

The Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119940
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339561
Inspection dates	1-2 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris
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	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Horton
Headteacher	Mike Owen
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2007
School address	Asfordby Road Melton Mowbray LE13 0HN
Telephone number	01664 562554
Fax number	01664 562554
Email address	office@meltongrove.leics.sch.uk

Age group	4-11
Inspection date(s)	1-2 October 2009
Inspection number	339561

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documents including the development plan, safeguarding information, curriculum and lesson planning, attendance information and pupils' work. The inspection team analysed the one hundred responses to the parent questionnaire.

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

- the way in which the school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils particularly boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the impact of the school's work to improve standards
- the way that the school tries to engage boys
- how well governors plan to make sure that the school is improving.

Information about the school

The Grove is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly speech and language difficulties, emotional difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorders, is higher than average. Almost all pupils are White British. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision from the age of four.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving school. Since his appointment two years ago, the headteacher has successfully introduced many good new strategies that are just beginning to have a positive impact on provision and outcomes for pupils. For example, the school is entering its second year of collaboration with the 'Mighty Creative' initiative, through creative partnerships. This is an enterprising project involving external practitioners, thus enabling the school to widen pupils' horizons and develop their awareness of the wider world. This is resulting in improved partnerships and a wide range of additional creative activities that are helping to promote pupils' confidence, social skills and self-esteem. Consequently, their personal development is improving. Because of accurate school self-evaluation, leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are aware that the good quality of care, guidance and support that the school provides has led to pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and rising attendance.

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills are below those expected for their age in almost all areas, and are well below expected levels in communication, language and literacy. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception and enter Year 1 with skills that are below average. Progress continues to be satisfactory throughout the school, with some good progress in Year 2 and Years 5 and 6 because of an increase in the pace of learning in these classes. This is due to good quality teaching and carefully focused support. Standards over the past few years have been below average when pupils leave the school in Year 6. This picture is just beginning to change: in the statutory tests in 2009 and in the current Year 6 class standards show signs of improvement, particularly in reading where standards are broadly average. Standards in writing are not high enough because there is a lack of consistency in the way writing is taught. There is also too little emphasis on improving pupils' skills through marking, which does not regularly tell them how they could do better. As a result, writing standards lag behind those in reading, particularly for boys.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. They receive effective support and their progress is rigorously monitored. As a result, they make good progress. Higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted or talented do not achieve as well as this because of low expectations of what they can achieve. Some good new resources and creative approaches to curriculum planning are beginning to have a positive impact on engaging most pupils in learning.

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

Leadership and management, though satisfactory are improving because leaders and managers at all levels are now working together well to improve provision and standards. Rigorous systems to track pupils' achievements and to monitor the quality of provision now show how well each pupil is doing and what they need to do next. The schools' strategy for promoting community cohesion is good. It is helping to extend pupils' awareness of their own local area as well as helping them to improve their knowledge of the wider world. Links with parents are good. Rigorous systems to keep pupils safe, including child protection procedures, fully meet current government requirements. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for boys, by ensuring that:
 - there is a consistent approach to the teaching of writing across the school
 - pupils do enough writing in lessons
 - pupils are encouraged to use their writing skills in other subjects.
- Rigorously monitor teaching to ensure that expectations are high enough to enable all groups of pupils, particularly those of higher attainment, to achieve their potential.
- Improve the consistency of marking so that it offers specific guidance on how pupils can improve their work.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The vast majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, and they make good progress in reading. Standards are below average by Year 6 but are beginning to improve. This is because of recent increased tracking and monitoring of pupils' achievements. Pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 make the best progress. This is due to some effective teaching in these classes where the pace of learning increases. In other classes, learning is satisfactory because expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. This limits the progress of many pupils, particularly those who are more able, who do not always achieve their potential. It is also evident in writing where boys in particular do not achieve well enough or as well as other boys locally or nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well across the school because of some high quality support and effective use of teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils achieve well in art and there are many good examples of their work with local artists displayed around the school.

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

Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is improving. They say they feel safe and secure. 'This is a brilliant school and the books are cool and creative. The teachers are excellent,' wrote one pupil. Pupils behave well and work cooperatively with their peers. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and take part in daily exercise with enthusiasm. Pupils contribute well to the community. For example, they recently worked closely with local people to organise and take part in a carnival in which they performed dances and concerts. The 'Mighty Creative' initiative is having a positive impact on pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is evident in a recent curriculum initiative in which each class studied a different country and developed a greater understanding of the lives and cultures of others. As a result of their growing awareness of the challenges and difficulties faced by people in other parts of the world, pupils organised stalls to raise funds for various charities. Pupils show a good awareness of right and wrong and older pupils regularly help younger ones particularly as buddies in the playground. Pupils' preparation for the future is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Evident strengths of teaching include positive relationships in all classes and the high level of support provided by the many teaching assistants who make a positive contribution to the learning of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teaching across the school is satisfactory, although good

