

# Blenheim Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134008
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	360598
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Marshall

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nancy Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Whiting
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Blenheim Road Orpington, Kent BR6 9BH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01689 819955
<b>Fax number</b>	01689 600830
<b>Email address</b>	admin@blenheim.bromley.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	360598

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, observed eight teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. They looked at school documentation including policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures and the school's improvement planning. They also scrutinised pupils' work and evaluated 57 parental questionnaires.

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

- How effective are the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress for all pupils, particularly in writing?
- How well do staff use assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning, particularly the higher-achieving pupils?
- How effectively do leaders check, review and take actions to improve teaching and pupil progress in order to tackle underachievement and secure satisfactory achievement, especially in Key Stage 2?
- To what extent have the school's actions to tackle persistent absenteeism been successful?

## Information about the school

Blenheim is an average-sized primary school. The children come from both White British families and a wide range of other ethnic backgrounds. Almost a fifth of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average and represents a range of needs. The school has a Nursery class which takes children from the local area. The majority of children in the Nursery move into the Reception class, while the rest join from other local play groups. The school has gained Healthy School accreditation. Over the last two years there have been many changes to staff, with three new teaching staff appointed from September 2010, including the deputy headteacher.

**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. Since its previous inspection, it has successfully maintained the good level of pastoral care, guidance and support it provides, ensuring that pupils feel safe, are well cared for and thrive in their personal development. Pupils benefit from good relationships with staff. Their behaviour is good both in lessons and at play, and they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. They talk with enthusiasm about their school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated in their high take-up of clubs and healthy eating choices.

This is a satisfactory school. Since its previous inspection, it has successfully maintained the good level of pastoral care, guidance and support it provides, ensuring that pupils feel safe, are well cared for and thrive in their personal development. Pupils benefit from good relationships with staff. Their behaviour is good both in lessons and at play, and they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. They talk with enthusiasm about their school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated in their high take-up of clubs and healthy eating choices.

The school is now solidly focused on improving teaching and learning for the pupils after a period of staff changes and recent appointments. There is a strong shared commitment to raising attainment for all pupils. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, are becoming more involved in formal self-evaluation. Senior leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's effectiveness and what it needs to do to bring about improvement. For example, as a result of their good efforts in working with pupils and families, attendance, while low, has risen considerably. It is improving further through the school's close work with families, especially where a few pupils are too often absent. This success and the growing rigour of its monitoring, combined with the effective action to increase achievement, shows the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory, and attainment is broadly average at Year 6. Children benefit from good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, while sometimes good, teaching and learning are typically satisfactory throughout the school. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and teachers' expectations and, as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others and, therefore, satisfactory as a whole. For example, pupils do not build consistently well on their learning, or transfer the skills they have learnt between subjects, as they move through the school. This position is particularly the case for writing. All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set suitably challenging work for all pupils. This hinders the progress some pupils make, particularly the most able. While day-to-day assessment, including marking,

**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

is good in some classes, in others it is not used well enough. Not all pupils are made aware of the next small steps needed to improve their work and this limits their ability to take responsibility for their learning.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment in writing by:
  - developing teachers' use of marking and targets so pupils always understand exactly what to do to improve their writing and know the next steps in their learning
  - providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learned in literacy lessons when writing in other subjects
  - ensuring teachers always set high expectations whenever pupils use their writing skills.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - making better use of assessment information to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well, particularly the most able
  - ensuring that the checks all leaders make are thorough enough to secure consistently good or better teaching across the school.
- Improve attendance by:
  - ensuring that persistent absence is eradicated by working directly with the families of the very small number of pupils who are too often absent
  - promoting the importance of good attendance to all pupils and parents and maintaining this approach as a high priority across the school.

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

**3**

Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their academic learning, helped by their good attitudes towards school. They can explain clearly what they are learning because this is always shared with them at the start of a lesson. However, while progress is sometimes good, this pace is not yet a consistent feature across all year groups because planned learning is not always matched closely enough to the differing abilities of each group or to individual pupils. Consequently, pupils' interest and behaviour dips. Where learning is good, pupils are motivated and engaged, talking eagerly about what they have learned. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils successfully recalled the questions they had created in an earlier lesson to ask of the characters in 'Hansel and Gretel'. Skilfully questioned and challenged, they explained confidently how they could adapt their questions for other characters and improve them further. Already interested in their learning, they became totally engaged as the character of the witch appeared in the classroom and they were able to ask their questions of her in person.

Pupils' academic performance at Years 2 and 6 has been affected over recent years by a falling away in attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes to well below expected levels, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional skills. Good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage currently enables

**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

children to reach below-average attainment in Year 1. The school has focused closely on lifting achievement at Key Stage 1 and, as a result, progress here is more consistently good than it is at Key Stage 2, bringing attainment by Year 2 into the broadly average range last year and this year. Progress is particularly variable at Key Stage 2, but good progress for the older pupils has largely sustained broadly average attainment at Year 6. Given this degree of inconsistency across the school, progress as a whole is no greater than satisfactory. The school is also well aware that attainment in writing still has to catch up with reading and mathematics. It has already taken steps to hasten its improvement, but these have yet to make a full impact. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those pupils at the early stages of learning English, also make satisfactory progress. However, as a result of the increasingly well-targeted support for these pupils, their rate of progress is accelerating.

