

Grange Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124035
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	395447
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Gerald Griffin

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pearl Harrison
Headteacher	Jean Woolner
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2008
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gerald Griffin

Additional Inspector

Patricia Underwood

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed the teaching in 11 lessons, as well as visiting a further six lessons for shorter periods to evaluate pupils' progress and the quality of marking in more depth. A total of nine teachers were observed teaching, as well as a number of teaching assistants. The inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, three members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress and heard them read; evaluated safeguarding documentation, records of exclusions and the results of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. The inspectors took account of the views of the 57 parents and carers and 12 staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire.

Information about the school

Grange is larger than the average-sized infants school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Nearly half of all pupils come from a White British background. The rest of the school population is largely made up of pupils from a Pakistani background. There are a few other pupils from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The headteacher is also Executive Head of Belvedere Junior School. She spends two and a half days per week at the Infant school. The two schools at present operate a soft federation and are looking at the possibility of full federation for September 2013.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school in which pupils achieve well. Despite many strengths, the school is not outstanding because the quality of teaching is not high enough to ensure that pupils make consistently outstanding progress in all subjects.
- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and their good progress continues in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. All groups, in all phases, achieve equally well, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Teaching is good. Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of interesting and engaging experiences. Relationships in lessons are positive and pupils enjoy their learning. Occasionally, the typically rapid pace of learning is not sustained when introductions last too long. While children’s reading skills are developing well there are occasions when work on the sounds that letters represent (phonics) is not effectively matched to their differing abilities.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good and they make a strong contribution to the well-ordered school and the smooth flow of lessons. Pupils’ attitudes to learning are positive and they show initiative, perseverance and can manage their own learning from an early age. They feel extremely safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and secure. While attendance has improved strongly over the past two years, the learning of too many pupils is interrupted by holidays taken during term time, which slows their progress.
- The headteacher’s unrelenting drive to improve the school is enthusiastically shared by staff. Since the last inspection leaders have improved standards in reading, markedly raised attendance rates and strengthened the quality of engagement with parents and carers in supporting pupils’ achievement. This means that the school has a strong capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2013, improve teaching and progress to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently secure a rapid pace of learning throughout lessons by ensuring introductions do not last too long
 - ensuring that phonics work for children is always closely matched to individuals' specific needs.
- By July 2013, improve pupils' progress by working with parents and carers to reduce significantly the number of holidays families take during term time.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below those expected for their age. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, although their attainment remains a little below average when they leave Reception. Leaders check carefully that their assessments of children's levels and progress are accurate. On occasions phonic work is not sufficiently well matched to children's capabilities and this means progress in reading is not outstanding.

This good start is built upon in later years in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is average. Attainment in reading is rising because the most able pupils are now reaching their challenging targets, which some of this group missed in previous years. Good achievement and good attitudes to learning prepare pupils well for junior school.

Much good and some outstanding learning was seen during lesson observations. In the Reception class, children are curious and enthusiastically investigate and experiment. As a result, they gain a good level of independence in managing their own learning. In a Reception lesson seen, children were making good progress in mathematics by accurately adding together the spots they counted on model ducks and writing down their calculations. In a Year 1 English lesson pupils made good progress in developing their vocabulary by thinking of suitable words to describe the monster on a picture they were given. They discussed their ideas in groups; worked with a good level of independence and were able to plan and write an accurate and interesting description of their monster with minimal help from the teacher. Pupils are developing their basic skills of reading, writing, communication and mathematics effectively in all subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils were accurately measuring and recording the results of experiments on forces during a science lesson. Nearly all pupils listen attentively, speak confidently and articulate their ideas clearly.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs concentrate well in lessons. Their good progress is secured by effective teaching enabling pupils to achieve their

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small but challenging next steps in learning, which boosts their confidence to successfully tackle more difficult work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly acquire the English language skills that are needed to fully participate in lessons through expert help from adults who often speak their home language. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers. Parents and carers say that their children achieve well.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have generally high expectations about what pupils must achieve. Teachers' questions are probing and make pupils think deeply. They effectively use resources such as computers and the exciting classroom displays to engage pupils and develop their learning. Learning is often best when pupils are actively engaged in practical tasks, such as writing, calculating and using computers. Occasionally learning slows when pupils spend too long passively listening to teachers' instructions and explanations. In the Early Years Foundation Stage classes, teachers plan an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities. Learning takes place inside and outdoors, and provision effectively develops children's understanding of the world at large and promotes their physical, creative and imaginative development effectively. However, in Reception classes there are occasions when the tasks set in phonics are too easy or too difficult for some individuals. Homework in Years 1 and 2 is regularly set and extends class work well. Teachers' frequent checks on pupils' knowledge and understanding during lessons are mostly used skilfully to plan the next steps in their learning. Teachers plan many opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in the Nursery and Reception classes children were in awe as they watched a chick hatch and saw the start of new life.

