

Pratts Bottom Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101617
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	355040
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Hudson
Headteacher	Matthew Ringham
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
School address	Hookwood Road Orpington Kent BR6 7NX
Telephone number	01959 532225
Fax number	01959 532225
Email address	general.office@prattsbottom.bromley.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2011
Inspection number	355040

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 123 4234, or email 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 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons taught by four different teachers and talked to parents and carers, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked in particular at its self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the governing body minutes. They considered the responses in 35 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

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

- How effective are the school's measures to raise pupils' attainment in writing?
- What is the quality of the teaching, and do the mixed-age classes meet the needs of all pupils?
- How well does the school promote pupils' understanding of community cohesion, particularly in a global context?

Information about the school

This small village school consists of three mixed-age classes, one of which is shared between two teachers. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than usual. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. More pupils leave or join part-way through the year than is typical. A new headteacher took up his appointment in September 2010.

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

- The hallmark of this good school is its caring ethos. The findings of the inspection support the view of the parent who commented, 'The school has a friendly feel. The older children always look out for the younger ones and this carries on throughout the school, so that in turn the younger ones will help those younger than them.' Pupils develop good personal qualities in the school. They are kind and considerate to one another, and relish the many opportunities to take responsibility for others.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year and make good progress in their learning. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 continue to make good progress, and this reflects the consistently good teaching.
- The quality of care provided for all pupils, and particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good, enabling them all to succeed in their learning and to develop good personal qualities.
- Pupils who join the school part-way through the year are well supported. They quickly settle down and make good progress in line with others.
- The adults plan the curriculum well so that, within mixed-age classes, the school offers all pupils a good level of challenge appropriate to their age and capabilities. The focus on basic skills is particularly effective in promoting pupils' reading and mathematics. However, pupils have too few opportunities to write at length on a range of topics.
- As a result of energetic measures taken by the school, attendance has improved and is now above average, after being average for a number of years.
- The school is much loved in the local community. One parent commented, 'The school has a very good community feel about it and everyone helps each other.' The school uses its local resources fully. For example, pupils regularly go 'bug hunting' in nearby woods. The school recognises that not enough is done to promote pupils' wider understanding of other people's faiths and ways of life, for example by developing closer links with schools abroad.
- The headteacher and his team are ambitious for the school and continually seek ways of improving it. Leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of their school and their planning for the future is good. They have met the recommendation of the last inspection to improve the tracking of pupils' progress and this has enabled teachers to match work accurately to pupils' needs, even when different age groups are taught within one class. These factors indicate that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils have as many opportunities as possible to develop their writing skills in a range of topics.
- Extend pupils' wider global understanding of different cultures and customs, for example by establishing closer links with schools in other countries.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement is good overall, and they show their enjoyment of learning through their above-average attendance. One parent commented, 'My child skips to school every morning and this is her simple way of telling me how happy she is in her school environment.' With very small cohorts in each year group, pupils' starting and finishing points fluctuate considerably. Over time, however, the overall pattern is that children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities slightly below those expected and pupils leave with attainment that is in line with national averages by the end of Year 6. A scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school generally supports these findings, showing that pupils do best in mathematics and reading. Attainment in writing is slightly below average, especially at the higher levels. However, there are promising signs that new initiatives to develop pupils' fluency in writing are beginning to make an impact. All groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, and those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress. This is because their needs are identified early and met through effective support. Those with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in line with others, because they receive targeted support in class or in small withdrawal groups. In lessons, the level of challenge is consistently good. In the very best lessons, it is high, and pupils rise to the challenge. For example, in one fast-paced lesson for pupils from Years 4 to 6, pupils enjoyed learning Lewis Carroll's nonsense rhyme, Jabberwocky. Pupils effortlessly learned different parts of speech by guessing what the nonsense words meant, and then acted out their interpretation of what was meant by such words as 'gyre and gimble'. The lesson provided exciting opportunities for pupils to develop a love of language by devising their own nonsense words and to share their enthusiasm with others through discussion.

Pupils are friendly, confident and polite to visitors. They understand the importance of eating a healthy diet and taking exercise, and are proud that the school council suggested the building of the trim trail which they enjoy using. They feel safe in school and know the adults will support them if they have any concerns. Behaviour is good in and around the school, and this reflects their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils gain a good deal from the many opportunities for them to take responsibility within the school, and make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. They value the family-style lunches in which the older pupils take care of the younger ones, cutting up their food and helping them open packets. The satisfactory grounding pupils acquire in the basic skills prepares them adequately for the next stage of schooling.

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	3
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?

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, ensuring that they sit properly and pay close attention. The house points system ensures that good behaviour and good learning in lessons are quickly rewarded. Teachers use questioning skilfully to stimulate pupils to think for themselves, and encourage them to discuss tasks with one another, so that in most cases they are fully engaged. In one lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3, the pupils used their prior learning of Roman life to learn how to use the contents page, the glossary and the index of reference books. The tasks were matched successfully to their capabilities and each pupil enjoyed undertaking their own research. There are occasional instances, however, where teachers do too much for the pupils and in these cases pupils sometimes become a little restless and fidgety. As a rule, however, the pace of learning is brisk. Pupils are given good opportunities to assess the quality of their work. Marking by teachers is consistently clear and offers helpful guidance to pupils on the next steps they need to take to improve. Teaching assistants give good support, enabling all pupils, whatever their aptitudes or needs, to access the full curriculum.

