

Brunswick House Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118297
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358302
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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 of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Williamson
Headteacher	Janice Kingman
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2007
School address	Leafy Lane Maidstone, Kent ME16 0QQ
Telephone number	01622 752102
Fax number	01622 675204
Email address	headteacher@brunswick-house.kent.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 22 lessons and 14 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation including the school's self-evaluation form, monitoring records, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 58 parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- The improvements in mathematics.
- The achievement of more able pupils and boys to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging in English, particularly in writing.
- The effectiveness of the work of leaders and managers in securing consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and progress across the school.
- The impact of recent changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well the curriculum meets the needs and interests of all groups.

Information about the school

Brunswick House is larger than the average sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average as is the proportion that speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes. There is an after-school club that is managed by a private provider and not included in this inspection. The school has gained numerous awards, including International Schools and Artsmark awards, and has Safe Schools accreditation.

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

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in above average attendance and their good attitudes to learning. One parent wrote, 'My child absolutely loves going to school. It is very reassuring knowing how happy she is.' The good, trusting relationships between pupils and adults reflect the good care, guidance and support provided. As a consequence, pupils feel safe and develop good personal skills, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly and care for each other in this inclusive, cohesive school community.

There is a good capacity for sustained improvement. The school has moved forward from its satisfactory position at the last inspection, driven by the ambition and highly effective leadership and management of the headteacher. Clear and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have enabled the headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body to focus on the most important aspects for development and take effective action to bring about improvements. For example, a focus on mathematics has increased the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels in the subject by the end of Year 6. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above average and they achieve well from starting points that are at the expected level for their age when they start at school.

Children settle well in the Reception classes where their welfare is paramount and where they quickly pay attention to the routines that ensure their health and safety. The recent changes and developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage are having a positive impact but are not yet fully embedded to ensure that all children consistently benefit from high quality learning experiences.

Teaching is mostly good. Teachers plan lessons well with a good variety of activities. There are some very good examples of marking and feedback that give pupils a clear idea of how they can improve their work and provide good opportunities to help pupils develop skills in evaluating their own learning. Such good practice is inconsistent across the school, however, and this, as well as a lack of pace in some lessons, can sometimes slow the progress pupils make. On occasion, teachers do not always build sufficiently on the good progress pupils are making by extending the learning and thinking of more able pupils through the skilful questioning observed in many lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the recent developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure consistently high quality learning experiences that extend all children.
- Ensure good quality questioning in all lessons by sharing good practice among staff, to fully extend and challenge all learners, particularly the more able pupils.

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- Provide consistent and effective marking and feedback linked to learning objectives that gives pupils clear pointers for improvement and an understanding of their progress towards their learning goals.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning and this, along with their positive attitudes and good behaviour, makes an important contribution to their good achievement. Working collaboratively and learning through problem solving and investigative activities contribute to their good progress. For example, in Year 6 English lessons, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the 'crime scene' investigative work to stimulate their writing. They absorbed themselves in the activity, made good use of the outdoor environment and used good skills of discussion and questioning. As a consequence, they wrote some impressive, well-considered pieces of persuasive writing. One boy said, 'This makes writing fun and interesting and helps me to have lots of ideas.' The whole-school focus on motivating and inspiring pupils to write for a range of purposes has improved their enjoyment and ability to express their ideas and thoughts. This has helped to engage boys more effectively and reduce the gap between boys' and girls' attainment.

Pupils feel safe and secure and say they can always talk to an adult if there is anything they are worried about. A Year 1 English lesson was very effective in promoting pupils' awareness of safe internet use as well as a good use of a range of information and communication technology to support learning. Pupils are caring and supportive of each other. They have a good awareness of how to stay healthy and fit. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were exceptionally keen to learn together about measuring capacity through creating recipes for a healthy drink and consequently developed a clear understanding of the need for accurate measuring. Pupils enjoy their responsibilities in class and around the school, such as peer mediators and house leaders. They enjoy being enterprising and take part in many fund-raising events that help them develop an understanding of people who are less fortunate than they are.

Pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties, those with other special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to others because their needs are identified at an early stage and effective support is provided in class and in small groups or on a one-to-one basis.

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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	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Themed and creative approaches to learning, including well-planned links across a range of subjects, are enhanced by a good range of enrichment opportunities, including after-school clubs, trips and visitors. These activities very effectively broaden pupils' experience and interests as well as promoting good personal skills. For example, the Year 6 residential trip at the beginning of the school year does, as one child said, help the pupils to work together well so that they can support each other when they learn in the classroom. The achievement of an Artsmark award has promoted good quality work, as seen in displays around the school. A whole-school focus on the 'Take One Picture' project supports a smooth transition for pupils as they move from one year group to another. Music is a strength, with choirs, an orchestra, recorder and other instrumental groups that play for school and concerts elsewhere. The work the school has done to achieve the Basic Skills Quality Mark ensures that information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning and, along with English and mathematics, is integrated well into themed work.

