

# Brierley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111061
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	356856
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanne Olsson HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	154
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Steve Clapham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Booth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mirion Street Crewe Cheshire CW1 2AZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 685 527
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Eight lessons led by five teachers were observed. Inspectors made several visits to the Early Years Foundation Stage to observe provision. Inspectors also observed pupils at play and during assembly time. In addition, inspectors observed three intervention programmes being delivered. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, senior leaders and managers and a local authority officer. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement plan and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 27 parents and carers.

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

- Are current attainment levels being maintained and are all pupils, including those in Key Stage 1, making consistently good progress across the school?
- How effectively is the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enabling this group to make appropriate progress from their starting points?
- Is the quality of teaching and the use of assessment consistently good enough to secure good pupil progress and further raise standards in all core subjects, but particularly in English?
- Is the role of all leaders, including the governing body, sufficiently well developed to drive improvements in provision, leading to raised standards in all core subjects?

## Information about the school

Brierley is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school which admits most pupils from its immediate locality. The majority of children enter school from the on-site playgroup, although a number also come from different settings within the locality. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority-ethnic groups is in line with other schools nationally, but the number of pupils at the school who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Although pupil numbers have stabilised in recent years, the number of pupils who move into and out of the school throughout the year is higher than found nationally. The school has received a number of awards including National Healthy School Status, Inclusion Chartermark and the Sportsmark. St Peter's pre-school is housed in a mobile classroom on the school site. This provision, which is not managed by the governing body, is subject to a separate inspection. The latest report is available on the Ofsted website [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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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**

**2**

## Main findings

Brierley Primary provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school has improved since the last inspection: many of the areas judged satisfactory are now good. This improvement is due to strong leadership and a sharp focus on improving outcomes for pupils. Pupils are making better progress and attainment is rising. The school has some good features such as the care and support it provides to pupils and the effective links with partners to enhance pupils' learning and well-being; both of these areas are better than at the last inspection. Pupils have well developed personal qualities, positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is consistently good. Their thoughtful behaviour to each other means this a welcoming and harmonious school. Pupils who join the school at non-conventional times of the year are well supported and quickly become part of the cohesive community.

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age. In recent years, pupils made satisfactory progress across the school and left Year 6 with attainment levels that were lower than average. Pupils made better progress in 2010; this is because attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with national averages. Although learners' progress is improving across the school, it remains inconsistent across subjects and year groups. It is for this reason that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils' performance in reading and mathematics is stronger than in writing. There are inconsistent opportunities for pupils to write at length and for different purposes. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their average attendance. Their understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles has improved since the last inspection. It is good as pupils understand the dangers of smoking and alcohol and the importance of healthy eating. Different groups of pupils say they feel safe at all times in school and that instances of bullying are rare. All pupils are confident any issues or concerns they have are quickly resolved by school staff.

Teaching is improving but it is not consistently good across the whole school. Inconsistencies remain in the clarity of teachers' instructions and their expectations of how much pupils can do during a lesson. The school's strategies to improve teaching have not had sufficient impact in all classrooms due to significant changes in staff. Nevertheless, focused support for new staff has led to a good level of consistency in how teachers use assessment information to plan lively and relevant tasks that meet the needs of most pupils. In addition, all teachers provide clear feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. As a result all groups of pupils, including those in Key Stage 1 and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making at least satisfactory progress from their starting points.

The headteacher, ably assisted by an increasingly strong team of middle leaders and managers, has been relentless in driving forward improvement. As a result almost all of

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the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection have been successfully tackled. Subject leaders have a much greater role in driving improvement, teachers use assessment information well to match most activities to pupils' needs and pupils' achievement in reading is good. The significant improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage mean the youngest children make consistently good progress in all areas of learning. This good track record of improvement coupled with the rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school contribute to the school's good capacity to secure further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Ensure all pupils make consistently good progress by improving the quality of teaching so it matches the best in the school by:
  - providing greater opportunities for pupils to work independently for sustained periods of time
  - ensuring teachers' explanations are clear and their expectations of what pupils can do are sufficiently high enough
  - ensuring the support provided by additional adults is consistently focused on extending pupils' learning.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length for sustained periods of time
  - providing greater opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across a range of subject areas.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard and apply themselves well. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils eagerly used their prior learning to help them report on the disappearance of an 'ice-man'. In a Year 5/6 science lesson, there was excellent collaboration between pupils as they discussed and explored methods to clean water. These pupils were able to select appropriate resources, assess risk and reflect on their strategies to solve the problem. Such activities enable pupils to become confident, imaginative and independent learners who are prepared to persevere even when they find tasks demanding.

Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory overall. In 2010, attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 improved and was higher than at the last inspection. Good progress in reading and mathematics resulted in broadly average attainment in English and mathematics. Although attainment in Key Stage 1 fell in 2010, this group of pupils made at least expected and often good progress from their starting points. School-based data suggests pupils in Key Stage 1 are making better than expected progress. The current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve the challenging targets set by the school.

Work in lessons, in books and the school's own information on pupils' progress, show that pupils across the whole school are making satisfactory, but improving, progress overall.

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Although many pupils make good progress from their starting points, this is not consistent in all classes and in all subjects. All pupils make good progress in reading. In most areas of the school, pupils are making slower progress in writing. This is because there are inconsistent opportunities for them to write at length for a sustained period of time and to apply their writing skills across a range of subject areas. Intervention programmes are used very effectively to support pupils who are not making the expected progress, those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those pupils at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. As a result there is little difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils.

Pupils make a strong contribution to their school by acting as buddies to each other, as trained first-aiders and in leading whole-school assemblies. The active school council has influenced improvements to the school by developing a 'Chill Out Room' where pupils can go to if they need some quiet time, by suggesting a range of school visits to enhance learning and by organising events to raise money for charity. Good links with local schools, the local Church and other community projects mean they have an opportunity to contribute to the wider community. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is strong. This is evident in their enthusiasm for learning, in the care and consideration they show as reading buddies to the youngest children and in the welcome and support they offer to newly-arrived pupils. They have a well-developed sense of their own culture but their knowledge of other cultures is limited. Secure basic skills, average attendance and positive attitudes mean pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of their school career.

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*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>2</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>	3
<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?

Positive relationships result in calm and safe classrooms in which pupils can share their ideas and views without any concerns of 'getting it wrong'. Teachers use assessment information well to plan activities which meet the needs of most pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have very high expectations of all pupils. Time is used effectively so there is a good balance between teacher-led activities and independent learning. Effective questioning, good links to prior learning and regular feedback from teachers result in pupils making good progress in their learning. In the small minority of less effective lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are insufficiently demanding. Instructions sometimes lack clarity and pupils do not always have enough time to work independently. As a consequence, the pace of learning is not brisk enough to secure good progress. The deployment of additional adults to support learning within classrooms varies across the school. Most additional adults ask effective questions which encourage pupils to extend their learning, but sometimes adults provide too much support, which restricts pupils' opportunity to learn independently. In contrast, additional adults provide valuable support in delivering intervention programmes outside of the classroom. Throughout the school, pupils' work is marked thoroughly. In English and mathematics books, teachers provide clear guidance to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work.

Recent improvements to the curriculum have resulted in more relevant and enjoyable activities for all pupils. However, the opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills

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in other subject areas are under-developed. A good range of visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning, for example, pupils talk enthusiastically about their participation in an online mathematics competition which is encouraging them to tackle calculation problems outside their lessons and often at home. The curriculum is enriched by pupils' good attendance at a variety of school-led clubs.

The overwhelming majority of pupils agree that adults in the school care about them. Very good use is made of external partners and agencies to support pupils' learning and well-being. In partnership with parents and carers, the school ensures appropriate support is provided to individuals to overcome any potential barriers to pupils' success.

Arrangements for inducting newly-arrived pupils are good. They are particularly strong for those pupils who are learning English as an additional language, with an on-site translator and effective buddy system to ensure these pupils settle quickly, make friends and can access learning in classrooms. Secure systems to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality have been successful in improving attendance rates across the school.

Targeted support and intervention with parents and carers has led to a rapid improvement in the attendance rates for those pupils with the highest levels of absence.

