

Grove Street Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105011
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336404
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Vobe
Headteacher	Mrs N Little
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2006
School address	Grove Street New Ferry Wirral CH62 5BA
Telephone number	0151 6452170
Fax number	0151 6441992
Email address	schooloffice@grovestreet.wirral.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 18 different teachers, which included staff in the childcare provision. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers through 85 returned inspection questionnaires, and the opinions of staff and pupils were analysed.

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

- pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the more able and pupils in Years 1 and 2
- consistency in the quality of teaching, the use of marking and target-setting in enabling all pupils to achieve as they should
- the quality of care and pupils' personal development in all aspects of provision, from day care to Year 6
- the success of leaders and managers at all levels in driving improvements in pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is high. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high. The majority of pupils are of White British background. A few are from minority ethnic groups. The school has gained National Healthy Schools Status and an Eco Bronze Award. The school provides wrap-around care and registered childcare provision.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. There are, however, key strengths which include good links with parents, effective partnerships with external agencies and good quality care, support and guidance, particularly to enable pupils to adopt healthy and safe lifestyles.

Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below those expected and low in their social and communication skills. They make satisfactory progress, although outdoor provision does not provide them with enough opportunities to explore or to develop their imaginative play. Thereafter, pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6 and attainment, by the end of Year 6 is average.

However, as a result of recent actions put in place to improve pupils' reading and writing skills, progress in English is improving rapidly.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It has some good features but not all teachers consistently plan lessons which challenge pupils, particularly the more able, to achieve as well as they should in mathematics. The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' interests and needs, although it does not currently give pupils enough opportunities to extend their numeracy skills through work in other subjects.

Pupils confidently say, 'we really feel safe in school'. This is because of the effective way staff manage the behaviour of all pupils, especially that of the few whose behaviour is most challenging. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their contribution to school and the wider community is good and most enjoy school, as reflected in the average attendance rates by most pupils. However, a few are persistently absent and despite some improvement, overall attendance is low.

Leaders and managers including governors ensure safeguarding is good. They evaluate the school's effectiveness satisfactorily. Senior leaders, some of whom are new to their responsibilities are becoming increasingly involved in the process. Roles and responsibilities are developing but only slowly and it is still too early to evaluate the impact of their contribution. Consequently, the capacity for the school to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate progress in mathematics by ensuring:
 - teachers consistently plan lessons which challenge pupils and, in particular the more able, to achieve as well as they should
 - pupils are provided with enough opportunities to extend their numeracy skills through work in other subjects.

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- Extend the role of senior leaders by:
 - providing more designated time for them to check the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of curriculum provision in enabling all pupils to achieve as well as they should, particularly in mathematics.
- Improve provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring the outdoor provision enables children to explore and have enough opportunities to develop their imaginative play.
- Raise attendance levels by:
 - exploring further ways to work with the families and pupils of the small minority who are persistently absent.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Achievement and pupils' enjoyment of learning are satisfactory. The large majority of pupils show interest in learning, although a few need reminders to pay attention and behave well in lessons. Pupils are fully engaged and make the best progress where teachers set challenging targets, make learning interesting and relevant and constantly review learning through effective marking. However, such lessons are currently in the minority. The school works satisfactorily to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils whose circumstances have made them more vulnerable by providing work that meets their learning needs, skills and understanding adequately. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to their classmates.

Pupils develop a good understanding of safety. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall because opportunities for them to meet and learn about the religions and cultures of other pupils nationally are at an early stage of development. Pupils value the good opportunities they have to express their views through the school council and eco group. They make healthy eating choices and are keen to say that this is thanks to having, 'the best cook in the world'. Pupils value the responsibilities they have been given to contribute to the school and the local community, for instance, by harvesting their own vegetables and making lavender bags to sell at the monthly Farmers' Market. Pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are adequately developed. This, together with improving attendance, prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage in their school life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

In the few lessons where the quality of teaching is good or outstanding, learning is planned well, tasks set are challenging and well matched to meet pupils' abilities, and marking is used effectively to help pupils' improve their work. In the large majority of lessons teaching is satisfactory. Relationships and the care staff show to pupils, particularly the more vulnerable, are good. However, lessons are not always pitched at the right level or fully relevant or challenging, in particular, for the more able in mathematics.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school has made a start at linking subjects through themes to increase pupils' understanding and enjoyment, and the focus on developing their writing skills is paying off and standards in English are rising. The impact of these links on raising pupils' attainment in mathematics is currently satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of interesting before and after-school activities that pupils say they enjoy.

