

Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126255
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315459
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Caroline McKee

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 on roll	
School	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Laird
Headteacher	Alastair Ponsford
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
School address	Hazel Grove Trowbridge BA14 0JG
Telephone number	01225 755242
Fax number	01225 777988

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Grove Primary is a larger than average primary school. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language are below the national average. The school has a dedicated hearing impairment unit. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The school holds a number of accreditations including the Basic Skills award, Gold Artsmark award, Active-Mark, Investors in people and Healthy Schools status.

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 which is on the journey of improvement. Every child matters and achievements are recognised and celebrated. The vibrant and informative displays around the school celebrate these achievements and help pupils in their learning. Parents are supportive and enjoy the involvement in their children's education. One parent wrote, 'Every pupil feels valued and is treated like an individual'. The headteacher's good leadership is well supported by the governors, senior and middle leaders. They know the school well and their recent plans, although in the early stages, are already starting to bring about improvements, particularly in teaching. As a result, standards in Year 2 are now average. Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress overall. There is a good emphasis on developing the curriculum, so that pupils enjoy all areas of learning especially history, art and design, and physical education.

Children achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage. They settle quickly because of the good support and welcome they receive at the start of the year and make good progress in their basic skills. However, they have too few planned opportunities for structured play in the outside area. In Key Stage 1, pupils have improved their standards in reading and mathematics, but not enough pupils reach the higher Level 3. The school has recognised the need to increase the rate of progress of the higher attaining pupils and is now setting targets that are more challenging. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in all years because of their early identification and additional support provided.

In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress. Their reading, scientific and mathematical skills have improved. The good teaching ensures pupils are given tasks to meet their needs, but often they are not aware of what they need to do to work independently to improve. Teaching assistants are well informed and play a major role in helping pupils to make good progress. The improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has made a positive impact in raising standards and in pupils' enjoyment of learning.

The pupils' personal development and behaviour is good. They are caring and supportive of one another and have an exceptionally good understanding of how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle. Their behaviour in the playground is excellent. However, on a very few occasions in lessons, they can become distracted and chatty if not given tasks that sufficiently challenge them. Attendance is satisfactory. The taking of holidays during term time has contributed to a decline in attendance. The school has exceptionally good links with different countries, resulting in pupils having an outstanding knowledge of diverse cultures and of 'Fair Trade' principles. Pupils have persuaded local businesses to stock fair trade products. They have a good grasp of the skills that will help them later in life.

