

Greystoke Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119941
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313455
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Helen Morrison

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Power
Headteacher	Mary Thornton
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2006
School address	Thornton Drive Narborough Leicester LE19 2GX
Telephone number	01162 862286
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. Most pupils live locally in favourable socio-economic circumstances and are from White British backgrounds. Fewer pupils than seen nationally are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Greystoke Primary is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly and there has been good improvement since the last inspection when the school was withdrawn from special measures. Well implemented strategies are bringing positive change to teaching and learning but these have yet to fully impact on standards. The headteacher provides effective leadership, and gives very clear direction to the life and development of the school. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst senior leaders who are increasingly focused on raising pupils' attainment. The school has accurate and effective self-evaluation that ties in well to staff professional development and future action plans. However, not all managers are yet monitoring and evaluating progress and standards rigorously enough. As a result, school leaders do not have a clear enough picture of how well individual pupils are achieving. Parents are happy with the direction the school is taking and what has already been achieved. As one parent said, 'The school has flourished over the last three years.'

Achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. Standards are average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in Key Stage 2 are rising and inspection evidence shows that standards in writing are much improved, particularly for boys because of well matched tasks and well chosen resources that inspire their creativity and sustained hard work. Standards in mathematics are on track to be higher than in 2007, particularly for the more able learners who are challenged well in their work.

The good curriculum provides a wide range of learning experiences for pupils of all abilities. Pupils enjoy coming to school because, as one boy said, 'I learn something new every day.' The curriculum is suitably enriched, for example by specific focus days such as the recent arts day. These provide exciting opportunities for pupils to extend their skills. Through opportunities such as raising money for charities, pupils contribute well to the community and are prepared satisfactorily for their future. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good relationships and positive behaviour management underpinning the pupils' successful learning. In some lessons, however, pupils sit for too long on the carpet during the opening session. This is a particular shortcoming that is inhibiting their speedier progress. Lessons are planned well but day-to-day assessment and in particular the marking of pupils' work is not linked closely enough to their learning targets.

Care, guidance and support are good and this assists pupils' good personal, including spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Teachers care for their pupils very well, and the social and emotional aspects of learning programme helps pupils understand their own and others' feelings. Pupils feel safe because staff are responsive to their individual needs. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet all legal requirements. There are good links with a range of external agencies that add value to pupils' social and academic development.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children have a happy start in the Reception classes because their personal development is given a high priority, with the good care and attention shown by adults resulting in children's personal needs being well met. Teaching is satisfactory and assists the children in making steady gains towards meeting the learning goals. They are given a wide range of experiences with a

good balance between activities led by an adult and those they choose themselves. The outside area, however, is not used widely enough as a learning resource. Children make good progress in communication and language development and calculation skills but their knowledge and understanding of the world are less well developed.

Children's progress in English and mathematics is recorded regularly and efficiently, though assessments made at the beginning and end of year are less accurate, so that managers do not have a clear enough picture of children's attainment and progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics, by setting clear targets for pupils and involving them more in the process of checking on their progress towards these targets.
- Improve pupils' rates of progress by raising the quality of teaching so that pupils do not spend so much time sitting and listening and are more actively involved in their learning.
- Involve managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating standards so that there is a clear picture of each pupil's attainment and progress.

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

On entry, children have levels of skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age. During their time at school pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards.

In the Foundation Stage children make satisfactory progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, most have reached average levels. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 last year were above average in reading and writing but average in mathematics. Pupils are on track to reach average standards this year.

At Key Stage 2 standards were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 compared to schools nationally.

Initiatives, such as 'Big Write', have had a positive impact on pupils' writing, and as a result standards are beginning to rise. The school has yet to ensure that the targets set for pupils in English and mathematics are reviewed sufficiently frequently so that more rapid progress can be made.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning and to each other. A particular strength of the school is the confidence with which pupils explore feelings and relationships in their personal, social and health education lessons. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils report feeling safe and behaviour is usually good both in lessons and around the school. Attendance is good.

Pupils make a valuable contribution to the local and school community through the school council and raising money for charity. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy by

eating a balanced diet and taking part in physical activities provided, particularly the 'huff and puff' exercise sessions led by the older pupils.

