

Grove School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103392
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336073
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Andrew Stafford

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	680
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Satnam Chumber
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Matty
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors who observed 27 lessons taught by 25 teachers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, documentation relating to safeguarding procedures, monitoring information and other documents to support the outcomes of the school's own self-evaluation. Inspectors held discussions with pupils, staff and governors and they met with some key partners who support the school. The outcomes of 168 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of different groups of pupils to see if they are doing as well as they can
- how well teaching and the curriculum meets the pupils' needs
- what the school has done to improve pupils' attendance
- how well leaders and managers help all pupils to achieve as much as they should.

Information about the school

The school has a high proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and from homes where English is not the first language. Most of these pupils are from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Their needs are mainly for speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy Schools status and the International Schools award.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school is situated within a multicultural community and is highly valued by parents, carers and pupils. The school is a warm and harmonious place where pupils from all backgrounds achieve equally well, making outstanding progress in writing, where standards are above those achieved nationally. Parents and carers are encouraged to come into school and this has created a family atmosphere in which parents, carers and pupils learn and get on well together. For example, with the support of the parents and carers, the school is planning developments to the outdoor environment. Parents, carers and pupils are contributing their ideas by planning, drawing and making models of equipment and features they would like to see in the school grounds.

Outcomes for pupils are good overall but some aspects are outstanding. For example, the extent to which pupils feel safe is outstanding and pupils say that incidents of racial harassment are non-existent. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress although attainment at the end of Year 2 has been below average for the past few years. This is because children join the school with skills and knowledge well below those expected and a high proportion have little or no English. These children are subject to an intensive and successful programme of language acquisition which contributes significantly to the good progress that they make. This helps to ensure that all pupils achieve well and attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. This is because teachers plan learning activities that are matched closely to their needs. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to make healthy choices at mealtimes and they thoroughly enjoy the wide range of physical activities the school provides. The school is at the heart of the community. Pupils take part in events, such as the community festival where they sing, dance and perform, which help them to develop confidence and a sense of belonging. Consequently, pupils' contribution to their own and the local community is outstanding. Furthermore, these activities, and the school's ethos of respect for difference in individuals, enable pupils to make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The outstanding curriculum is broad, balanced and features good provision for literacy and information and communication technology. Pupils have the opportunity to take GCSE mathematics in Year 6 and the good pass rates they achieve contribute very well to the overall good progress pupils make. The 'thinking curriculum' gives pupils excellent opportunities to study themes across different subjects and this approach adds to their enjoyment of learning. Teachers are skilled at making clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and this helps them to make good progress in their lessons. Most teachers mark pupils' work carefully and provide good guidance as to what the pupils

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have done well, but they do not always identify what pupils need to do to improve their work. There are too few opportunities for all pupils to respond to teachers' marking and this can sometimes lead to progress that is slower than when pupils spend time reviewing comments. The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils. The school works in close partnership with outside agencies to provide excellent additional support for pupils whose circumstances make them and their families vulnerable. Parents are well informed and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership of the school is good. Under the guidance of the dedicated and inspirational headteacher, senior leaders have become skilled in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The school has introduced a system to assess pupils' achievements in science more precisely because attainment in science was lagging behind standards achieved in English and mathematics. Senior leaders have monitored the use of this information to inform teachers' planning and the school's data indicate that this has had a positive effect on standards in science, which are now broadly average. The school's management systems make accessing information straightforward, leading the school to have a good understanding of its strengths and the areas for further development. The school has a good capacity to improve further because it has improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection, mainly through the impact of paired coaching. Senior leaders have, rightly, identified the need to build on these strategies to improve further the quality of learning through a focus on the consistency of teaching and support by all adults in the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a rich stimulating environment for children. Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes where there is access to the outstanding outdoor learning area. This extends the opportunities children have to learn and develop their skills outside the classroom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the strategies that already exist to improve the quality of teaching and to raise achievement by:
 - making clear to pupils through marking and verbal feedback what they need to do to improve their work
 - providing pupils with opportunities to respond to teachers' marking
 - ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants provide consistently focused support for pupils who need it.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils are happy and they enjoy coming to school. They say they feel safe and that adults care for them very well. When asked what makes this school special, one pupil said, 'Healthy. It keeps us healthy!' They are ambassadors for health promotion as acknowledged by achieving Healthy Schools status. In lessons pupils, particularly those

