



# Grove School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 103392  
**Local Authority** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 286646  
**Inspection dates** 31 January –1 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Don Mason

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Dawson Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Handsworth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Birmingham B21 9HB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4644669
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	686	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4640508
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Satnam Chumber
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Pamela Matty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 May 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is one of the largest primary schools in the country. It is in an area of high socio-economic deprivation. Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Twenty two different home languages are represented. A large majority of pupils do not begin to learn to speak English until they start school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is twice the national average. The school has three Nursery classes.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. Parents hold it in very high regard saying, 'we are privileged to have a school like this in our area'. Pupils make remarkable progress in their language development because of very good teaching and effective use of support from outside agencies. Pupils, from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, work and play together very well because of the inclusive ethos created by the school. They achieve well, progressing from well below average standards on entry to reach average standards by the end of Year 6.

In the Foundation Stage, good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress, particularly in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school and reach average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The achievement of higher attaining pupils in mathematics and music is outstanding. A number of improvement measures related to reading, writing, mathematics, curriculum, including science, and assessment have had a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement in the last four terms.

The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Teaching is lively and activities provided for pupils are well matched to their needs. Pupils' progress is regularly checked in detail. The information gathered is used very well to move pupils on to the next level. Pupils who are not making sufficient progress are quickly identified and appropriate support is provided by well-trained, enthusiastic teaching assistants. The pupils enjoy their lessons very much and report that their lessons have become more interesting in recent months, especially in mathematics. They particularly enjoy their topics and the related visits. The quality of teaching remains variable, however, and the school rightly seeks to ensure that all teaching is of the highest quality. The curriculum is outstanding and greatly enriched by an excellent range of sports activities, visits and visitors. Many attractive displays around the school illustrate the breadth of the curriculum offered.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the very high level of care, guidance and support provided for them. From a very low starting point overall, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, develop into self-confident young people who take pride in the progress they know they are making in their work. Pupils feel safe, adopt safe practices and report that any problems which arise in school are quickly dealt with by staff. Academic guidance is good. Pupils develop a good understanding of their achievements and what they have to do to improve saying, 'the work gets easier, but when we reach our targets we get new ones and then work gets harder again'. Attendance is improving but remains below average. However, this is not a reflection of the pupils' enjoyment of their education. The school continues to do all it can to improve attendance.

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school arising from the effective day-to-day management of school life. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is passionate in her desire to improve pupils' achievement and promote their enjoyment of learning

even further. This goal is shared by all staff who work very well together as a team. The school's self-evaluation is outstanding. The significant improvements of recent months are an indication of the school's good capacity to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school to the level of the best.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter the Nursery with well below average levels of attainment. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes especially in their speaking and listening skills and in their personal and social development. They enter Year 1 well below the expected national levels. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6 to reach average standards overall at the end of Year 6. The progress in language development made by pupils whose first language is not English is outstanding. Standards at the end of Year 2, as seen in the latest national tests, were exceptionally low. Staff have worked hard to remedy this situation by improving teaching and the accuracy of their assessments. They have been successful and there is reliable evidence to indicate that the current Year 2 pupils are on target to reach average standards in the forthcoming end of year tests. The improvement is particularly strong in writing. Standards in science, as seen in national tests, although improving, remain significantly below average. The school has high expectations of more able pupils who achieve well. Their achievement in music is outstanding and in mathematics where several pupils achieve GCSE grades each year. The good progress in pupils' achievement throughout the school has been facilitated by rigorous use and checking of challenging targets for improvement.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children make great strides in their personal development in the Nursery and Reception classes. This progress underpins the very positive approach that pupils have towards school as they grow older. By the time they leave, pupils are ready to conquer the world. They are confident, considerate, articulate and willing to have a go at anything. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are very appreciative of the wide range of sporting activities available to them. Their spiritual and moral development is good and their social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy the rich cultural diversity that is celebrated in the school and pupils from all racial groups get on well with each other. As one pupil said, 'you make friends really fast'. Pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy. In addition they have many opportunities to work together in pairs and groups thereby developing skills that will serve them well in later life. Behaviour is generally good and pupils display very positive attitudes towards their work. The school council has been proactive in developing an anti-bullying policy and older pupils enjoy their roles as

