



# Grove Street Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 105011  
**Local Authority** Wirral  
**Inspection number** 287091  
**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael McIlroy HMI

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>	Grove Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		New Ferry
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Wirral CH62 5BA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6452170
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	393	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 6441992
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr M Vobe
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs N Little
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 October 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	29–30 November 2006	287091

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and few speak English as an additional language. More than half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is much higher than the national average. Over a third of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities which is also above average. The school recently admitted a sizeable number of pupils from a local and neighbouring school that has closed.

The school holds a number of awards, including the Eco-school award and the Healthy Schools award. A distinctive feature of the school is the extended care provision which it offers pupils and pre-school children.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher has worked relentlessly to improve the school and the leadership team's strong emphasis on pupils' personal development has created a positive climate for learning at the school. This, and a strong caring and inclusive ethos, have enabled the school to integrate successfully a large number of pupils from a neighbouring school which has closed recently. Parents of these pupils report that most have settled happily and quickly into their new school.

Pupils enter the school with well below average skill and learning levels, but make good progress in the Foundation Stage because they are well taught. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 overall, but results are generally below average in Year 6. However, in 2005 results at Key Stage 2 were particularly low when compared with the pupils' Key Stage 1 results four years earlier, especially in mathematics but also in English. As a result the school enthusiastically adopted an intervention programme funded by the local authority (LA) in order to improve achievement and the benefits of this are beginning to be seen. In the most recent national assessments, science and mathematics have shown strong improvement and greater attention has been paid to ensuring that assessment at Key Stage 1 is accurate. However, English results remain a significant concern for the school.

The curriculum is adequate and is rightly focused on the core subjects. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some of it is good. The recently adopted more rigorous approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning is raising expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensuring that work is increasingly matched to pupils' abilities.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils' enjoyment of school, and their positive attitudes, are reflected in improving attendance and the considerable contribution they make to both the local community and to their school. Caring support and concern for all pupils' welfare has been strengthened recently by the introduction of frequent and effective checks on how well each pupil is doing in lessons. Where needed, extra support is given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who fall behind in their work. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by outside agencies. Nevertheless, academic guidance is not as good as it needs to be: marking is still patchy and pupils do not always know what to do to improve their work.

Parents who returned questionnaires are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Governance is satisfactory and in light of the strong improvements in science and mathematics at Key Stage 2, the school has adequate capacity to improve further and offers satisfactory value for money.

Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in one respect, the standards achieved in English, is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has

made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

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

- Improve standards in English across the school.
- Further develop the monitoring of teaching and learning in order to increase the proportion of good teaching.
- Strengthen the academic guidance which pupils receive and ensure it is consistently applied.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils enter the school with skills and knowledge that are well below average for their age. They make good progress in their learning in the Foundation Stage because of stimulating teaching. By the end of the Foundation Stage, some achieve the early learning goals expected of their age group. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and the school has recently improved the way it assesses the standards achieved by pupils. In the most recent assessments, standards were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, the standards achieved by pupils were just below average in the three core subjects in 2004 but declined in 2005 when attainment in all three subjects, English, mathematics and science, was significantly below average. Pupils achieved least well in mathematics.

The school now participates in a national support programme, helped by the LA, and has focused much effort and hard work, with considerable success, on improving results in mathematics. In the most recent Key Stage 2 tests results rose dramatically in mathematics and in science, including for the brightest pupils, and over half achieved the higher Level 5 in science. However, English results fell slightly and remain a concern.

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

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect of the school's work is good. Pupils enjoy school and are polite and helpful to one another. They are courteous to adults and many are confident when speaking in front of an audience. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory, as is behaviour. Pupils feel safe in the school building. They know who to turn to when they have worries and, as one pupil said, 'bullies are dealt with quickly' by the headteacher. Pupils make good use of opportunities provided in school to exercise responsibility, such as elected membership of two school councils. The effective and eager eco-council wrote to the borough council and helped bring about improved street lighting in the area. Their positive suggestions to improve their surroundings, such as 'friendship benches', are taken up by the school. Pupils participate in a range of physical activities, both inside and outside of the curriculum, and have a good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles: they are particularly

enthusiastic about environmental issues and school health initiatives, such as the Eco-schools' programme and the 'walking bus'.

