

Grendon Junior and Infant School (NC)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103205
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	323777
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	273
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	R Green
Headteacher	Tina Pyke
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Grendon Road Kings Heath Birmingham B14 4RB

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

In this larger than average primary school, Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in Nursery and Reception classes. Most children attend full time in the Nursery, but a minority attend on a part-time basis. The majority of pupils are of White British background, although 12 different ethnicities are represented within the school. Even so, almost all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is rapidly improving. The leadership knows standards in English and mathematics in the past have been too low. Now, through rigorous monitoring, the careful pinpointing of pupils who are underachieving, and relevant action, standards are rising especially in reading and mathematics. Assessment information shows that pupils in all classes are making gains in their learning at an increasing rate. Standards overall are now below average but in English, standards are higher in reading than in writing. The school is working hard to remedy this imbalance, and is introducing a range of strategies to improve writing standards. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

Teaching is good with teachers involving pupils in their learning particularly well. Pupils are very clear about what they are expected to learn and how to succeed in their work. They value this and say it helps to promote their enjoyment of school. Pupils find work interesting and teachers try hard to make learning fun. The curriculum is satisfactory and enrichment is good. A high priority is given to pupils having first-hand relevant experiences in order to inspire their love of learning.

Pupils' personal development, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, is good. Behaviour throughout the school is good and reflects the hard work and consistent approach of all staff. As a result, pupils are willing to work hard and try to do their best. Attendance is satisfactory, following the school's determined efforts to encourage families to appreciate the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Pupils know the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, but as yet not all recognise the relevance of this for them. However, they do enjoy taking part in the daily 'wake and shake' activities.

Care, guidance and support are good and successfully promote pupils' good personal development and well-being. Parents appreciate the pastoral care provided and safeguarding requirements are fully met. Not only are pupils well cared for, they are offered good academic guidance. Tracking and target-setting systems are secure, resulting in pupils having challenging but realistic targets. However, the assessment information from the Early Years Foundation Stage is not used rigorously enough in Key Stage 1 to ensure that, through a better curriculum, pupils maintain their earlier good progress. Effective programmes have resulted in underachieving pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities making up lost ground, and consequently, their progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good.

Good leadership and management at all levels provide staff with clear direction, resulting in all staff working hard, eagerly taking on new ideas. Governance is good with governors offering both support and challenge to the leadership of the school. The school improvement plan is good and identifies the correct priorities. However, as yet, not all stakeholders including governors are involved enough in the initial writing of the plan. The school's good capacity to improve is demonstrated through significant improvements to the quality of teaching and learning which is resulting in achievement accelerating and standards rising.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Teaching is good, and consequently by the time children enter Year 1, most have skills that are expected of them in all areas of learning. Progress is good in both the Nursery

and Reception classes. Children arrive happily each day, are greeted warmly and quickly settle in a calm, purposeful atmosphere. They are well behaved, and respond well to clear expectations and the good use of praise from all adults. Arrangements for care and welfare are good. Good teaching provides a well-balanced blend of activities chosen by children and those led by adults. Careful questioning helps children to extend their thinking and speaking skills. For example, this was seen when Nursery children enthusiastically discussed if Incey the spider would reach home before being caught in the rain! Children are keen to learn, happily taking turns and sharing when playing in the Grendon garage or planting peas in the outdoor area. Leadership and management are good. An accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses is achieved through regular team meetings, shared planning, training and a thorough approach to assessment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement throughout the school the agreed strategies for raising standards in writing.
- Ensure the assessment information of the children leaving the Reception class is used rigorously in Years 1 and 2 to ensure the curriculum enables children to make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- Involve all stakeholders, including governors, in the writing of the school improvement plan.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

In the past standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have fluctuated, often being well below average. However, this is improving because of the impact of good teaching on pupils' progress, and the increasing effectiveness of the leadership in ensuring that underachievement is swiftly identified and addressed. Consequently, achievement overall is satisfactory. The most recent assessment information confirms that the progress of pupils is accelerating and in lessons observed during the inspection, progress was always at least satisfactory and on occasions better. In all year groups, more pupils than in the past are working at age-related expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards overall are still below average but in Year 5, the majority of pupils are attaining the expected levels. Although writing standards are improving these are still not high enough, and throughout the school these remain well below those expected for the pupils' ages. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are benefiting from a range of support programmes and target group work. This additional help and support is enabling them to make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school especially 'Wow days' which they say are 'exciting and fun'. Even so, attendance is only broadly average. Pupils enjoy trusting relationships with adults and feel their contribution to the life of the school is valued. Their behaviour is consistently good, and they say that they feel safe and secure. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils know the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle although lunch boxes do not always reflect this knowledge. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and make a good

