

# Grange School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105622
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	336531
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Hilary Ward

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	9
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Granaghan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andrew Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	77 Dickenson Road Rusholme Manchester M14 5AZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited all class groups in the school as well as the off-site provision at Horizon and observed twelve lessons and nine teachers as well as teaching assistants delivering lessons. Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and many pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at a range of documents including the school development plan, policies and assessment information and looked at 46 parental questionnaires.

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

- how assessments are used to help pupils make progress
- how older pupils are being supported to gain independence and life skills and achieve accreditation
- how the needs of the youngest children are met
- how effectively leaders and managers, including governors, are improving the school.

## Information about the school

Grange School educates pupils with autism spectrum conditions. Some have identified additional learning difficulties and all experience social and communication difficulties relating to their condition. At the time of the inspection two children were of reception age. For some of the time these children work alongside others in Key Stage 1 and at other times they are grouped separately to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Boys outnumber girls at Grange School by about seven to one. Almost half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups with about 30% from families where the first language is not English. About half are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are five looked after children. Pupils are admitted at any time and at any age. Those admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 often display the greatest degree of complexity of their special educational needs. Pupils joining later are usually transferring from mainstream schools. The school also manages an off-site provision, Horizon, for pupils with autism, who are of higher ability or who have more complex needs and find attending a school difficult. Many of these have not been attending a school for some time. Grange School has also developed outreach support to some 25-30 mainstream schools.

**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

Grange School is a good school which cares well for its pupils and makes good provision to meet their often complex needs. The school has coped with uncertainty about its future structure and location over a number of years. However, some of the provisional plans have enabled the school to create a structure which has strengthened the management and allowed for development of the different departments of the school. This year the school has admitted children who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is meeting their needs well. The school has also developed very good educational provision at the Horizon centre to meet the needs of groups of pupils who were not previously attending school or who have particularly complex needs. Many schools in the city draw on the expertise of Grange School through its outreach support and advice and this is highly regarded.

The school enjoys very good relationships with parents and carers who speak highly of the provision for their children and the support the school provides to families. More than one parent commented on the 'warm loving atmosphere' the school creates.

The good curriculum is planned to suit the wide range of age and ability. However, occasionally there are missed opportunities to extend the learning of some of the higher attaining pupils on the main site. This is when they do not consistently assess their own learning or identify the next steps for themselves. However, overall, pupils make good progress, achieve well and enjoy their learning. The strong focus on developing social and communication skills results in particularly good progress in this area and equips pupils well in preparing to move into adult life in the wider community. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together as teams to implement programmes and share information about how well pupils are doing, though the school recognises the need to find an appropriate assessment tool which will better inform the often small steps of progress their pupils make. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities both in school and in the wider community.

Senior leaders and managers, including governors, have high expectations for the education, care and well-being of their pupils. Staff review provision to ensure that it is relevant to pupils' needs. However, governors do not have a consistently rigorous overview of the school's areas of strength and weakness. This means they are not always able to provide the right degree of challenge. Recent developments of off-site provision, outreach support, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the planning for the new school, along with the maintenance of a good quality of education since the last inspection, all indicate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' rates of progress, by:
  - involving pupils more in evaluating their own learning and decisions about the next steps they should take
  - more rigorously assessing pupils' learning to inform small step targets
  - analysing the information from assessment to identify areas for intervention.
- Improve the effectiveness of the Governing Body, by:
  - increasing the number of governors
  - increasing governors' first-hand knowledge of the work of the school
  - developing their skills in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance so that governors are better equipped to provide challenge.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Pupils make good progress particularly in their social and communication skills. The more able learn to read and to write independently and to use basic number for use in daily life. Many have good verbal communication but others learn to use symbols, pictures, simple sign language or communication aids to express their needs and wishes. Pupils with additional special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress overall. However, occasionally higher attaining pupils do not progress as rapidly as they could because they are not as effectively challenged. Pupils gain skills they will need for life, such as making simple meals, learning to listen and to take turns and to become increasingly independent. Although pupils achieve well this is not consistently recognised through gaining external accreditations. In an art lesson at Horizon, pupils worked with sustained concentration as they mounted their work, talked to their peers and adults about it and used information and communication technology (ICT) independently to write about their paintings. These pupils make significant gains in confidence and in coming to school regularly and happily. For most this is a great achievement and prepares them effectively to continue their education by attending colleges when they leave.