There is a good curriculum and an excellent range of extra activities. This, together with the school's good care and guidance, results in the pupils having outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Some parents were concerned about child protection issues, but the school meets all requirements and is aware that it needs to make better arrangements to reassure parents of this fact. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and, with a new management structure, is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The children start school with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The vast majority of the children reach the expected learning goals by the end of Reception and a minority exceed these goals. They make a good start in acquiring the basic skills of language and mathematics. The curriculum indoors is exciting and taught at a good pace and the children are enthusiastic and respond well to each other. They like their teachers, are happy and develop well socially. Currently the outdoor space does not allow the children to engage in a wide range of structured activities to promote their learning. The Foundation Stage leader ensures each child's progress is tracked well and she has a realistic plan to meet new requirements. The teachers work well together and the children make satisfactory progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of marking and use of assessment information to involve pupils more in understanding what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve the outdoor play area in the Foundation Stage and provide a wide range of structured and supervised play activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Standards in Year 2 were below average in 2007, but improved teaching and better planning in reading and mathematics has led to standards that are now average. The school has identified that too few pupils gain the higher levels and has set more challenging targets and this is starting to have a positive impact. The rate of progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve well. The increased range and better use of ICT resources has contributed to pupils becoming more adept in their use of ICT. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils made outstanding progress in data handling and furthered their knowledge of diet by using software that encouraged them to make healthy choices. All pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at the early stage of learning English make good progress because of well-planned programmes and support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is excellent. They participate enthusiastically in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They say they enjoy the 'extremely healthy choices' for their lunch. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community and are keen to be involved in developments such as interviewing prospective staff. The school council has a strong voice and ensures that the school is environmentally friendly and safe. The pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe is reflected in their excellent behaviour at breaktimes. Their positive attitudes and relationships with adults and with each other show their enjoyment of school and they know whom to talk to if they have any worries. Their attendance is average, in part, because a few families take their children on holiday during term time despite the school requesting them not to do so. Pupils support each other well and are considerate of those with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the playground, they enjoy the responsibility of acting as 'buddies'. Their excellent social skills and good academic skills prepare them well for their future education and the later world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan tasks that link subjects well to improve pupils' learning and consolidate their numeracy and literacy skills. This has led to improved standards in reading and mathematics in all years. Teaching assistants are well informed and support pupils effectively. Teachers are effective in stimulating interest with a wide variety of tasks. Question and answer sessions are particularly effective in assessing what the pupils know and what they are unsure about. Relationships are strong in all lessons and the few incidents of disruption are generally managed well. These incidents occur when pupils are not challenged effectively. The pace of learning slows in a few lessons when teachers spend too much time with one group of pupils and others do not know what to do if they are stuck. Pupils are not always aware of what to do next so that they can use their initiative and take the next steps on their own.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is developing effective links between different subjects. Literacy and numeracy are taught across the curriculum and the provision for communication, language and numeracy with the youngest children enables them to become more effective readers. Pupils enjoy their lessons. As one boy said, 'History, science and ICT are really exciting, and I always feel I've learned a lot.' The emphasis on global learning enables pupils to gain an outstanding understanding of other cultures through their work on China, France, Spain, Germany and the Gambia. The pupils also study modern foreign languages, welcome visitors to the school, take part in events in the local community and enjoy outdoor adventure trips. The extensive range of after-school activities are well attended and enjoyed, especially the morning 'wake and shake' where pre-school children are also encouraged to participate with their parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a good understanding of the needs of the pupils and their families. Parents can accompany their child to the morning learning activities, which helps pupils to start the day well prepared to learn. The good standard of pastoral care contributes significantly to the happy, friendly and caring atmosphere within the school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place and risk assessments completed. Pupils who find learning difficult are quickly identified and effective programmes address their needs. The school makes good use of outside agencies. Academic guidance is improving though marking does not always help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear vision of a fully inclusive school. The senior leadership team, middle managers and governors are fully committed to turning this vision into a reality. The pace of improvement is good, with key leaders being more accountable for their actions. All leaders have a growing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school expects new systems for tracking pupils' progress to improve their analysis of data. The school has successfully arrested the decline in standards in Key Stage 1 and are setting increasingly challenging targets to enable more pupils to gain the higher levels. Regular lesson observations provide leaders with a view of the quality of teaching, but monitoring is not always sufficiently focused on the pupils' learning and progress. The school is very proactive in seeking and reacting to the views of pupils and parents. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and are effective in helping to shape school policy and act as a 'critical friend'.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove Primary School, Trowbridge BA14 0JG

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspectors to your school. We think that you are very serious about the responsibilities you take on to help make the school a better place. We were particularly impressed with your excellent behaviour around the school and in the playground, but feel a few of you could concentrate harder in lessons. You start your school life well because the teachers make you feel welcome and help you to make good progress in the way you talk, use your numbers and play with other children. In Years 1 and 2, you have worked hard to improve your reading and mathematics and have now reached standards that are average, though not many of you get to the higher levels. By the time you are in Year 6, you reach standards that are above average and make good progress. You also show that you very much enjoy the good teaching and the good range of activities the teachers prepare for you. You use ICT well in all your subjects and you told us how much you enjoy learning about other countries and their different customs. The school provides good care, support and guidance so that you improve your work and make good progress in your personal development.

The headteacher, staff and governors are doing a good job to improve the school. The teachers know how well you are doing individually and use this information to set your next targets. So it can continue to improve, we have asked the school to:

- Tell you more about how to improve your work so that you are able to do more work on your own.
- Set harder targets so that more of you can reach the higher levels by the end of Year 2.
- Improve the outside play area and provide more activities with adults for the youngest children.

I wish you every success for your future.

Yours sincerely

Caroline McKee Lead Inspector

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