Most parents and carers speak positively about the good pastoral care and support their children receive. Well-targeted guidance and effective links with external agencies are provided for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more vulnerable. As a result, these pupils make good progress in their personal well-being. The school makes strenuous efforts to improve attendance, particularly of the few who are persistently absent, through work with families and some successes have been noted. The sterling work of the behaviour mentor ensures that the behaviour of all pupils and, in particular, the more challenging, is satisfactory. Arrangements to prepare pupils for high school are well planned and help to ensure a smooth transition to their

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next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Overall, leaders and managers are satisfactorily driving improvement and managing the quality of teaching and learning. The dedication of the headteacher in ensuring pupils and, in particular the more vulnerable receive good care and support, is commendable. However, some senior leaders are fairly new to their roles and currently have limited designated time to make the necessary checks that all pupils are achieving as well as they should. Governors ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met and that pupils' safety has a high profile in all of the school's work. They are keen to play their part in promoting improvement and their ability to rigorously challenge the school's performance is satisfactory. Satisfactory work has been undertaken overall to promote community cohesion. There are some good elements to this work through, for instance, links with schools in the Lebanon. Opportunities for pupils to meet and learn about different religions and cultures nationally are at an early stage of development. The school works well with parents and external partners, to promote pupils' well-being, particularly for the most vulnerable. The ethos established in the school is one of promoting equality for all, and whilst satisfactory, its promotion is particularly evident in the availability of curricular enrichment for different groups of pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3

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	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of outcomes, provision, and leadership and management within the registered childcare provision are satisfactory overall and comply with the requirements for registration. When children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage, either within childcare provision or the Nursery, their skills are below those expected and low in their ability to speak, listen and socialise. A high priority is given to helping children to address these needs within each setting. As a result, children generally make good progress over their time in the settings in their social and early reading skills. However, overall they make satisfactory progress by the time they move to Year 1. This is because play activities in each stage of the provision are too often overly adult-directed. Consequently, children lack opportunities or the resources to explore their world for themselves or to play imaginatively particularly in the outdoor environment. At times, the quality of teaching is good. This is evident where adults provide children with challenging questions to extend their thinking. However, such opportunities are not consistent throughout the settings. Links with parents are effective and ensure parents are kept informed and encouraged to take a part in their children's learning. All adults take good care of the children. The quality of wrap-around care is effective in accommodating each child and their family's individual circumstances and needs. All aspects of safeguarding are in place. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The manager knows clearly how improvements can be made and has introduced plans to ensure that methods used to observe and track children's progress are being consistently followed in each setting. However, there has been limited designated time available to fully evaluate the success of these plans.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of the 84 parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire are

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positive in their views about the quality of provision and learning outcomes for their children. Most agree that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps their children safe and they are content with the education and care their children receive. Inspection evidence confirms the positive responses which most parents and carers submitted about all aspects of the school's work. However, a few feel that their views are not taken into account, that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively and that leadership of the school is not as strong as it could be. Evidence indicates that parents' and carers' individual concerns are responded to appropriately and that the behaviour observed during the inspection was satisfactory. The inspection found that leadership was satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grove Street Primary 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 383 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	45	47	49	4	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	49	52	41	43	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	45	47	45	47	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	43	50	53	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	51	43	45	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	42	49	52	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	43	49	52	1	1	0	0
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)	36	38	48	51	4	4	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	43	48	51	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	28	54	57	9	9	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	28	61	64	2	2	5	5
The school is led and managed effectively	41	43	46	48	0	0	5	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	43	47	49	3	3	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.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grove Street Primary School, Wirral, CH62 5BA

I would like to thank you for helping the team when we inspected your school. I especially enjoyed watching you play your 'World Cup' football match. Now I would like to share with you what the inspectors found out about your school.

Yours is a satisfactory school. You get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Your behaviour is satisfactory and you achieve adequately in your lessons so that, by the time you leave in Year 6, your attainment in English and mathematics is average. The curriculum is satisfactory and you have some good opportunities for before- and after-school activities. It was also pleasing to hear about how safe you feel in school and that there is always someone to talk to if you have concerns. Those of you involved in the school and eco councils have contributed well in helping your classmates know how to keep healthy and safe.

The headteacher and governors want the school to become better and I have asked them to do several things to improve the school:

- Help you all to improve your attainment in mathematics and give you more opportunities to extend your numeracy skills through other subjects.
- Improve the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children have more chances to explore and play imaginatively.
- Give senior leaders more time to make checks that you are achieving as well as you should and that the subjects you study help this to happen.
- Improve the attendance of the few pupils who do not attend regularly enough.

We hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best to help Grove Street become an even better school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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