and for cultural differences. Pupils of all backgrounds work and play happily together, taking care to ensure that no individual is left out. They are considerate towards each other and take care to ensure that newcomers settle in and make new friends quickly. Consequently, there are almost no incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour.

The youngest children get off to a satisfactory but uneven start in the Nursery and Reception classes. From skill levels that are below those expected for their age on entry, they make satisfactory progress overall but better progress in Reception than in Nursery. The inconsistency between classes is largely because assessment of the children is not sufficiently robust to establish their starting points or used effectively to support their learning and challenge children enough. Pupils make good progress across the rest of the school. Their attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. The main reasons for their good achievement in Years 1 to 6 are:

- teaching that is frequently good and sometimes better
- a well-planned curriculum that makes the pupils' experiences interesting by linking learning across different subjects
- the enrichment of the pupils' experiences through a variety of activities, many of which are supported by productive links with other local schools
- the careful use of assessment information to identify and tailor support where individuals are falling behind their targets
- a sharp focus on supporting the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The action to improve the quality of the pupils' writing is starting to have an impact with their imaginations stimulated in a wider range of contexts than previously and across many subjects. Learning is made interesting and challenging in most lessons and teaching assistants are deployed well in support of individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers are becoming better at engaging pupils in their learning in response to the school's action to improve teachers' questioning skills. However, this is not consistent

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across the school and so there is room for improvement in this and in associated aspects of planning opportunities for pupils to respond to each other's ideas and to teachers' marking.

The relatively new staff team is becoming more cohesive under the headteacher's thoughtful and determined leadership. The team has coped well with the building work going on around them. One parent summed up the views of many when writing, 'The teachers work hard to provide a creative and inspiring curriculum and I believe the headteacher and leadership team are driving the school forward and striving for excellence.' There are now more opportunities for free choice of activities for the youngest children, and teachers in Years 1 to 6 are making better use of assessment information to challenge pupils. Both of these were identified as areas for attention at the previous inspection. The accuracy of self-evaluation is giving everyone a clear picture of the school's qualities and where priorities for improvement should lie. This gives the school good capacity to meet its goals and to secure further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Bring greater consistency to the way teachers engage pupils in their learning by:
 - using more effective questioning techniques to develop their thinking
 - providing more planned opportunities for pupils to discuss and share their ideas with each other
 - giving time for them to respond to their teachers' marking.
- Improve assessment and its use in the Nursery and Reception by:
 - undertaking and recording more frequent observations of the children, especially when involved in self-chosen activities
 - ensuring that the information is used to identify more clearly the children's starting points providing tasks that challenge the children further.
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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The pupils are given a firm basis for success in the future, as one parent indicated when writing, 'As my child will be leaving this school to start a new chapter in her life, I feel that Grove has given her a very good foundation to build on.' The pupils develop their basic skills at a good pace and apply them in a wide range of contexts. They generally concentrate on activities and work hard. These qualities support their good progress and were particularly evident when Year 3 pupils prepared questions they might ask characters in a book they were studying. Pupils are starting to take greater responsibility for aspects of their learning, such as when assessing the work of their peers or trying to improve their work in the light of their teacher's comments.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards their individual targets by the careful balance between support in lessons and

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withdrawal for more focused activities. Although there have been no significant variations in progress by groups, a slight difference in the achievement of younger Bangladeshi pupils is starting to become evident to the school.

Pupils greatly value the diversity they see around them, by respecting differences and celebrating their shared values. They show they are very sensitive to each other's ideas, such as when given the opportunity to discuss issues and listen to others' perspectives. One consequence is that relationships are warm and friendly. Their behaviour around the school can be excellent, but varies in lessons when they lose concentration and their teachers have to remind some of them, rather too regularly, of their expectations. Pupils make a considerable contribution to school life and have a voice in its development. They take responsibilities seriously and involve themselves in local community activities. Pupils' understanding of how to stay fit and healthy is aided by links with other schools, which extend opportunities for participation in sporting activities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are stimulating and calm places in which to learn, because of the helpful

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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displays and the way most pupils respond to their teacher's expectations of their behaviour. Teachers make learning enjoyable through interesting activities such as the Year 5 report writing of a supposed crime committed at the school. By making the characters involved real and the location immediate, pupils were deeply involved and their imaginations stimulated. These features are not seen consistently because not all teachers engage pupils as successfully through their questioning or use of discussion. This means that in some classes, early learners of English have limited opportunities to develop language through talk. Marking generally helps pupils to identify how they might improve their work, but teachers do not routinely give sufficient time for them to respond to their suggestions.