contribution to their community, for example as school councillors, prefects, ambassadors or playground buddies. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong. Pupils are developing a good understanding of differences in culture and religion, and speak sensitively about their 'wishes for the world' and the obelisk parade to celebrate world peace and solidarity. Their good social skills and satisfactory basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them adequately for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good quality teaching is a significant factor in the improving rate of progress. The lessons observed during the inspection and other inspection evidence show that teaching is having a good impact on pupils' learning. This is now becoming evident in improved standards. Most teachers use the information about pupils' levels of attainment to plan lessons that meet the needs of all groups of pupils. However, this is not yet consistent, for example, when teaching 'letters and sounds' to younger pupils. In most lessons, the pace of learning is good and this maintains high levels of interest. Pupils are encouraged to share and discuss their ideas, which foster the development of speaking and listening skills and raises self-esteem. Classes are well managed and good relationships between staff and pupils are very evident. Teaching assistants are deployed carefully and they make a positive contribution to the groups they work with. Teachers are good at sharing the intended learning of the lesson and how pupils can succeed in their work. Written marking is good, and pupils are now developing effectively their own skills of assessing how well they are learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Overall the curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs of the pupils. It focuses with increasing effect on reinforcing key skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT and linking them to other subjects. However, the curriculum for the pupils in Key Stage 1 is not always appropriate for their needs as it does not sufficiently take into account children's levels of attainment when leaving the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school works closely with external providers, local schools and its parents to good effect. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have a range of successful initiatives in place to support them. Numerous visits, extra-curricular activities and visiting speakers all add to the quality of learning, and channel pupils' energies into increased levels of engagement, interest and productivity. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about healthy life choices through personal, social and health education programmes and science lessons. The global dimension of pupils' development is extended well through links with a school in Nepal and the learning of French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a very caring and supportive ethos, which develops happy, well-motivated pupils who enjoy school. All staff show a high level of commitment to pupils' care and welfare and parents are confident that their children are well supported. Pupils know staff will listen to their concerns and help them resolve any problems. All the current requirements for safeguarding are in place.

Good systems are in place for checking how well pupils are learning. Assessment information is effectively analysed to check pupils' progress, set challenging targets and identify those pupils in need of additional support. However, the assessment information of the children entering Year 1 is not used rigorously enough to ensure the good progress of these children is maintained. Most pupils know their curriculum targets and are able to explain what they mean and what they need to do to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leadership team work very well together to create an environment where relationships are strong and individuals feel valued. The governing body is supportive and increasingly holds school leaders to account. Targets set are realistic and pupils' progress is regularly monitored and discussed with the relevant staff. Self-evaluation is good and the correct priorities are identified as areas for development. For example, the leadership knows writing standards are too low. This has resulted in the trialling of different strategies, such as the use of more visual resources and providing relevant purposes for writing, in order to identify ways of raising standards in this subject. As yet, however, these strategies are not used throughout the school. The process of sharing management responsibilities with middle managers is effective as leaders are encouraged to take responsibility for their own aspects of school improvement. Although the school improvement plan provides a useful tool for school improvement, not all stakeholders including governors have the opportunity to contribute to strategic whole-school planning. Through secure links with the local and wider communities, the school's promotion of community cohesion is good. There is a good understanding of the needs of its community and a clear evaluation strategy is in place.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Glendon Primary School, Kings Heath, B14 4RB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and we found that your school is a satisfactory school that is getting better and better.

- These are some of the things we found out.
- The school is improving and you are starting to make more rapid progress in your work, especially in reading and mathematics. Well done and keep up the good work!
- Those of you in Nursery and Reception (the Early Years Foundation Stage) get a good start to your education in these classes. You make good progress because of good teaching.
- Teaching is good through the rest of the school and this means you enjoy your lessons. We know this because many of you told us about 'Wow days' and how much fun these were.
- The adults in school look after you well, and you feel safe and secure in school. We are glad you say adults will always help you.
- Your personal development is good, and this shows in your good behaviour, politeness and in the sensible way you carry out responsibilities in school, for example as school councillors or prefects.
- We think the staff are very clear about what is needed to make things better and we agree with them that you need help to attain higher standards in writing. They have some good ideas about how to do this and we have suggested that everyone in school now tries to use these new ideas.

We have also made two other suggestions.

- We know there is a lot of information available about the things those of you in Reception know and can do. So we have asked that this is used carefully to ensure that you all make the progress you should in Years 1 and 2.
- The school's plan for making things better is good but we think everyone, including you, your parents and governors, should have more chances to be involved in making the plan.

Thank you again for your contribution to the inspection. You can also help the school to become better by attending regularly and continuing to be happy, hard-working learners.

Yours faithfully Lois Furness

Lead inspector