peer mediators. Pupils also make a good contribution to the school community through their work as monitors and reading partners. Older pupils enjoy the excitement of taking part in the Birmingham Young People's Parliament.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching overall ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress. The good work of the class teachers is complemented by a large team of effective teaching assistants, visiting specialists and consultants. Lessons are well planned and a range of teaching methods is used effectively to meet pupils' needs. Pupils speak warmly about their teachers and appreciate the efforts they go to, to make their lessons interesting. Pupils generally succeed, irrespective of their difficulties, because any problems are quickly identified and appropriate support provided. Their self-confidence and enjoyment are enhanced by the knowledge that they are making progress in their work. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to outstanding. An unusually large proportion of the teachers are newly or recently qualified. They receive very good support from senior colleagues and make good progress in developing their teaching skills. Staff are continually striving to improve and to raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is exemplary in the way it has been developed to meet the needs of all its pupils, including the most able. A new curriculum plan has recently been introduced and is already having a significant impact on improving pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning. Topics covering a number of subjects provide pupils with interesting activities and visits. Pupils have acknowledged the changes made and speak with great enthusiasm about their activities and visits. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils learnt about mathematical co-ordinates in history by producing an Aztec treasure map. The wide range of visits, special events and after school clubs is outstanding, giving pupils many opportunities to learn and achieve success in and out of the classroom. Music is a strength of the school with a large number of pupils enthusiastically learning to play a wide range of instruments. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit greatly from the creative and varied curriculum provided for them.

In Nursery and Reception, children experience a good variety of activities that help them to enjoy learning and develop their imagination. Plans are in place to develop the outdoor area for both classes which, at the moment, is not promoting pupils' learning as well as it should especially for the Reception children.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils achieve well and make outstanding progress in their personal development because of high quality pastoral care and good academic guidance. Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds are supported equally well. Staff know the pupils and their families very well and provide good support on a day-to-day basis. Parents are effectively involved in helping their children to learn. The links with support services outside school are excellent and this means that help is readily available when it is needed. Pupils are given very, clear advice about what they need to do to move on in their learning. This is based on extremely thorough checking of the progress that they make. Pupils find the teachers' marking of their work very helpful.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspired by the high expectations and very strong leadership provided by the headteacher, staff work very well together towards their common objective to raise pupils' achievement and promote their enjoyment of learning. The school's self-evaluation is outstanding. Staff have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are constantly thinking about how they can improve further. Senior staff meet regularly with their colleagues to discuss pupils' progress, identify those not making sufficient progress and to plan appropriate support. Staff value the training and career development opportunities which are provided. Equal opportunities are promoted very well with the result that pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds develop high self-esteem. Pupils frequently join the school, sometimes with low levels of attainment, and they are quickly assimilated into the life of the school. Staff work very well with parents and outside agencies to promote pupils' learning and well-being.

Governors provide strong support for the school and facilitate good links with the local community. They ask searching questions in order to help the school move forward. The improvement in standards in English and mathematics and the improving provision in science are an indication of the school's good capacity to improve further. The school is not complacent, however, and seeks to further improve the quality of teaching in order that pupils achieve as well they possibly can.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work you were doing and talking to you about your school. Thank you for being so helpful and friendly. We find that your school provides you with a good education which has several outstanding features.

### **What you do well**

- You make good progress in your work and standards at the end of Year 6 are now average.
- Some of you make outstanding progress in mathematics and music.
- During your time in school you develop into mature, self-confident, well-behaved young people.
- Your English and mathematics are getting better because the teachers are constantly checking your work and providing support when it is needed.
- The staff look after you very well and provide you with outstanding support.
- The headteacher and staff are making changes which are bringing about improvements and making the school even better.

### **What we have asked your school to do now**

- Try to make sure that all the lessons are taught as well as the best ones.

Some of you could help by making sure that you come to school as often as you can so that you can make the most of the opportunities available to you.

We wish you all the best for the future.