Key skills are promoted well and pupils learn through a series of rich experiences on a daily basis. Content is increasingly linked between subjects to make learning more interesting. Educational visits stimulate the pupils' thinking so that they can begin to identify lines of enquiry they might wish to follow. Partnerships with local secondary schools strengthen opportunities for sport and art and provide additional activities for gifted and talented pupils.

Understanding the circumstances of pupils and their families is enabling staff to identify the precise difficulties faced by individuals and to sharply target support programmes accordingly. External agencies provide much valued support for vulnerable pupils and those in need of their specific expertise. Thorough induction arrangements when pupils join and the careful preparation when they move on to secondary school help to give a smooth transfer from one stage to the next.

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 is ably supported by the deputy headteacher in making sure her ambitions for the pupils are supported by staff. Procedures for checking the performance of staff and providing support for the improvement of their teaching include other leaders. Targets are challenging, used continuously as a lever to raise achievement and progress, and are carefully checked.

Governors ensure that everyone works in a safe environment. Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of the pupils are in place and work effectively in practice. Anyone working with children is properly vetted. Governors have adapted their practices so that they can gain a greater insight into the working of the school, but they are not

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sufficiently active in identifying priorities for improvement or challenging the school to overcome any shortcomings.

People feel valued in this very cohesive school. There is a clear understanding of the changing context within which the school operates and many activities are planned to promote community cohesion. However, the school has not evaluated this sufficiently in order that it can identify what should be done next, particularly in supporting the growing Bangladeshi community. Plans are in place to reintroduce more opportunities for parents and carers to develop their computer and other skills once the rebuilding is completed. Links with outside organisations give good value for money as the school would not be able to support pupils or enrich their experiences without the additional expertise these organisations bring.

The school is strongly committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination. The headteacher and her team focus sharply on identifying and removing barriers to learning, whatever these might be. As a result, pupils from various minority ethnic groups represented in the school achieve well and action is starting to be taken in the light of the emerging gaps in the attainment of younger Bangladeshi pupils.

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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and understanding below those expected for their age, particularly in their language and social skills. Induction arrangements help them settle in to school life and relate well to each other and staff. The children are happy and show consideration towards each other. They behave in a safe and

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responsible manner because adults reinforce what is expected in a positive and encouraging way. Children are confident to ask for help when they need it.

Teachers use a range of teaching methods and adequate resources to engage and interest the children. There is now a better balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by the children. Consequently, children's independence is increasing and they are beginning to do more for themselves. The children make satisfactory progress across the stage, although their progress is accelerating in the Reception classes where the teachers have introduced phonic sessions which are helping the children to tackle unfamiliar words with greater confidence. Nevertheless, their attainment is still below average by the end of Reception, particularly in writing and numeracy.

Rigorous attention is paid to ensuring that the children are kept safe at all times and a close and productive partnership with home is established. The staff team works well together as a close unit, but there are some inconsistencies in practice that, while recognised, have not been eliminated. Assessments of the children's progress are gathered but opportunities are missed because they do not consistently make observations when the children are involved in self-chosen activities. In addition, the information is not monitored rigorously enough to identify clearly the children's starting points on entry to the Nursery. Tasks which really challenge and stretch the children are not provided routinely.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very much in support of the school and have no major concerns. They are almost unanimous in reporting that their children enjoy school. They are pleased with the quality of teaching, the way the school is led and managed, the success with which their individual needs are met, the efforts made to prepare their children for the future and the information they receive about their children's progress. These are areas that are endorsed by the inspection team. A few parents and carers felt that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns, although no evidence was found to support this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grove Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 469 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	61	25	36	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	66	23	33	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	44	36	51	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	41	36	51	4	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	39	56	30	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	44	33	47	5	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	53	27	39	4	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	27	39	37	53	2	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	40	40	57	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	37	37	53	5	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	29	38	54	8	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	31	44	36	51	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	54	29	41	3	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



16 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove Primary School, Chadwell Heath, RM6 4XS

You will remember that inspectors visited your school recently and I am writing to let you know what we found. Thank you for making us welcome and for being so ready to share your thoughts about your school. We had the opportunity to talk with many of you and we told your teachers you were very helpful and polite.

We agree with you that Grove Primary is a good school. You clearly enjoy school and we agree with you that your teachers take good care of you. Your behaviour is good, and you are being very sensible about the building work going on around you. Those of you who have special jobs, like being members of the school council, carry out your duties responsibly.

You make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult or are new to learning English also make good progress because of the support you receive.

Everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. The two things we have asked the teachers and other adults to do are to:

- involve you more in lessons through better questioning and by giving you more opportunities for discussion and time for you to respond to their marking
- improve the way teachers check the progress of the youngest children and use this to plan activities that meet their needs better.

You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and showing pride in your school. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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