Pupils enjoy an active lifestyle and participate in 'wake up shake up', swimming, kayaking, athletics and other activities which help them learn how to be healthy. Many pupils restrict their own diets but are supported to make healthy choices at snack and lunchtime. Pupils have made their own boxes in which to grow vegetables. They begin to share experiences and to tolerate and engage with others and behave well in lessons and around the school. When there are occasional outbursts, staff help pupils to learn how to manage their own behaviour. As a result of this, pupils say they feel safe in school and this is confirmed by parents.

Members of the school council have been actively involved in contributing to plans for their new school but wider opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school community are more limited. However, pupils learn to socialise in the local and wider

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community and make frequent trips out. They are rightly proud of their successes in musical and dramatic performances at Bridgewater Hall and Contact Theatre. They learn about the needs of others and raise funds through a nocturnal walk in Peace Week. They have shown an interest in environmental issues and have sown a wild flower meadow and made bird boxes for community parks. They enjoy celebrating their diverse cultures and backgrounds at times of key festivals and through projects. They show their spiritual development through reflection and trips to places of worship. For example, on one such visit a child was heard to say 'I don't want to ever forget what I've seen today'.

Attendance meets the average for all schools and is higher than that for most special schools despite the difficulty of sometimes integrating children and young people who have been out of school for long periods of time such as at Horizon.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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## How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are taught effectively. Teachers know their pupils well and plan tasks to match their ability. Assessment though does not always inform the setting of small step targets for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, the school does not have a clear view of pupils' planned and actual progress in all of the subjects over time. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies appropriate for the learning needs of their pupils and these are very well adapted to meet the particular needs of some pupils with more complex disabilities and for those with higher abilities at Horizon. Teaching assistants are skilled and provide very good support for pupils' learning, for example, in ensuring all are able to participate fully in the lesson.

Pupils enjoy the broad range of subjects and activities provided by the good curriculum. From the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the sixth form the skills of communication and social development, which the pupils at Grange need, are incorporated into all sessions. Lessons have practical activities and make use of imaginative resources. Literacy and numeracy are taught in meaningful contexts, for example, reading a story about the Nile while moving objects on a tactile map. Some pupils follow a sensory curriculum through individual programmes. ICT is currently only used under supervision on the main site because some pupils find it difficult to use in an appropriate way. However, the school is seeking ways to further develop its use for learning. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to get out and about in order to enjoy new experiences, understand topics at first-hand and to practise their social and behavioural skills. Visits include to a Victorian street, garden centre and the theatre. All pupils who wish to go benefit from developing a range of independent and life skills on residential trips. Pupils particularly enjoy music and drama, with visiting specialists helping to develop the skills and knowledge of Grange staff. The school is aware that there is a minority of girls and have ensured their needs are met through individual tutorials. Opportunities for work-related learning and work experience for older pupils are less well developed.

Provision for care, guidance and support is good. Communication with parents and carers is good and they feel they can approach the school for help and guidance with managing their children at home. The school runs workshops for parents, carers and professionals and usually takes the lead in promoting multi-agency involvement. This has proved effective in aiding the links between home and school and in helping pupils' transition into and from the school. In many ways pupils are supported well. However, opportunities for them to learn to make choices are less well developed. For example, there are limited opportunities for them to choose routes of accreditation matched to their interests or to learn about making choices in personal relationships. Good personal care ensures pupils' welfare, for example, preparation at the end of the day helps pupils to tolerate the arrangements to transport them home, often over long distances.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school's leaders are very highly regarded by parents and carers and by schools who benefit from the outreach advice and support for pupils with autism. Several plans for the school's reorganisation have culminated in the agreement of plans for a new build in another district of the city. Staff and pupils have been very involved in contributing to the design. As a result, plans for the new school incorporate innovative ideas to enhance provision for children with autism in Manchester into the future.

The senior leaders have continued to monitor teaching and learning and to support the professional development of staff. However, self-evaluation to analyse strengths and weaknesses sometimes lacks the rigour to inform developmental planning to further improve standards for the current pupils.

Governors are very committed to the school but are few in number. While governors are highly supportive, they sometimes find it difficult to attend meetings and to spend time in school and this restricts their involvement in evaluating the school's performance in order to provide the necessary challenge.

