

Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126255
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	360030
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Claudia Ellis
Headteacher	Mr Alastair Ponsford
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 15 members of staff. Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including records of pupils' progress, policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe, plans for improvement and records of monitoring activities. The responses in the questionnaires returned by 144 parents and carers were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- The achievement in Key Stage 2 of the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively leaders at all levels monitor pupils' learning and progress.
- The school's evidence for judging the curriculum and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as outstanding.

Information about the school

Grove Primary School is larger than average in comparison with primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. A below average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school's specially resourced provision for special educational needs serves West Wiltshire. It is open to any pupil with a statement for hearing impairment regardless of the level of loss. At the time of the inspection, five pupils were being supported by the hearing impaired resource base through a mixture of in-class support and sessions when pupils are withdrawn, mainly for speech and language development.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. Childcare, involving breakfast after-school clubs, is provided by an external provider and is not managed by the governing body. It is, therefore, inspected separately.

The school has achieved several rewards, including the International Schools Award, Arts-Mark Gold and Healthy Schools Plus.

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

Grove Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. A very large majority of parents are happy with the school's work and confirm that their children enjoy school. One parent's comment was typical of many in praising their child's time at Grove as 'very happy due to the commitment and dedication of all the staff'. Pupils have positive attitudes to school life and behaviour is good. They feel safe in school and talk knowledgeably about various ways of keeping themselves safe beyond the school environment. They respond well to the school's efforts to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Attainment is above average when pupils leave the school in Year 6. Attendance has improved to above average since the last inspection. Both demonstrate that pupils are in a good position to make the most of their secondary education. On face value, this suggests that pupils make good progress from their starting points when they start in Reception, which are generally below average. However, overall achievement is no better than satisfactory because of some marked inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress'. Pupils make better progress in some classes than others and there is unevenness in the progress of different groups. Higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as other groups in both key stages. In contrast, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning and development. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also achieve well overall in the main school and especially in the hearing impaired resource base. The provision here is a strength of the school; the quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding, leading to good achievement overall and outstanding progress for some pupils.

The school's curriculum is well organised, imaginative and balanced and has a strong impact on pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school. The school's well-established and effective international links are a good example. Teaching is satisfactory. Good questioning, skilful management of pupils' behaviour and good relationships are features common to many lessons. However, the school's monitoring and data show there is too much variation in the quality of teaching for this to be judged better than satisfactory. Appropriate steps have been taken to develop greater consistency and this is improving. For example, the teachers' assessments suggest that attainment at Key Stage 1 will improve this year.

Good systems are in place to keep pupils safe. Staff are very aware of the school's policies and procedures and pupils are well cared for and supported in this respect.

The leadership team's evaluation of the school's effectiveness is generally accurate. Senior leaders are aware of the weaker aspects in pupils' achievement, although some of their judgements, submitted shortly before the inspection, are over- generous. This is mostly down to senior leaders focusing more on the quality of the provision rather than the impact of this, together with any recent initiatives, on the learning and progress for all

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groups of pupils. Nevertheless, attainment at Key Stage 1 is improving, including in mathematics, which has been a weaker aspect. More pupils are expected to reach the higher level (Level 3) this year at Year 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. The inconsistencies in pupils' progress are being identified and tackled, with some signs of success. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection. These indicate the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of pupils' achievement, by:
 - making better use of the information from the Early Years Foundation Stage profiles to promote good learning across Key Stage 1
 - monitoring pupils' ongoing progress more regularly and taking steps to intervene and support at an early stage for pupils making slower progress
 - using the end-of-year targets levels more effectively and reviewing these as the year progresses to check how well individual pupils are on track to meet them.
- Improve the accuracy and impact of the school's self-evaluation, by:
 - considering the impact of provision and any new initiatives on pupils' learning when evaluating their effectiveness
 - ensuring that any monitoring, particularly of teaching, has a clear focus on the learning and progress of different groups, particularly higher attaining pupils
 - reviewing and clarifying the responsibilities of members of the leadership team in monitoring pupils' academic progress
 - strengthening the role of governors in monitoring pupils' achievement.
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching, by:
 - disseminating the strengths that already exist in teaching
 - ensuring information from assessments is used effectively by all teachers to set appropriate work for higher attaining pupils
 - ensuring feedback from leaders' monitoring activities focus on any variation in the learning of different groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are responsive and enthusiastic in lessons and in almost all cases settle well to tasks and maintain concentration. They readily enter into discussion when asked to work in pairs and groups and enjoy sharing their work and ideas with the rest of the class. Pupils have a good awareness of their learning targets in some classes. However, there is quite a wide variation in how successfully assessment is used in lessons to support learning for all groups of pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils. It is used well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and very effectively for pupils in the hearing impaired resource base. There is good practice in some lessons, when pupils are actively

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involved in reviewing their learning. In one Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, higher attaining pupils referred to their targets without any prompting and these were at the forefront of their minds when making different amounts with a set number of coins. Such good practice, however, is not a routine part of pupils' learning across the school.