*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	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides good leadership. Her ambition for the school is shared by all school staff and members of the governing body. As a consequence, there is a common sense of purpose and a commitment to improving the school further. Activities to monitor the effectiveness of the school are regular and rigorous leading to accurate self-evaluation. Plans for school development are sharply focused on accurate priorities. As a result the school has been successful in tackling the issues raised at the last inspection. Senior leaders and managers have maintained a sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching in order to secure better outcomes for pupils. However, the positive impact of this work is not consistent across the school due to recent staffing turbulence. The re-invigorated governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses. Members of the governing body are beginning to provide greater challenge to senior leaders and managers as they are taking an increasing role in monitoring the work of the school. The school's systems for safeguarding are robust. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree the school keeps pupils safe.

Opportunities for parents and carers to attend adult learning workshops, to become involved in pupils' learning and to share their views through regular questionnaires lead to positive relationships. The school makes good use of other partners to support and



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enhance the learning and well-being of all pupils. For example, well established links with a local university has resulted in science students making regular visits to school to develop pupils' science investigative skills. Thorough systems to monitor the academic achievement of all pupils are effective in ensuring equality of opportunity. Any gaps between groups are promptly identified and swift action is taken to ensure all pupils make at least expected progress. All forms of discrimination are tackled appropriately and the school is a harmonious community. The school is beginning to deliver planned actions to develop pupils' understanding of diversity. This work is having a satisfactory impact in promoting community cohesion.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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

When children join the Early Years Foundation Stage what they know and what they can do is lower than expected for their age. It is particularly low in recognising and using number. Almost all children make good progress and, as a result, leave Reception with skills and knowledge that are broadly average for their age. Children's development of communication, language and literacy skills remain below the other areas of learning.

Children make good progress because they receive good quality teaching and learning opportunities. Children enjoy their learning. They concentrate well and can work independently and as part of a team for sustained periods of time. For example, small groups worked very well together to construct a model to help the Gingerbread Man cross the river. They listened to each other and persevered with the challenge until they achieved success. Adults support learning well, particularly during adult-led tasks. This is because adults use questions effectively to encourage pupils to extend their ideas. Children's behaviour is consistently good and they show respect and consideration to

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adults and to each other. The outdoor environment has improved since the last inspection. Most of the outdoor learning opportunities are purposeful and reflect the indoor provision.

Strong and purposeful leadership by the Early Years Foundation Stage manager has led to improved outcomes for children in a relatively short space of time. As a result the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was judged satisfactory. Development planning is focused on appropriate priorities and a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. Thorough assessment is used to inform learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is continuing to develop links with parents and carers and to involve them more closely in the children's 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

Almost all parents and carers who returned questionnaires consider their children enjoy school and are kept safe. A very large majority feel teaching is good and the school is helping their children to have a healthy lifestyle. Parents and carers were supportive of other aspects of the school's work. A few were not so content with the manner in which unacceptable behaviour is dealt with or with the progress their children were making. A very small number did not feel that the school took account of their suggestions or concerns. Inspectors looked at these concerns carefully by observing pupils at work and play, by talking to pupils, parents and carers and by scrutinising school documentation. The findings from these activities are included within this report.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brierley 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	67	8	30	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	67	8	30	1	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	59	7	26	4	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	48	10	37	4	15	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	56	9	33	3	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	59	8	30	3	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	56	10	37	2	7	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)	12	44	13	48	2	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	48	11	41	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	48	9	33	4	15	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	44	11	41	2	7	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	15	56	7	26	5	19	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	59	7	26	4	15	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](http://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"><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.**



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brierley Primary School, Crewe, CW1 2AZ**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we recently came to inspect your school. All of the team found it a pleasure to talk with you, to look at your work and listen to views about your school. We consider Brierley to be a satisfactory school. These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You all make good progress in reading and some of you make good progress in writing and mathematics. Your attainment is average.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and trust the adults who care for you.
- You have good attitudes to learning, you behave well and are considerate to others. You make sure pupils who are new to your school settle quickly and are happy.
- Teachers are good at making your learning interesting and fun - I do hope the Year 2 pupils were able to find out what had happened to the Ice Man!
- Teachers mark your work regularly and help you to improve.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked the governing body to work with the headteacher and staff to focus on a few key areas. We have asked them to help you make better progress in all areas of your learning by making sure teaching is good in all classes. We have also asked them to help you improve your writing skills by giving you more opportunities to write in other subjects.

We are sure that with such positive personal qualities you will help your teachers and headteacher to further improve the school. Please accept our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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