Pupils achieve well in many aspects of their personal and social development. Strong relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils' good behaviour, help to foster their positive attitudes towards learning. Their enjoyment of school life is evident in their supportive attitudes towards each other, which help to make the school a safe and welcoming place. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel well cared for. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their strong awareness of other traditions is illustrated in their respect for the many cultures represented in their own school and local communities. Pupils enjoy being part of the school council and taking on responsibilities. However, the opportunities for them to widen their involvement in the local and wider community are less well developed. The regular attendance of most pupils, and pupils' ability in general to work well together from an early age, are key factors in their satisfactory development of basic skills.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Across the school, behaviour is managed effectively during lessons. Some are planned and organised well, with interesting activities to engage the pupils and high expectations set by teachers. For example, Year 6 pupils produced high-quality written work because the teacher shared clear success criteria with them, so that they knew exactly how to improve their writing and note taking. The most able were very effectively challenged to scan information from the internet for their sub-headings and succeeded well because of the good links to their previous learning made by the teacher. However, this approach is not always the case. In other lessons assessment is not used well enough to ensure all pupils achieve well. For example, in their marking teachers do not refer consistently enough to the next steps in learning or to pupils' individual targets in order to show them how to improve their work. Similarly, expectations of the quality of pupils' written work vary greatly from class to class and, consequently, pupils do not value their writing sufficiently to always produce work that reflects their ability.

The curriculum is enriched well through a wide variety of visits and visitors, as well as a good range of extra-curricular activities which help to promote pupils' enjoyment of learning. It is appropriately adapted to enable pupils to build satisfactory basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. While well-considered links are made between subjects, opportunities to develop pupils' writing and to allow them to practise and consolidate these skills are less well established. Improvements to

**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

assessment are enabling staff to track pupils' progress more closely and identify particular learning needs more rapidly than before. As a result, the curriculum is increasingly tailored carefully to pupils' needs in lessons. However, while these strategies are quickening the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning to speak English, they are not yet fully embedded or as effective in challenging the more able.

Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for well because the school works closely with parents and outside agencies. One such area is pupils' attendance. Improvement in this area is due to the success the school has had in working with the families of those who find it difficult to attend regularly and, in particular, to the setting of clear guidelines regarding holidays and other absences.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by all members of the recently created senior management team, who are equally ambitious for the school. Leaders are becoming increasingly involved in analysing performance data to see how well the school is doing and to plan actions for improvement. Through its rigorous tracking systems, the school is also increasingly holding teachers to account for their pupils' progress. Senior leaders and governors recognise the need to become even more rigorous in their monitoring of teaching and learning to see where it is most effective and to ensure consistent learning. Subject leaders, some new to their role, play an appropriate part in checking how well their subject is doing, and planning for improvement. These plans are being put into action, but there has not yet been enough time for them to fully take effect.

All leaders appropriately support the drive for equality of opportunity and freedom from any form of discrimination. They have put in place more rigorous systems to make sure pupils from all groups increasingly receive the same level of support and achieve well. Governance is developing its capacity for checking and influencing the school's work and effectiveness. It is ensuring that safeguarding guidelines are adequately met, with office staff making appropriate checks on the school's procedures and systems. Those for safe recruitment, assessing risk and for child protection are secure. Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the school and the local community, and their understanding and contribution are developing well in these areas. The school is also beginning to promote pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures in national and global contexts and are currently developing links with other schools in the United Kingdom and further afield. Consequently the school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory.



**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

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. They grow quickly in confidence, becoming enthusiastic learners because of the particularly strong focus on their pastoral care. The curriculum is adapted effectively, using the children's own interests to engage them in learning. For example, in both the Nursery and Reception classes, children drew on their own experiences from their many cultures as part of the focus on celebrations. Children wrote invitations, dressed in special clothes, bought presents at the shop and learned songs and dances. Reception children became utterly engrossed in producing food for their party. They created lists of what was needed, bought them at the shop and then transformed them in their 'factory' to create lollies and 'smoothies', talking animatedly as they carried out their ideas. Others worked with considerable concentration as they wrapped and labelled presents for friends and family. While these activities benefitted all, they were particularly successful with those at the early stages of learning English.

Teaching is good and the children learn well from the high-quality interventions they receive from teachers and other adults as they play. Learning opportunities are well planned so that children build on their knowledge and understanding both indoors and outdoors. Writing has been a particular focus and, consequently, children have many opportunities in the Nursery and Reception to make marks and develop their early writing skills. After analysing children's progress so far, a similar focus is planned to develop their reading skills. Communication with parents and carers is good, and home-school books are being developed to give them a better understanding of how they can help their children's development through everyday activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage

**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

leader and team use assessment information effectively to promote learning and are able to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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

## Views of parents and carers

The return of questionnaires from parents and carers was a little below the national average. The vast majority of questionnaires received were positive and almost all of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended the safe and caring attitude of the school, its support for pupils and how well their children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles. Typical comments about the school included, 'teachers are very caring and supportive' and pupils feeling 'very secure in the school'.

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over how the school prepares their child for the future. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed that, in addition to satisfactory academic achievement, transition procedures into the Early Years Foundation Stage and when the pupils left in Year 6 were good. The school has used its close links with the local secondary school well and past pupils regularly help with after-school clubs and take part in sessions to help the older pupils with their move to secondary school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Blenheim 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	88	7	12	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	79	12	21	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	70	16	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	72	16	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	74	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	77	13	23	0	0	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)	34	60	20	35	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	68	16	28	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	67	16	28	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	61	17	30	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	74	15	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	75	13	23	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



20 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Blenheim Primary School, Orpington BR6 9BH**

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear that you like school and we agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do. You get on with one another well and behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help so that you know how to keep healthy and safe.

The inspection team has found that your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs as it should and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work. The leaders in the school do a suitable job of running your school. They know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do three things:

- make better use of marking to help you understand how to improve, particularly in writing, have high expectations of what you write and give you lots of opportunities to practise and use your writing skills in other subjects ♦
- keep checking to make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and interesting
- work with you and your families to make sure you miss as little of your learning as possible.

You can help by coming to school regularly, continuing to respect others' values and always using the advice teachers give you about how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**