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of Pakistani heritage, make good and sometimes outstanding progress, especially in writing. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher provided the challenge of writing a newspaper article about their new eco-garden. Pupils carefully analysed current newspaper articles for headlines, captions and writing styles in preparation for their own writing. Scrutiny of pupils' current work shows that they are able to write at length using complex sentences and a wider selection of interesting vocabulary, for example, when writing about their visit to the British Museum. Information collected by the school shows that there is little variation in the progress of pupils between classes, year groups and those from different minority ethnic groups. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress and those whose home language is not English make very good progress because they receive targeted support that is tailored to their needs. Good, and sometimes outstanding, personal development prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils engage enthusiastically in artistic, sporting and extensive cultural opportunities, with cultural development being a particular strength. Activities are held for parents and pupils to raise awareness of other religions and traditions and these are compared to stories and other customs from their homeland. These activities help pupils to understand their own culture and that of others from different backgrounds and this has been acknowledged by the school receiving the International School award. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and the school has put into place additional systems to encourage pupils to attend regularly. They behave well and they clearly understand right from wrong. Pupils are curious about the world around them and have a strong sense of enjoyment in learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2 3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The excellent curriculum is broad, balanced and focused well on pupils' academic, personal, and emotional development. There are extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in the eco-garden pupils' writing on the science topic of pollination was displayed to support the learning of others. Teaching is typically good and there are instances of some very effective teaching. There are examples of best practice in marking and of teachers telling pupils precisely how to achieve the next steps in their learning, though there is some variability seen in exercise books from different classes. Teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons that are closely matched to the needs of most pupils. There is very good support for pupils who arrive at school with little spoken English and so they make very good progress in lessons. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not always provide enough information about what pupils need to learn next. Most teachers are skilled at asking pupils questions that challenge them and enable them to make good progress. In these lessons, pupils behave particularly well because they are interested in what they have to do. Teaching assistants support pupils effectively and many play an important part in assessing pupils' achievements. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. Pupils are confident that should an issue arise, it will be dealt with promptly by adults. There are excellent transition arrangements so that pupils move both into and from the school with confidence. The school has built excellent relationships with a broad range of outside agencies to provide pupils and parents and carers with additional support to help them to overcome difficulties.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2 2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has a strong leadership team whose members place the needs of the individual pupil at the heart of all that they do. There is a sharp focus on raising

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attainment and, through improving the quality of teaching, standards in science have risen. Teamwork is very strong. Leaders provide good support and guidance to other staff to improve their practice. Senior leaders have put into place a systematic procedure for monitoring the work of the teachers which is leading to improvements. This system is well developed, is rigorously monitored and is leading to clear improvements in teaching and learning.

Governors are supportive and provide good challenge to school leaders. They take an active role in establishing the strategic direction the school should take. Partnerships with parents and the community are excellent and make a valuable contribution to good outcomes for pupils. There are plenty of opportunities for parents and carers to take an active role within the school and many have responded positively to the additional classes available for them to develop their own skills. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils were outstanding at the time of the inspection. For example, pupils were highly aware of how to move safely across the roads that link the two school sites because of the training led by road safety officers. The school successfully promotes equal opportunities for pupils at a personal level and any small variations in the progress made by pupils in different classes is quickly reduced. The school promotes community cohesion exceptionally well so that pupils have a very good understanding of the range of diverse cultures and faiths in the locality and the wider world, and are knowledgeable about contrasting localities in the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

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Children get off to a good start, despite entering the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that when they move up into Year 1 they have made up a lot of ground in all aspects of their development. This is because teachers have put into place programmes, such as the structured teaching of letters and sounds and in reading, to accelerate children's progress in literacy. The Nursery adjoins the Reception class and this means that there are many opportunities for the classes to work together. In the Nursery, staff create stimulating areas both indoors and outside so children can play and work by moving between the different areas. The school has redeveloped the site to provide a dedicated unit for the Early Years Foundation Stage with outside space for all children. The easy access to this well-developed area leads to extensive opportunities for effective learning.

Provision is good. Staff work together to plan learning experiences that are well matched to the needs of children. These are based on thorough assessments made of their progress, that include comments made by parents about their child's progress. There is a good balance of activities which are led by the teacher and those which children choose for themselves. This helps children to develop good learning skills such as cooperation, independence and resilience. There is a strong focus on developing children's social and emotional skills and this can be seen in their good outcomes. They are able to take turns and to share. They listen well to one another and are able to take part in individual as well as group activities. Welfare arrangements to meet children's pastoral care are good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers reported that that they were satisfied with the quality of education their child receives. There were very few written comments made by parents on the questionnaires and of these there were more positive than negative views on the school's work. One parent summarised the view of the vast majority, 'My child is very happy at Grove School. She is learning well and I think it is an excellent school'. A few parents raised a concern about how well their children are prepared for their future education but inspectors' findings agree with the majority of parents' positive responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grove School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 168 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 680 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	115	68	53	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	102	61	63	38	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	90	54	73	43	3	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	81	48	78	46	8	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	102	61	57	34	5	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	81	48	76	45	7	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	43	89	53	5	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	67	40	85	51	11	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	42	90	54	6	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	75	45	84	50	4	2	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	36	94	56	4	2	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	80	48	74	44	6	4	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	100	60	60	36	4	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



27 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove School, Birmingham, B21 9HB

Thank you for making me and my colleagues so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you all and hearing what you had to say about your school. We agree with you and your parents that Grove Primary is a good school and that you learn a lot in your lessons.

You reach the expected standards in your work by the time you leave, make good progress and achieve well. The teachers help you to learn well in most lessons and they care for you very well. We were particularly impressed with how much you know about how to stay safe and healthy and how well you all get on with each other. Your work within the school and local community is really excellent, and you really enjoy the opportunities you have in art, music and drama to express yourselves individually.

There are some ways that your school could be even better and we have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to:

- make sure that you know what to do to improve your work
- give you time to correct your work after reading what your teacher has said about it
- check that all the adults who help you give you exactly the right support.

We know that you will continue to work hard and to help your school to become even better and we wish you all the very best for the future

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford

Lead inspector

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