

Grindleford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112550
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337961
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Edge
Headteacher	Leonie Hill
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 8 lessons or parts of lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's records relating to pupils' progress, samples of pupil's work, the school's records of monitoring, its development plans and 27 parent questionnaires.

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

- marking and target setting
- progress in writing in Key Stage 2
- the way that the school checks its work.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than most primary schools and the majority of pupils come from the local village. Very few pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is well below average. Currently children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught with Year 1 pupils in temporary accommodation while purpose-built provision is being constructed. During the extended absence of the substantive headteacher, the school is being led by an acting headteacher.

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

This is a good school that has improved significantly since its previous inspection. Good management systems combined with excellent team work means that all staff have leadership and management roles. Consequently the school has continued to develop despite recent unavoidable staff absence and disruptive building work. The school provides a very good balance between structure, discipline, learning and fun and pupils feel exceptionally safe. Consequently pupils blossom into confident, extremely articulate young people whose behaviour is outstanding. This alongside above average academic attainment and above average rates of attendance means that pupils are very well placed for future success.

Teaching is good and pupils find it a joy to learn because of the emphasis on learning through practical and exciting activities. Children make satisfactory progress through the Reception year but their progress accelerates to good in Years 1 to 6. By the time they leave in Year 6 attainment is above average and they have achieved well. Pupils often make exceptional progress in mathematics to reach very high standards of attainment but their progress in writing is not as fast. This is because older pupils do not always respond fully to the high quality marking of their writing and academic targets are not used effectively enough. Consequently they continue to make simple mistakes in their spelling and punctuation and their writing lacks excitement.

All staff have high aspirations and are reflective in their practice. However, there are weaknesses in assessment procedures in the Early Years Foundation stage which slow children's learning. Good quality monitoring of teaching, combined with effective tracking of pupils' progress and analysis of data has enabled the school to pinpoint exactly where it needed to improve, and careful planning has under-pinned developments. As a result there have been sustained improvements in outcomes for pupils, both in terms of their personal development and their academic attainment. Accurate school self- evaluation and successful improvement planning indicate that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve assessment procedures in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that children's learning is checked regularly through direct observations that are carefully recorded and gathered together efficiently
 - making sure that assessment information is used effectively enough to ensure that activities are planned to meet pupils' individual needs.

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- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
 - establishing a dialogue with pupils that ensures they respond positively to their teachers' marking
 - using academic target-setting more effectively
 - improving pupils' spelling and punctuation.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils are making good progress in Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 2 they consistently reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. An above average proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. In lessons pupils are very keen to do well and apply themselves with gusto. Their mathematical skills develop very rapidly and they achieve high standards in this subject. The school is aware that their skills in writing are not developing at the same pace. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are becoming more enthusiastic about writing and this is reflected in vibrant pieces of work. This reflects improvements to provision including better quality teaching. However pupils in Years 5 and 6 are continuing to make simple mistakes with their spelling and punctuation and their writing is less exciting. The standard of their writing does not always fully reflect their excellent oral skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils because they are well supported.

Pupils are very proud of their school community and say it is like a family. This view is echoed by parents and staff. There is a very active school council and pupils are keen to take on extra responsibilities. Their involvement in the local community is substantial and highly valued by many. Pupils know how to keep healthy. They eat sensibly and are keen to take exercise. Pupils' outstanding social and moral development is reflected in their very mature attitudes and excellent standards of behaviour. Pupils are highly considerate and thoughtful of each other. Conflicts are rare but when they do arise they are resolved intelligently and pupils work together extremely well. Although pupils are very tolerant of differences the development of their understanding of other faiths and cultures is satisfactory rather than good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lively teaching combined with a brisk pace and a good range of activities ensures that pupils are enthusiastic about learning. Relationships are warm and supportive and humour is used very effectively to skilfully manage and motivate pupils. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of all pupils but make a particularly effective input to supporting pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. Teachers have good questioning skills which they use both to check learning and to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. Work is matched well to pupils needs, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Teachers' marking, particularly of writing, is often of a very high quality but does not always have sufficient impact. This is because pupils' responses to the teachers' very specific guidance are not thoroughly checked. Academic targets are not routinely set in English lessons and as a result there are missed opportunities to rigorously address elementary mistakes in punctuation and spelling.

The curriculum is well organised, imaginative and provides a good range of learning experiences. A strong emphasis on working together, developing research skills and a high level of independence successfully supports many aspects of pupils' personal development and ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils enjoy the topics which make links between different subject areas and are designed to build upon their own interests. For example, they talk enthusiastically about making their own Terracotta army when they were involved in a topic about Asia. Partnerships with other local schools successfully extend pupils' opportunities in many subject areas. This is illustrated by the way the school has worked with the local high

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school on a film project that emphasised developing narratives with the aim of improving boys' writing. The good enrichment, including visits and a wide range of clubs, is very much appreciated by pupils.