Attainment at Key Stage 2 has been above average over the last three years with the school's assessments suggesting a similar picture for this year. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has been below average because learning and progress for some pupils have not been consistent across this key stage. This is showing signs of improvement in that there are pockets of outstanding learning and progress in Year 2. Despite the good results in national tests, there is also variability in pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 although, again, this is reducing.

Pupils are confident in their own safety and the security of the school. They appreciate the steps that have been taken to replace the school fencing. Behaviour is good overall, especially in lessons. Pupils report that not all pupils set high standards for themselves in the playground at lunchtimes. The headteacher knows from the school's own consultations that this is a view held by some pupils, and appropriate plans for improvement are in place. Pupils show a strong interest in keeping healthy, praising the healthy choices at lunchtime, for example, and participating in clubs that keep them active. There is good participation in the range of enrichment activities and after-school clubs that are available through the school. Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities they have to put forward their ideas, contribute and take responsibility. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They benefit considerably from the school's strong international links, though are less aware of some of the cultural differences represented within Great Britain.

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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	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, rather than good, because inconsistencies have not yet been fully addressed to bring about good learning and progress for all groups. There are clear strengths within the teaching. Teaching in the hearing impaired resource base is good. The teacher and teaching assistants use a variety of communication methods, including British Sign Language, to help pupils learn. They work closely and effectively with class teachers and teaching assistants. Most teachers employ a range of effective questioning techniques to explore pupils' thinking and understanding. Teaching assistants provide effective and sensitive support and play a strong role in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Planning for higher attaining pupils is not consistently effective and opportunities are sometimes missed to provide an additional degree of challenge through more in-depth questioning or tasks.

The curriculum is good and particularly effective in promoting pupils' personal development. It is not yet having a strong enough impact on pupils' academic achievement to be judged outstanding. Arrangements for pupils' care, support and guidance are well organised and effective. Pupils who find themselves in vulnerable situations are supported very well and the school has good links with a range of agencies to support these pupils and their families. Provision in the hearing impaired resource base is carefully targeted and based on in-depth knowledge of each individual's needs. Pupils are helped in many ways to overcome significant barriers to their learning. Parents are

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kept informed and involved and the strong links with other agencies, including speech therapy, are also an important factor in these pupils' good progress.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is clear drive and ambition from leaders to ensure pupils' good personal development and enjoyment of school. Revisions in the curriculum, for example, have led to greater engagement and enjoyment for pupils. Leaders' work to ensure all groups achieve well is not as effective. Some analysis of pupils' learning and progress is carried out by leaders but this is not sufficiently regular. Some occurs too late in the academic year to support any pupils at risk of underachieving. The extent to which different leaders, such as subject and phase leaders, have responsibility for monitoring and pupils' standards and progress also lacks clarity. Nevertheless, the subject coordinators for English and mathematics can point to some initiatives that have improved outcomes for pupils and their plans for improvement are appropriate. The work this year to improve pupils' numeracy skills has had a clear impact. Some initiatives, however, are at a relatively early stage and have not yet had a chance to embed and make a demonstrable difference to pupils' learning. The revised approach to teaching pupils about the sounds that letters make, to support early reading skills, is a good example.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led effectively and the improvements to the outdoor area have broadened the opportunities for children's play and development. The information from the Early Years Foundation Stage assessments are not used sufficiently to guide the teachers' planning in Year 1 and to set targets for individual pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1. Across the school, the end of year targets are set automatically by the computer program and leaders are not reviewing and amending these, when necessary, to promote good learning for all groups. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory but no better than this, due to inconsistencies in achievement. An appropriate range of monitoring is carried out by senior leaders. Joint monitoring carried out during the inspection with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher indicate that their judgements on teaching are broadly accurate. The senior leadership team's records of monitoring activities focus less effectively, however, on the learning and progress of different groups, particularly higher attaining pupils.