Teachers mostly engage pupils well in their learning and ask good questions to extend thinking and learning. There is a good pace to learning in most lessons, and teachers often imaginatively bring subjects alive to motivate and engage pupils. In these lessons, pupils make good progress and learning is challenging and memorable for them. The same level of learning is not evident in all lessons and, as a result, there are occasions

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when some, often more able pupils, do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is because sometimes teachers' questioning does not always extend pupils' thinking to extend their learning. There are good systems for assessing pupils' learning and generally good use is made of assessment information to plan the next stages in learning. A notable feature of the best lessons is marking and feedback that not only gives pupils useful information on how to improve but also encourages them to reflect and evaluate their own progress and learning. This is, however, inconsistent across the school as sometimes teachers' comments on work do not relate to the learning objectives of the lesson.

The needs of vulnerable pupils are met effectively and are enhanced by good links with other agencies to provide well-targeted support to ensure that these pupils integrate well and make good progress relative to their starting points and circumstances.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's drive and ambition to provide the best possible learning experiences for pupils and raise expectations are significant factors in the improvements evident in the school since the last inspection. Her highly effective leadership and management motivate and inspire everyone in the school. One teacher commented that, 'There is a great positive atmosphere in the school and this has led to well motivated pupils and staff.' There is a growing sense of shared responsibility and commitment among staff. Self-evaluation is effective and efficient, and clearly identifies strengths to build upon and areas for further improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and has led to improvements being made, as leaders are knowledgeable in their subject areas as well as effective in their leadership roles. For example, the focus on mathematics has improved provision and led to improved attainment and progress. Governance is good. The governing body holds the school to account for its performance by providing a good balance of support and challenge that contributes well to school improvement.

Through its inclusive ethos, the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination very effectively and ensures that all pupils have every chance to take part in all of its activities and achieve well. The school works well with parents and carers. Great efforts are made to help them support their children's learning, for example through organising parenting classes and developing a parent forum. They have confidence in the headteacher. One parent wrote, 'The headteacher is particularly inspiring. She is very approachable yet maintains the authority needed. She enjoys good relationships with the children as individuals and is always in the playground to welcome them to school.' Good

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partnerships with local schools and appropriate agencies are well established, enrich the curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' well-being through well-targeted support. Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. There are good links with the local community; for example, pupils are involved in the design of the interior of a new local library. The school's established links with a school in Malawi, as well as their experience of other European cultures through learning languages and opportunities for video conferences with other schools, contribute positively to the global dimensions of community cohesion and have been recognised with the International Schools award. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are good, known by all staff and applied across all aspects of the school's work. These ensure that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe and have gained the school its Safe School accreditation.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

There have been considerable recent changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision which have resulted in an exciting and stimulating environment that provides learning opportunities both indoors and in the dedicated outside area. Children clearly enjoy their activities, for example playing in the large sandpit and in the willow structure where they imaginatively create their own worlds. Children make steady progress from their starting points that are generally around the expected level for their age, and their skills are broadly in line with expectations in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1. There are very positive, trusting relationships with the team of adults and as a result, children are happy, behave appropriately, settle well into the routines of the day and are well cared for. Children understand the need to keep themselves safe and healthy. At lunchtime, a group of children agreed that fruit and vegetables were 'good things to eat because they don't make you fat'. They are beginning to make choices about their

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learning as there are increasing opportunities for them to choose, balanced satisfactorily with activities led by adults. Improvements have also been made to ensure that assessments are more accurate and that the information is used more effectively to plan the next steps in learning. On occasion, however, opportunities are not taken to extend children's learning and thinking through their play, which sometimes limits exploration and problem solving skills and the pace of their learning. The school has correctly identified that these aspects of change are not yet fully embedded and plans are in place to further develop consistency in order to improve the current satisfactory progress.

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

A very small minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of these, all agree that their children enjoy coming to school and that the school keeps them safe. Almost all are happy with their children's experience at school. The main concerns from a very small minority of those who responded were related to information about progress and meeting children's particular needs. Inspectors found that the school meets the needs of all children well although in a small minority of lessons the level of challenge is not always sufficient for some more able pupils. Inspectors also found that the school provides parents and carers with good information about their children's progress. The inspectors fully support parents' and carers' positive views about the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brunswick House 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 414 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	76	14	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	43	26	45	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	50	25	43	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	50	26	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	52	23	40	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	69	17	29	1	2	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)	24	41	25	43	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	38	30	52	6	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	43	29	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	47	26	45	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	48	27	47	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	64	20	34	1	2	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



13 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brunswick House Primary School, Maidstone ME16 0QQ

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You were very polite and friendly. You are right to enjoy coming to Brunswick House because it is a good school. Your school has improved since the last visit by the inspectors because the headteacher and all the adults have been working very hard to make it better for you. You work hard too, and by the time you go to your next school you do better than many other children in English and mathematics. Well done for working so hard to improve your achievements in mathematics! We were impressed with the way you work and play well together. We agree with you and your parents and carers that this is a caring and safe place to be and this, with your good behaviour and enthusiasm to learn, helps you make good progress in your learning. All of you make good progress because you are taught well and teachers plan interesting and exciting things for you to do. Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

These are the two important things we would like the school to do:

- There have been some good changes in the Reception classes and, to make sure that all the children do as well as they can, all of their learning opportunities should be equally good.
- Teaching is good in your school but sometimes lessons are not quite as good as they could be. To make sure they are always good, or even better, teachers should always ensure you are doing as well as you can by asking challenging questions that make you think, especially those of you who find learning easier than others. They should also make sure you know how you can improve your work and that you understand how well you are making progress towards your learning goals.

Thank you again for being so interesting and friendly to talk to. You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and keeping your enthusiasm for learning.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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