All staff receive training in child protection and positive behaviour management techniques. Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet government requirements. Regular checks and risk assessments are carried out and the site is secure. The school protects pupils' health, safety and well-being effectively. Its promotion of equality of opportunity is good. It meets the needs of individuals well but monitoring and evaluation of the progress of different groups is less sophisticated. However, the school has recognised the needs of its minority of girls and has targeted funding to make additional and effective provision for them. The school encourages participation in activities involving other pupils and other schools and reaches out to the local community, but there is currently no evaluation of the impact for pupils of its work on community cohesion. Very good partnerships have developed with other schools who receive outreach support from Grange School staff and this provides benefits to pupils who make use of their facilities and who, for example, join in sporting activities.

Parents and carers are confident that their children are well cared for and value the partnerships which support them in caring for their children at home. Sometimes they would like to know more about what their children are learning. Because of the good outcomes for pupils, the school provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*



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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

At the time of the inspection there were two pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is a new area for the school which had not admitted children under five prior to this year, but which is effective. Leaders, managers and teachers in the primary department have taken steps to ensure they have a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and welfare requirements. As a result, the quality of education and care are good and the provision is well led and managed. Pupils spend some of their time with older pupils in Key Stage 1, but the school has ensured their progress is being monitored against the early learning goals. Some sessions are specifically targeted to this small group and meet their needs well. Pupils have settled well into routines and are beginning to develop communication and social skills through good planning of learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, often well organised so that one leads to the other. For example, one session involved a 'bear hunt'. This started with children following the story in their own tactile versions of the book and then led to an enactment of the hunt through different sensory settings in the classroom. Initially, adults led the hunt but as confidence grew children explored the different settings themselves. One boy showed real independence as he took cards describing the settings in the story through symbol and text and matched them to the different locations in the room. Outside there is freedom to learn through informal play but adults gently support the children in sustaining their attention on a particular activity for growing lengths of time.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

**Sixth form**

Provision in Grange School for 16-19 year olds is good and the sixth form is well led and managed. Teaching helps the development of key skills and students become more independent through an appropriate curriculum. They learn essential life skills, for example, through 'showering' programmes and by going into the community to practice their numeracy skills in shops. As a result, students make good progress in their learning and in developing the skills they will need as adults. Students increasingly work together well in teams. For example, in a lesson where students prepared their own lunch, everyone undertook different roles in preparing vegetables, making dough and in clearing away and washing up. Teaching assistants provided effective prompts to ensure all the students participated successfully in making the pizzas. There was some brief opportunity for students to evaluate their learning in this lesson. However, overall in the sixth form, self-assessment is less fully developed so that students are not always well placed to evaluate their learning and to contribute to decisions about their futures. The school is introducing Foundation Learning but this is at a very early stage in providing further vocational, life and enterprise opportunities and related accreditation.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

**Views of parents and carers**

From the completed questionnaires received from more than half of parents and carers, it is clear that the overwhelming majority feel that their child is enjoying school and they are unanimous in their belief that their child is kept safe. One parent said 'I could not have asked for a better school and my second son is also on the waiting list (he is also autistic)' and another 'I cannot begin to express our delight with his progress and

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obvious contentment at the school'. Although many parents and carers are grateful for the support they receive from the school, some would like more information to better support their child's learning at home. Parents and carers believe that behaviour is managed effectively. Inspectors agree that staff receive training to understand and manage the behaviours of pupils with autism spectrum conditions which helps to ensure the school is calm and happy.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grange 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	62	17	34	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	68	16	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	60	19	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	58	16	32	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	30	60	16	32	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	50	20	40	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	48	22	44	2	4	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)	25	50	18	36	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	60	18	36	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	60	18	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	58	19	38	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	70	12	24	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	74	12	24	1	2	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



02 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange School, Manchester, M14 5AZ

Thank you so much for welcoming the inspectors into your school. We know that the weather was very hot and that some of you were getting tired by the end of the day but you behaved really well during our visits to your classrooms which must have disrupted your routines. I want to tell you a few of the things we found out during the inspection.

- We think that your teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to make sure you are well cared for and make good progress in your learning.
- The school gives you lots of exciting opportunities to get out and about and learn new things in the community.
- The school is especially good at helping you with things you find particularly difficult, like sharing with each other and letting people know how you feel and what you want.
- As you get older you become more confident and learn skills which will help you when you leave school. We think you can gain some nationally recognised qualifications.

We have asked the staff and governors to do two things to make the school even better for you:

- find a better way to assess your small steps of progress and involve you more in understanding how well you are doing
- make sure the school's governors find out more about the things you are doing so that they can check how well things are improving further for you.

We know that some of you went to see the work start on clearing the site for your new school which will be very exciting and we wish you well for the future. Thank you again for showing us the work you do.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hilary Ward

Lead inspector

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