The curriculum is good overall, and enrichment activities are exciting and wide-ranging. The clubs, and the trips and visits to places of interest, often arranged in partnership with local schools, extend pupils' opportunities, and are appreciated by them. The curriculum is inclusive and pupils with a statement of special educational needs are particularly well provided for through careful planning by the adults. The curriculum has a good focus on

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

developing pupils' basic skills, particularly in reading and mathematics, and this enables pupils to make good progress in these subjects. Pupils do a little less well in writing, and the school recognises that not enough is done to develop their fluency, because they have too few opportunities to write at length on a variety of topics, for example in such subjects as history and geography.

Pupils are given good care and support, and the care of vulnerable children and of those with a range of additional needs is a particular strength. The school goes to great lengths to provide for them, for instance by ensuring that teaching assistants are well trained and effective in supporting them. Each pupil is known and cared for. One parent commented, 'All the teachers are welcoming and approachable, and they even know siblings who don't go to the school by name!' Because the classes accommodate pupils from different key stages, transition arrangements are generally strong, so that pupils move seamlessly through the school. Transition arrangements into the Reception Year are good, and Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their move to the next phase of schooling.

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?

One parent commented, 'The present headteacher, and before him the previous head, are examples of how a primary school should be run.' In little over a term, the new headteacher has maintained a supportive and cohesive team, while forging ahead with some well-targeted changes. For example, he has introduced a new writing programme for pupils throughout the school, and this is beginning to have an impact on raising pupils' attainment, especially at the higher levels. The ambition of leaders and managers to improve the school is good. They understand their school and their plans for its development are clear and cover the right areas. The governing body shares their determination to make the school outstanding. Governors are actively engaged in the life of the school and are ready to take the initiative in making improvements, for example, by requesting detailed information on pupils' attainment and progress in order to hold the school to account. The leaders' management of the quality of teaching is good. As yet, their programme of classroom visits is at an early stage, but it is already apparent that a particular strength is the focus on how and what pupils learn. The school promotes equality of opportunity well, tackling discrimination by removing barriers to learning, as seen in the effective use of teaching assistants to support different groups, so that all pupils have the chance to succeed. The headteacher and governing body ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and all adults are thoroughly checked and vetted before working in the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall. Leaders, managers and members of the governing body have created a cohesive school with a pride in its long history and prominent place in the local community. As yet, leaders do not sufficiently develop links with schools and communities overseas to ensure that pupils have a full understanding of other people's ways of life and systems of belief. Leaders and managers work in effective partnership with parents and carers, keeping them well informed about their children's progress and communicating well through the school's informative website and through regular newsletters.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

For part of the day, the small group of children in the Reception Year learn alongside pupils in Year 1, but mostly they have separate play and learning activities, so that overall they receive an education which is typical of that provided for children of their age. During the Reception Year, the children make good progress in acquiring new skills. Induction arrangements are effective and the children quickly settle into their routines. The school builds and maintains good relationships with parents and carers. Adults promote children's welfare well. They provide firm but kind support and as a result the children develop good social and emotional skills. They play together peacefully and are ready to share and take turns. In general, there is a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-led activities. On occasion, however, the children spend too long sitting on the carpet while the day's activities are planned. In the best activities, adults develop children's interest through questioning to promote higher-level thinking, asking the children, for instance, such questions as 'How do you know that?', rather than taking the child's first response as sufficient. Occasionally, however, adults do not extend the children's language skills through sufficiently well-targeted questioning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Leaders plan well to provide focused activities for children in need of

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

extra support and to ensure that children are kept safe. They provide a good curriculum with varied play opportunities to build the children's physical agility and to stimulate their imagination.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 proportion of parents and carers who returned questionnaires was higher than usual. All those who returned questionnaires or who spoke to inspectors agreed that their children enjoy school and that it keeps them safe and healthy. The findings of the inspection are that all these aspects are good. Parents and carers were unanimous in regarding the teaching as good. The findings of the inspection support this view. A few expressed concerns about their children's progress and felt that the school did not help them sufficiently to support their children's learning. Inspectors found, however, that pupils make good progress and that the school helps parents and carers well in encouraging their children to learn. Parents and carers were unanimous in being happy with their children's experience at the school. One commented, 'This is a lovely school where the teachers show real care and concern for the children.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pratts Bottom 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 62 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	51	17	49	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	51	16	46	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	49	14	40	2	6	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	22	63	12	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	57	12	34	2	6	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	57	15	43	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)	15	43	15	43	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	54	14	40	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	51	13	37	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	54	15	43	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	60	12	34	2	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	60	12	34	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



16 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pratts Bottom Primary School, Orpington BR6 7NX

Do you remember when two visitors came to your school recently to watch you learn and play? Thank you for making us so welcome, and telling us your views. You are fortunate to go to a good school. Here are some of the things your school does well.

- The adults look after you well, and you are happy at school.
- Your school keeps you safe and healthy. You behave well and pay close attention in lessons. You are polite and respectful to visitors. You enjoy taking on responsibilities at school, such as looking after the younger children.
- Your teachers teach you well, and you leave school with results which are very much like those of pupils in the country as a whole.
- Your parents and carers like your school as much as you do, and value the way everyone is treated like a member of the family.

Here are ways in which your school could become even better.

- We know you love writing, so we have asked your school to give you more opportunities to write on a wide range of interesting topics.
- We know how special and important your school is in your local community. Now we want the adults to tell you even more about how people live and worship in other countries.

All the adults are working very hard to make your school better and better. All of you can play your part by working hard, too, and always asking if there is anything you do not understand.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.