

Granville Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112940
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	338057
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Nada Trikic HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	716
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Gee
Headteacher	Miss Sylvia Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 31 lessons and 31 teachers, and held meetings with school leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, groups of pupils and the school's improvement partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including improvement plans, analysis of pupils' progress, records of classroom observations, attendance and exclusion data and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Questionnaires from 24 parents and carers, 93 pupils, and 21 members of staff were analysed.

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

- whether arrangements for assessing and tracking progress are good enough to tackle the trend of weak progress and low standards
- the impact of actions to promote the achievement and aspirations of girls
- how the school's context is influencing strategy and actions for promoting community cohesion, equality and diversity
- the effectiveness of steps to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- the involvement of middle leaders in quality assurance activities to improve provision and ensure consistency.

Information about the school

Granville is smaller than the average secondary school. Its population is predominantly White British with very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have dyslexia or behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The school gained specialist sports status in 2008 and has nominated modern foreign languages as a second target subject. The school has experienced disruption to staffing at senior level in the last year. A new headteacher took up post in September 2009.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school has not made the progress expected since the previous inspection, and too little attention has been given to the improvement points identified at that time. Leaders at all levels have been too slow to secure a strong and effective system to track progress that will support work to raise attainment, or to ensure assessment information is used effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all learners. The analysis of progress has only recently considered the performance of different groups, including those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and this has been a barrier to promoting equality. Checking and improving the quality of teaching have not been given a high enough priority. Disruption to senior leadership and a lack of openness about academic performance have compounded the school's difficulties.

Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. By the time they leave at the end of Year 11, attainment is low because too many pupils make inadequate progress. In 2009, the proportion of pupils who gained five or more A*-C grade passes, including English and mathematics, dropped by nine percentage points, well below the school's target. This resulted from weaker performance by pupils of middle and high ability, and a dip in English results. Progress overall, and in English and mathematics, was well below what was expected, particularly for the girls. In part, this can be explained by disruption to teaching in English but weaknesses in the tracking of progress, teaching, leadership and the narrow curriculum also contributed to this decline.

In September 2009, the new headteacher quickly identified areas for improvement and raised expectations. She has brought energy and vision which are increasingly shared across the school community. Some notable improvements have been made, such as the introduction of a wider range of vocational courses to better motivate pupils, and targeted provision to meet the needs of more vulnerable learners. A lack of time and capacity has hampered the development of the quality assurance activities necessary to support improvement and consistency. Self-evaluation is at times over-generous as insufficient information is gathered and interrogated to inform judgements. The role of middle leaders is underdeveloped. The governing body has received training to raise awareness of its role and responsibilities, and this is ongoing. Statutory requirements are not met with regard to safeguarding and the promotion of community cohesion.

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Stronger features of provision are linked to the sports specialism. It has led to some valuable initiatives, such as the popular Friday Night Project. This brings together a number of local providers to create a range of sporting and leisure activities, and input from youth workers with a focus on health issues. Pupils benefit increasingly from leadership opportunities. The specialism is yet to have a full impact on other aspects of the school's work. Pupils say they feel safe, and that the school does not tolerate bullying or harassment which arise from prejudice. They feel confident that their concerns are taken seriously and know where to seek help and advice. Pupils receive good care and support. Work with outside agencies is embedded in the vertical house system which fosters good relationships between pupils and breaks down barriers between older and younger pupils. Coherence is lacking between the provision of guidance and pastoral care, especially with regard to information about choices, careers, and personal health. Opportunities are missed to raise aspirations and broaden horizons; for example, in challenging stereotypical work-experience choices for girls.