Teaching assistants provide valuable support, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. For example, they keep notes on individuals' progress which are shared with the teacher to help with future planning. Marking and feedback provide pupils with a clear understanding of how they can improve their work. Almost all parents and carers said that their children were taught well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

School records and discussions with pupils confirm that good behaviour is the norm. Pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes towards school and learning in all of their lessons. They cooperate and collaborate well in groups. They have good levels of perseverance; show initiative and can think and learn for themselves. Pupils mostly manage their own behaviour well, which ensures lessons usually proceed without interruptions.

Pupils have a very good understanding of what constitutes bullying, how to avoid it and what to do if they encounter it. They say that bullying is rare and school records confirm that this is so. Pupils are highly confident that any bullying would be quickly resolved by the school. They feel very safe and know precisely how to keep

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themselves safe, for example, when crossing the road. Pupils mostly take care to keep those around them safe but some pupils voiced concerns about boisterous behaviour on the playground at lunch time, a matter that the school is addressing. Parents and carers, pupils and staff say that behaviour and safety are good.

The very large majority of pupils attend school every day and there are periods when attendance is above average. However, over the year, too many pupils miss school because they are taken on holiday during term time. School records show that the progress of such pupils is not as good as their peers and that their attainment often drops significantly while they are away. This happens in spite of the school's efforts to dissuade parents and carers from this practice.

Leadership and management

Key leaders, including the governing body, set challenging targets for school improvement. Their drive has successfully raised attainment in reading, the area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. Robust checks on teaching and the quality of learning are used well to plan successful actions to overcome weaknesses and improve understanding and progress by developing their skills. The impact of professional development and performance management is good. For example, leaders have been successful at sharpening teachers' use of games and other resources to improve pupils' calculation skills. Additionally, strong links with local schools enable teachers to see and adopt best practice from elsewhere.

Leaders' regular checks on the progress of each pupil have improved strongly since the last inspection. These are used to provide effective interventions to help pupils catch up on missed work. The needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are accurately assessed and used to provide them with appropriate learning programmes. The targeted support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is very effective. The school makes effective use of staff and local people who speak home languages to ensure the growing number of pupils who start school with little or no English settle quickly and happily into school. The governing body uses its good understanding of data to challenge the school robustly over its performance. As a result of improvements since the last inspection the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Parents and carers are extremely happy with the way the school advises them on helping their children to learn at home and this aspect of the school's work is outstanding. For example, many of them take advantage of the frequent opportunities to join their children in the classroom to see how they learn. The school provides classes to show parents and carers how they can support their child's reading at home and this has contributed markedly to improvements in this subject.

The curriculum widens pupils' horizons and raises their level of ambition. It strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, it provides many opportunities for pupils to develop a strong understanding of right and wrong by reflecting on their actions and those of others. Pupils talk

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enthusiastically about the many clubs and visits that are organised for them.

The school has an effective safeguarding policy that is implemented robustly. It ensures government requirements are met and pupils kept safe. Leaders show clear commitment to combating discrimination and to equal opportunities as shown in the good progress made by all groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those pupils who speak English as an additional language and those known to be eligible for free school meals. Provision is effective in promoting a tolerant and harmonious school community.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grange Infant School, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2HU

Thank you for being so polite and friendly, and for the help you gave us, when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and the opportunity to talk with some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed joining you for assembly. You are rightly proud of your school's happy atmosphere and you especially like the way you all get on so well together. Grange is a good school.

You told us that you enjoy school and feel extremely safe and secure. You try hard in lessons and your progress is good. Your behaviour is good in class and around the school. You have very good relationships with your teachers. Most of you attend school regularly and are punctual. The curriculum provides plenty of exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy. It also provides you with plenty of opportunities to think about your feelings, right and wrong, and to work together and appreciate your own and different cultures.

The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body are working together to make the school even better, and we have asked them to do three things to help you improve your learning. These are to:

- help you to always make rapid progress by keeping lesson introductions short
- make sure that phonics work is always well matched to your abilities in Reception.
- work with your parents and carers to reduce the number of holidays some of you are taken on during school time.

All of you can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons and attending every day. We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead Inspector

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