Pupils' moral and social development is good and they have a good awareness of right and wrong. Cultural activities are well supported, including music, art and drama, and pupils enjoy opportunities to perform in school and in venues such as the Albert Hall. Insufficient attention is paid, however, to promoting pupils' spiritual development and preparing them for life in a multicultural environment.

Pupils develop their basic skills satisfactorily and this prepares them adequately for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The purposeful atmosphere in classes and good range of resources results in pupils being keen to learn and sustain interest in their studies. For example, in one class pupils were engrossed when using programmable toys to explore quarter turns. Teachers plan well and often adapt their daily planning on the basis of learning in a previous lesson so ensuring that pupils move on to the next stage. Teaching assistants play an important role in classes, particularly when they are supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, as a result, these pupils make the same progress as their classmates. In many lessons, however, pupils spend too much time sitting on the carpet listening rather than being actively involved. This slows learning, particularly for the more able, who quickly become bored. Teachers generally make helpful comments when marking pupils' work, but pupils are not given time to respond to these comments which are rarely linked to targets for learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been carefully thought out to provide a good range of experiences for pupils, particularly for those at either end of the ability scale. Additional provision is beginning to be made for more able pupils who are challenged well in specific tasks. The e-pals project, for instance, where pupils work online and communicate with similarly talented pupils in other schools, benefits pupils' learning although this work is in its infancy. Arts subjects have a high profile in the curriculum and in the provision for extra-curricular activities, with music a particular strength. Pupils throughout the school also benefit from learning French. The school makes good use of its swimming pool to give all pupils the opportunity to learn to swim. Visits add to pupils' learning and experiences. There are a good number of sporting activities, which are well supported and enhance pupils' active lifestyle. Too few links, however, are made between subjects which would enable pupils to practise their writing and other skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are given very good care and support. The staff are friendly, know the pupils well and are interested in their well-being both academically and socially. The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, and the individual needs of more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met effectively. The vast majority of parents are very

happy with the quality of care provided for their children. Measures to safeguard all pupils are effective with those who are most vulnerable being well protected. Incidents of bullying are rare with the few instances dealt with promptly and effectively.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Senior leaders accept that more needs to be done to help pupils understand how to improve their work. Although the progress of pupils is tracked, the systems are not sufficiently robust to ensure that appropriate targets are set and underachievement identified soon enough. Pupils are particularly well prepared for their transfer to secondary school by transition projects which take place throughout the school year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is an effective leader who knows the strengths and areas for development of the school well. As one parent said, 'The headteacher has really turned the school around.' The senior leadership team share her determination and commitment to continue to improve the school further. For example, they have worked together on developing innovative target setting 'ladders' which are currently being implemented. Team leaders have oversight of two year groups and work alongside their teams to provide coaching in planning and teaching to promote good practice. At the moment, however, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the tracking of pupils' progress are not rigorous enough to ensure that all pupils make as much progress as they could. The governing body are supportive of the headteacher and senior leadership team but they have yet to provide effective challenge and hold the school to account.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greystoke Primary School, Narborough, LE19 2GX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and sharing with us all the exciting things you do. We hope the Years 1/2 plant detectives solve the mystery of why the plants died and that the slippers Years 5/6 are making look as good as their designs when they are finished.

Because you were so friendly, polite and helpful we found out quite a lot about your school.

- It gives you a satisfactory education so you achieve as you should.
- Your headteacher leads your school well and so it is improving all the time.
- Your teachers care for you and look after you and so you feel safe.
- You are learning to live healthily, for example, in your 'huff and puff' sessions.
- Those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you make satisfactory progress.
- You have lots of opportunities to be creative, for example, in music, art and drama.

In order that your school gets even better we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to:

- help you reach even higher standards in English and mathematics by setting you targets that you can check with your teachers
- make sure you spend more of your lessons taking an active part in learning rather than only sitting and listening
- help you to make faster progress by making sure that all your teachers keep a closer eye on how you are doing so that if any of you fall behind you are helped to catch up quickly.

You can help your teachers to do this by always doing your very best.

I wish you lots of success in the future.

With best wishes

Helen Morrison Lead inspector