Relationships in lessons are generally positive and pupils are keen to learn. Weaknesses in the planning and delivery of too many lessons mean that the pace of learning is often slow. Opportunities are missed to make lessons fun and exciting through a variety of active tasks that enable skills to be built through the lesson and understanding reinforced. Too often there is one main task without an effective concluding plenary to sum up learning. As a result, teachers are often unable to evaluate successfully the learning of different groups of pupils. Although some examples of good practice were seen where assessment criteria were used effectively to enable pupils to develop their learning, this was not usual. Often pupils undertake tasks without understanding how their performance will be assessed. The quality of marking is inconsistent and often lacks sufficient information to enable pupils to improve their work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The governing body must ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and community cohesion are met so that rigorous review, monitoring and evaluation lead to the identification of appropriate priorities for action.
- Raise standards of attainment and improve rates of progress by:
 - regularly collecting, analysing and using information about progress across the curriculum and age range for all groups of learners
 - acting regularly on the outcomes of the analysis of progress of groups of learners to tackle identified inequalities.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan lessons to take account of pupils' prior attainment, assessment information and learning needs
 - plan interesting and varied tasks that challenge and engage pupils
 - share learning outcomes with pupils clearly and precisely to enable them to assess the progress they are making

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- check pupils' learning and progress more frequently during lessons so that plans can be adjusted to meet their needs
- use questioning to deepen pupils' thinking and to extend their oral responses
- group pupils more flexibly in order to provide targeted support, and to promote independent learning.
- Strengthen the role of leaders at all levels to promote consistency and high expectations through:
 - systematic monitoring of the quality of lessons to inform training and to enhance teaching skills
 - regular checks on the use of assessment and tracking information by teachers and pupils
 - agreed checks on all aspects of the school's work to ensure a coordinated and rigorous approach to self-evaluation
 - effective planning that includes precise objectives supported by measurable success criteria to track progress accurately.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Evidence from pupils' work seen during the inspection confirmed that too many pupils are not making the progress they should. In most lessons, pupils' behaviour is good, and they generally cooperate well with teachers and support staff. However, pupils are often too dependent on their teacher for information and direction, and this encourages passive learning. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop skills and confidence to tackle work independently. When given the chance, pupils enjoy opportunities to work together on practical and active tasks.

Leaders are now analysing the progress of different groups of learners. Current assessments for Year 11 indicate that targeted support in English and mathematics will begin to close the attainment gap on national averages. Recent improvements to the process of identifying pupils with special educational needs have led to greater accuracy in assessing their progress.

Pupils are friendly, polite and attend well. Behaviour in lessons is generally positive, although low-level disruption is evident in a small minority of classes where teaching does not engage pupils' interest.

Pupils make a good contribution to their school community. They are willing to take responsibility, for example, as house captains, prefects or representatives of the sports council. Involvement in decision-making is at an early stage as too few pupils participate and share their views. Pupils welcome the opportunity to take part in the interview process for new staff.

Pupils' awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity is limited as there are too few planned opportunities to widen their experiences.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Until recently, the curriculum was too narrow offering few opportunities for additional breadth and flexibility to meet pupils' needs and interests. A range of vocational and science courses now offers different ways of learning. There is a recognition that a more creative approach to curriculum planning is required to stimulate interest and to raise aspirations. Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment activities, mainly sport, and participate enthusiastically.

Teachers enjoy positive relationships with pupils, who respond well, even when the teaching lacks excitement. Expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough and lessons often lack a sense of urgency. Teachers are inclined to talk for too long and miss opportunities to involve pupils in explanations, or to challenge thinking through probing questioning. Teachers often fail to identify resources or strategies to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Lesson objectives are usually expressed in terms of tasks to be completed rather than skills, knowledge and understanding to be acquired. Pockets of good practice were observed, notably in drama, music, physical education and dance, where planning for different groups of pupils is evident and assessment information is used well. Here, pupils have a secure understanding of how their performance will be assessed, using this to evaluate their own work and that of their peers, identifying how to improve and develop further.