The quality of pastoral care is good and this is reflected in the way pupils feel at ease in the school. Potentially vulnerable students and those with special education needs and disabilities are well supported. This well-targeted support is enhanced by good links with external agencies. Pupils value the good range of rewards for good behaviour such as 'fine dining' and 'golden time' and they respond extremely well to the clear guidance and structure relating to standards of behaviour. Good arrangements for transition to secondary school mean that pupils are looking forward confidently to the next stage in their education.

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?

All staff in this small school contribute well towards leadership and management. They are very dedicated and have high expectations of themselves and of their pupils. This is reflected in the setting of very challenging targets and a good commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for pupils, including carefully checking the learning and progress of different groups and individuals. Leaders vigilantly evaluate the school's work. They have already identified how improvements can be made to the quality of pupils' writing and their plans are already starting to have an impact. Leaders are aware that there is more to be done in the Early Years Foundation Stage, hence the development of the new accommodation. The work of the governors has improved significantly since the previous inspection and they now provide the school with effective support and challenge. There is no doubt that the school is at the heart of its local community. Although there have been good links beyond the immediate community in the past these links have declined recently. Currently there is limited work to promote contact between pupils from different backgrounds. Relationships with parents are of a high quality although formal communication is satisfactory and informal communication is very good indeed. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. Although pupils are very well cared-for and checks on staff are thorough, the acting head has yet to up-date his training in child protection procedures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	3
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 enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and feel safe and secure. This is because relationships between children and staff are of a high quality and children are well cared for. When children join Class 1 their skills are similar to those expected for their age. Currently children make satisfactory progress in lessons because they have access to lively introductions that capture their interest and are well supported by adults who are very good at questioning children and moving their learning on. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage are working in very difficult circumstances and the current temporary accommodation impacts on the range of activities that can be planned. Although a reasonable range of activities is provided, the school does not always offer continuous provision where children choose from diverse, carefully planned activities for themselves. In part, this is because the staff are anxious to provide well for the majority of the class who are in Year 1. Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough and result in the information contained in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile being insecure. More needs to be done to ensure that children's learning is checked regularly through direct observations and that these observations are recorded and gathered together efficiently. Assessment information is not used effectively enough to ensure that activities are planned to meet pupils' individual needs. Nevertheless, leadership and management are satisfactory. The leader of the unit is working very hard to develop better practice. For example, steps are already being taken to improve assessment including undertaking further training.

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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

Over half of the parents responded to the questionnaire. They are delighted with what the school provides for their children. Many comment on the wonderful opportunities that are available their children and about how their children are growing in confidence. They know that their children are very happy in school and remark positively about the hardworking and committed staff. A few parents would like more information from the school about their children's progress and what they can do to support their children's learning. Inspectors found that informal contact between parents and staff is excellent and parents get satisfactory formal information about their children's progress and the work of the school. However there are missed opportunities to provide parents with additional information about how they can help their children, for example, the school website is very out of date and there have been relatively few events workshops or other events which help parents to support their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at insert name of 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/inspector received 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	56	10	37	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	63	8	33	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	52	12	44	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	81	5	19	0	0	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)	16	59	8	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	70	8	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	67	6	22	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	56	12	44	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	52	10	37	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	49	20	49	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 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.



16 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grindleford School Derbyshire S32 2HS

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school and to share in your Christmas celebrations. You go to a good school that is getting better all the time. It's clear that you have a fantastic time at school because of all the fun things you get to do. I enjoyed listening to you sing at the Christmas carol services and lots of you told me that you enjoyed the recent Young Voices event at Sheffield. I thought you were very well informed about how to keep healthy and I was pleased to hear that you feel exceptionally safe. You have excellent manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. Your behaviour is outstanding. I think that you all make a really important contribution to your school.

You told me how much you liked your teachers and you are quite right to say that teaching is good. Children get off to a satisfactory start in Reception. However more needs to be done to check their learning and to plan activities that meet their individual needs. Those of you in Years 1 to 6 are all making good progress and by the end of Year 6 you are reaching standards that are above those reached by other children in schools nationally. You are doing very well in your mathematics lessons but your progress is slower in writing. I noticed that your teachers work very hard to make sure that they tell you exactly how to improve your writing when they mark your work. However you do not always take enough notice of your teachers' helpful written instructions and this is slowing your progress. You can help by always responding well to your teachers' marking and by making sure you do not make careless mistakes with your spelling and punctuation.

You told me that the staff look after you well and I agree. The people who run your school are working hard to make it an even better place. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector

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