The school's partnership with parents is good overall. The school has established a good range of partnership activities, including links with other schools, locally and internationally, and close liaison with specialist agencies.

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The governing body provides satisfactory leadership. Arrangements for ensuring pupils are safeguarded are good. Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school and are kept informed by the headteacher and some subject coordinators. Some visit the school to observe the school's work for themselves. Governors know some of the main headlines from the national assessments but they are not given as much information on pupils' achievement. Consequently, their role in monitoring how effectively the school's provision is helping all pupils to achieve well is not as well developed. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to link with the local community and the international links are strong. The weaker aspect relates to the limited opportunities for pupils to establish links with contrasting areas in this country.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills that are generally below the expectations for children of this age. They achieve well in their learning and development during their time in Reception and, when they enter Year 1, children's attainment is broadly average. Children are happy and confident, willing to share and cooperate, both in activities that are led by adults and those where they are able to make choices for themselves. When given these opportunities, they happily select their own activities and resources. However, on occasions, the opportunities for making choices are rather limited.

Children's enjoyment of learning is very clear, helped by the positive relationships between children and adults and between the children themselves. They are aware of the routines and the need to move and act safely because a consistent approach is used across both classes. During the inspection, for example, one child was heard to say to another, 'Be sensible or someone will get hurt.'

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Teaching is good and informed by a good knowledge of how children learn and develop. There is good attention to individual children's needs and the atmosphere is supportive and lively. This brings about happy children and very good behaviour. Children are cared for well and there is good attention to ensuring they learn and play in a safe environment. Partnerships with parents and other agencies are having a strong impact on children's learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leadership is good and strongly focused on improving provision and outcomes for children. The improvements since the last inspection are testament to this. As a result, the outdoor area is much improved and this resource makes a clear contribution to pupils' broader learning and development. The plans for future action and records of meetings show a common sense of purpose and illustrate good teamwork. Comments from several parents confirm their happiness with provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the good start that their children make to their education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents are happy with the school's work, confirming that their children enjoy school and feel safe. A small minority of parents submitted written comments. The positive and negative comments were generally balanced in number. The commitment and dedication of staff and pupils' enjoyment of school was a common feature of those praising the school's work. Behaviour, pupils' safety and aspects of leadership and management drew some criticism. A few parents reported doubts about whether their children were making enough progress. All these were explored during inspection. No issues were identified concerning pupils' safety. Leadership and management and pupils' progress were found to be satisfactory overall but some weaker aspects were identified within both and are therefore included as areas for development for the school.

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 144 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 414 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	49	63	44	5	3	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	66	46	72	50	3	2	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	43	30	87	60	9	6	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	35	75	52	14	10	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	62	43	72	50	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	28	85	59	11	8	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	34	84	58	7	5	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)	42	29	85	59	7	5	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	36	79	55	9	6	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	28	68	47	18	13	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	24	87	60	10	7	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	42	29	66	46	16	11	8	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	43	70	49	8	6	2	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



20 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove Primary School, Trowbridge BA14 0JG

You will know that we visited your school recently and we would like to thank you for helping us in our work by talking to us about your school and what it is like to be a pupil at Grove Primary. We would like to thank the pupils who completed a questionnaire. Special thanks also go to the group of pupils from the school council who met with an inspector.

We judged your school to be satisfactory. There are many good things about your school. Your questionnaires showed us you enjoy school and you feel well supported. The children learn a lot in Reception and make a good start. The children who are supported in the hearing impaired resource base receive very good support and do well. Those of you who need extra help with your work in lessons also learn successfully. We judged your behaviour to be good and were pleased to see that you know a lot about how to keep yourselves safe and are committed to keeping healthy.

There are some classes in the school where you learn a lot in lessons. This is because you are taught well, the teachers know what you are capable of, and plan work at the right level for all of you. This is not the case for all classes, though, and we found that some of you could tackle harder work and make better progress as you move through the school. We have asked the school to make sure that all of you learn well no matter which class you are in. We have also asked your headteacher and the leadership team to check more regularly and thoroughly how successfully you learn and make progress. When the senior leaders review how well they think the school is doing, we have asked that they consider how you are benefiting from all the activities and any new ideas that are introduced.

You work hard in lessons and show interest in most activities. You are very good at cooperating with one another and it is good that you put forward your own ideas for improving the school. We hope you will continue to do this and try your best.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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