Good links with partner primary schools ensure a smooth transition. A high priority on

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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attendance has been successful in supporting a steady trend of improvement. Attendance is now above average. Girls' attendance is below that of boys and is being tackled effectively through mentor support and targeted programmes.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has taken important early steps and demonstrates a determination to bring about improvement. Middle leaders have a greater understanding of their responsibilities; lines of accountability for pupils' progress are improving, supported by training. Involvement in quality assurance through systematic observation, work scrutiny and the analysis and use of assessment information is still in its infancy. Improvement plans at both whole-school and subject level lack precision. Objectives tend to be general and not well supported by measurable success criteria. Targets for sub-groups are not built into plans sufficiently to aid regular and accurate checks of progress.

Although there are firm plans to improve the quality and frequency of lesson monitoring, this is undertaken primarily by senior leaders. Not all teachers have been formally observed by the new leadership team, although 'learning walks' and 'drop-ins' have included all staff. Evaluations by senior leaders are inclined to be over-generous. A start has been made to tackle weaknesses in teaching and a programme of training is in place. However, strategies for improving the quality of teaching have yet to have sufficient impact.

The role of the governing body is developing following recent training and it is better placed to provide appropriate support and challenge. However, the governing body does not fully meet statutory requirements for safeguarding and the promotion of community cohesion.

The school provides a safe and socially inclusive environment. There is now a stronger focus on identifying barriers to learning and personal development. This is evident in the identification of potentially vulnerable pupils and improved monitoring and analysis of attendance to identify pupils at risk. Information gathered has been used to target girls for mentor support and special projects. Success is evident in improved attendance, confidence and self-esteem.

Basic safeguarding regulations and key policies are in place. However, systematic and robust monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of policies is not built into the

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school's work.

Leaders have not taken effective steps to analyse the local context to agree a strategic approach for promoting community cohesion. Leaders recognise that, given that most pupils are from White British backgrounds and aspirations are often too low, a proactive and inspiring plan is required to support an appreciation of other cultures, and to broaden pupils' horizons. Cohesion within the school and local community is promoted well through the vertical house system and sports specialism.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

Very few parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most express confidence that their children are safe and happy in school. Given the inspection's findings on the quality of learning and progress, inspectors endorse the view that there is scope for a greater role for parents and carers in supporting the learning of their children. The school recognises that further improvement is needed in supporting and promoting good behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Granville Community 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 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 716 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	42	13	54	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	7	29	16	67	1	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	33	13	54	3	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	33	13	54	3	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	38	12	50	2	8	1	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	21	10	42	8	33	1	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	25	13	54	4	17	1	4
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)	8	33	12	50	2	8	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	46	11	46	1	4	1	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	29	12	50	4	17	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	17	14	58	3	13	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	5	21	16	67	2	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	46	10	42	2	8	0	0

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.



24 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Granville Community School, Swadlincote, DE11 7JR

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our discussions with you and seeing you at work. You told us that you feel safe in school and that there is always someone to turn to if you need help or advice. You particularly enjoy the benefits of the sports specialism and many of you also enjoy the Friday Night Project. The school provides you with good care and support but the quality of guidance does not always help you improve or extend your ideas.

We would like more lessons to be good or better because you should be learning at a faster rate. We could see that you prefer lessons where you have a variety of active tasks, and the chance to work together. Lessons are not always planned well enough to meet your needs, and teachers do not regularly check on your progress during lessons to ensure that you understand the work. The curriculum is beginning to provide additional courses to motivate you and meet your interests.

The headteacher has begun to improve ways to check on the quality of the school's work. We have asked all leaders to work together to make improvements and to check that lessons are meeting your needs. The work of the governing body is developing so that it can provide greater challenge and support to the school. Policies are in place to keep you safe but they are not yet checked carefully enough to identify where improvement is needed. The house system works well and helps to build good relationships across year groups and in the local community. The school has been less successful in extending your knowledge, understanding and experiences of other cultures in Britain and the wider world. We have asked the school to take action to improve this.

To help the school to improve as quickly as possible, we decided that it needs 'special measures'. This means that it will receive additional help to improve and inspectors will visit about once a term to check on progress. You too can help the school to improve by thinking more about what you are learning in class and making sure that you know exactly what you need to do to improve the quality of your work. Our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikic

Her Majesty's Inspector

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