Pupils also make a good contribution to the wider community through charity fundraising. Twice a year local pensioners are invited for afternoon tea and entertained by the choir. Enterprise projects, such as helping host the local farmers' market, contribute to school funds and allow pupils opportunities to develop skills necessary for their future economic well-being. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is fostered by a variety of activities across the curriculum, including celebration assemblies.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and some of it is good. In most lessons pupils behave well and are eager to learn, partly due to the good relationships that exist between staff and learners. When asked to work together learners generally did so well. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards and other resources to motivate pupils. Learners generally know what they have to do. Teaching assistants are well deployed in lessons and this ensures that the less able make good progress.

However, pupils of different abilities are set the same work too often and as a result some more able pupils are not always challenged enough, particularly in English. Typically, where work was well matched to pupils' needs, learners made good progress. The pace of some lessons was not always brisk enough and time was not always used well. For example, pupils were required to sit and listen for too long in a number of lessons. This resulted in them losing attention. Planning is satisfactory, but lessons are not always evaluated against the lesson objectives. Consequently, while some good teaching was evident, the overall impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time is satisfactory.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. There is an appropriate focus on the core subjects and information and communication technology is well developed. A number of intervention strategies, such as booster classes in school time, enable older pupils who have fallen behind in their learning to catch up. There is an adequate level of homework.

Learning is enriched through visits to local museums and art galleries. There is a good range of visitors to the school, such as theatre companies. Theme events are held to support learning, such as the 'Roman' and 'Victorian Days'.

There is a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to participate in, including judo, choral singing, chess and the 'Dr. Who' club. Some extra-curricular

opportunities exist for gifted and talented pupils, such as participation in local art competitions.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care, guidance and support which pupils receive are satisfactory overall. The school cares well for its pupils. Child protection procedures are in place. Good arrangements exist for the induction of new pupils, partly due to close links with the pre-school 'wraparound' care unit and for the smooth transfer from one key stage to the next. Satisfactory behaviour is encouraged by a consistently applied system of rewards and clear rules.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by clearly written individual education plans. The strong support they receive from teaching assistants enables them to make good progress. Vulnerable and looked-after pupils are supported with sensitivity. The academic guidance which pupils receive is uneven. Class targets are displayed clearly in all classrooms but not all pupils know their targets or the level they are working at. Marking is not consistent and much of it does not yet help pupils understand how to improve their work. The school has begun to remedy this.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is dedicated to the school's continual improvement and has worked tirelessly to achieve this. A strong focus on pupils' personal development, led by the deputy headteacher, has created a welcoming, inclusive and positive learning environment. This has contributed greatly to the successful integration of pupils from the nearby school which closed recently. Most parents of these pupils praise the welcome given to their children and the way they have settled in.

The headteacher is ensuring that the school is focused on raising standards: in collaboration with the LAs intervention programme she is providing clear direction for the school's improvement. This means that pupils' performance is tracked very well and underachievement is identified early. A range of strategies are deployed to help overcome this, including additional adults, and the impact of this drive for improvement is beginning to be seen. Moreover, the more rigorous monitoring of lessons is improving the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, standards are rising in most areas.

The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is broadly accurate. The headteacher has a sound understanding of the weaknesses and strengths of the school. Issues arising from the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. Following recent staffing changes the leadership team currently consists of the headteacher and a deputy and there are suitable plans to strengthen the team. Effective leadership is provided by the Foundation Stage leader and by a recently appointed coordinator for special educational needs. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. Hardworking subject

managers check pupils' work and are beginning to monitor teaching and learning effectively.

The school seeks the views of parents' and pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, although some would like more information about its work. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are informed about the work of the school and provide support for the headteacher. Finances are well administered. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we inspected your school recently. I am writing to let you know what we found. Some of the best things about your school are:

- you enjoy being at school
- you are very polite to visitors and to each other
- you know how to keep healthy and safe
- you make a good contribution to the local community
- most of you behave well in school
- the school council and the eco-council represent you very well.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors of the school to make some changes in order to make things better for you. These are:

- to help you all to learn more in literacy
- to make all teaching as good as the best which we saw
- to find better ways to help you to know how well you are working and what you need to do to improve your work.

Once again, many thanks for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school.