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

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

teaching was seen in some lessons where pupils were encouraged to work at a fast pace to increase the amount of work they did. The use of assessment to help pupils make the next steps in their learning is variable, as is the quality of teachers' marking. This is supportive but does not always help pupils to improve their work or explain how to get to the next level. Pupils get off to a good start in their writing in Years 1 and 2, but they do not build on this sufficiently as they move into Years 3 and 4. The lack of a consistent writing strategy means that some pupils do not progress as well in the subject as they could. For example, there is a lack of cursive writing in Years 3 and 4 and this impacts on standards as pupils get older.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving due to the school's focus on developing a creative approach to learning. Although in the early stages, it is beginning to provide pupils with some exciting opportunities to learn about the world around them and is just beginning to provide increased opportunities for writing. For example, links with a school in Spain have led to older pupils learning the language, exchanging work, and developing pen-friends. A recent creative experience in which the whole school packed their suitcases and used role-play to create an imaginary trip to Spain led to some exciting writing by all pupils. There is a good range of after-school clubs that are well attended and which contribute well to pupils' health and fitness.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils which is having a positive impact on their personal development and on outcomes for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnerships contribute well to pupils' learning. For example, local college students regularly visit and work with pupils and a recent 'Dragons Den' activity with local businesses helped pupils to improve their confidence and self-esteem. Effective induction procedures ensure that pupils settle quickly and there are good links with secondary schools so that transition is smooth.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the future of the school. Systems to promote improvement are securely embedded and are beginning to improve provision, raise standards, promote equality and tackle discrimination. For example, actions to improve pupils' personal development through good quality care, guidance and support have resulted in good behaviour in all areas of the school as

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

well as rising attendance and significantly fewer exclusions in the past year. Provision to engage boys in learning through practical and visual approaches is improving, though leaders know that there is more to do. Standards are just beginning to rise because of some accurate assessment and tracking that is helping to identify clear targets for improvement. Monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory but is not always rigorous enough to ensure that expectations of what pupils can do are high enough. Procedures to keep pupils safe are good and child protection procedures are particularly robust. There are several new members of the governing body and, though supportive, they are not yet as effective as they could be in challenging leaders about their decisions or about the school's performance. The school's strategy for promoting community cohesion is good and is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school's work, believing that their child is happy and safe at school. Links with external agencies are particularly strong and some very effective business links have resulted in the provision of exciting new music resources and some good quality work related experiences for pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy coming to the Reception class because their welfare needs are met effectively and relationships are good. They behave appropriately but many have limited personal and social skills which result in some children taking a while to settle. On entry, many have skills that are below those expected in all areas of learning except in physical development. In communication, language and literacy, children's skills are well below those expected. During their time in the class, they make satisfactory progress. At times, there are not enough opportunities for children

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

to develop their independence in learning by making choices and sometimes too much is done for them. There is, otherwise, an appropriate balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Children benefit from some good resources and the large spacious environment both inside and outside the classrooms. It was evident that children particularly enjoy the outdoor area as a group of them played a game with a parachute as they tried to join in with singing simple songs. Their skills in singing nursery rhymes are limited. Leadership is satisfactory. Children's achievements are recorded appropriately through photographs, assessment and observation. These records show that children enjoy regular visits to places of local interest. Children are safe and secure.

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

The school has good relationships with parents and carers. Most parents feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress, although a very small minority feel that they are not kept informed about how well their child is doing at school. A very large majority of parents are happy with the school. They feel that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps them safe and helps to keep them healthy. They particularly like the way in which the school focuses on personal development and many parents commented on pupils' good behaviour. 'The Grove emphasis is not solely about achieving high standards but about turning out sound social and interactive children' wrote one parent. Another commented that, 'The teachers and staff are all approachable and very caring towards the children'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 252 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	62	36	36	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	70	26	26	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	36	36	51	51	9	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	42	49	49	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	59	59	36	36	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	44	44	46	46	8	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	40	52	52	7	7	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)	37	37	48	48	8	8	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	35	54	54	7	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	37	40	40	12	12	6	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	31	48	48	13	13	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	53	53	36	36	7	7	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	50	50	37	37	5	5	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 all 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 pupils' 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.



5 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Grove Primary School, Melton Mowbray, LE13 0HN

Thank you for your welcome on our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking to you.

You go to a satisfactory and improving school. That means that there are some things that the school does well, but also some things that could be better. This letter is to tell you about the things we found out about your school.

- You enjoy school and behave well.
- You are learning to be healthy and to keep fit.
- You work well with your local community.
- You make satisfactory progress in most of your lessons and you make good progress in reading and art.
- Those of you who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in all areas of learning because of the good help you are given.
- Teachers plan many satisfactory activities for you to do and you have lots of visits and visitors to help you learn about others.
- The headteacher and other adults take good care of you and the school keeps you safe.

We are asking the school to do three things to help you do even better. You could help by trying hard with your writing and making sure you do enough writing in your lessons.

- To ensure that all of you, but especially boys, improve your writing skills.
- To make sure that those of you who could do more in your lessons are encouraged to do so.
- To make sure that marking of your work tells you how you could do it better.

Yours faithfully

Denise Morris
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [08456 404045](tel:08456404045), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.