

Broadwater Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118566
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358386
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Kift
Headteacher	Jane Florey
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited eight lessons or part lessons taught by five staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation and pupils' workbooks and displays; they held discussions with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors, and staff. Questionnaires from 36 parents and carers and 15 staff were analysed to help inform the inspection process.

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

- How well pupils attain in writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 6.
- The extent to which teaching and the curriculum cater for mixed ages and promote weaker subjects such as writing and reading.
- How well senior leaders use self-evaluation to help drive improvement across the school.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in one class. Other pupils are taught in a Year 1 class, a mixed Year 2/3 class and a Year 4/5/6 class. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. Around 15% of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. There is a breakfast club, run by the school, which caters for an average of 16 pupils each morning. The school has a number of awards reflecting its commitment to promoting pupils' healthy lifestyles, their environmental awareness and in developing staff. It won the Tunbridge Wells in Bloom competition in 2010. The school shares its site with a 'stay and play' children's centre. This is not managed by the governors and was not part of the inspection.

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

Broadwater Down provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Against the backdrop of having high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils' levels of attainment are starting to edge closer to levels expected. The large majority of parents and carers are happy with the way in which the school helps develop pupils' personal qualities, including their environmental awareness. A small number of parents and carers, rightly, feel that some pupils' academic progress could be quicker.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their starting points, as they did at the last inspection. By the time they enter Year 1, they make up ground in their number, language, emotional development and social skills. In the past, this good start has not always been built upon effectively in Years 1 to 6, but there are now early signs that the school's best results for some time, achieved in last year's national tests for Year 6, are on track to improve again this year. Progress through Years 1 to 6 is still too variable because the quality of teaching is not consistently good at fully stretching pupils' learning. The satisfactory curriculum influences some aspects of pupils' learning for the better as good partnerships with others help develop their environmental awareness and a focus on reading is raising pupils' confidence levels. However, too many day-to-day activities lack the sparkle to really fire pupils' appetite for learning in writing and some aspects of mathematics. By the time pupils reach Year 6, although their attainment is broadly average and their achievement is satisfactory overall, their ability to write interestingly at length and their ability to apply their number skills in simple investigations are not at the levels expected. Pupils' reading, basic number skills and understanding in science have improved since the last inspection.

Good levels of care, guidance and support help the pupils know right from wrong and to behave well in lessons and around the school. This helps promote harmonious relationships. The school caters well for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Levels of attendance have risen since the last inspection. A small, but persistent, number of pupils do not attend regularly enough and this affects their learning. The school's concerted efforts, helped by outside professionals, has raised attendance levels since the last inspection, but a small number of parents and carers do not respond positively to requests and reminders. Pupils say they enjoy the school, know how to stay healthy, and love looking after their allotments and particularly their chickens. Those pupils in the breakfast club enjoy eating together and sometimes eating the eggs produced.

The headteacher and staff have fostered some improvements since the last inspection, particularly in raising pupils' attainment and broadening the pupils' awareness of sustainable principles. The reality is that raising academic performance has taken some time to achieve as the talents and skills of all staff have not always been developed to

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best effect to monitor subjects or influence the school's otherwise satisfactory levels of self-evaluation. Governors give satisfactory but improving support in influencing longer-term developments. The priorities chosen to remedy weaknesses in pupils' basic skills are the right ones and although it has room to be even better, the recent improvements in pupils' academic outcomes indicate that the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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?

- Improve pupils' attainment and rate of progress in writing and mathematics, particularly in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - ensuring there are more opportunities for pupils to write at length
 - giving pupils more guidance on how they can use a wider vocabulary in their written work
 - ensuring pupils apply their mathematical skills in regular investigational and practical 'real life' tasks where possible
 - continuing to work with the small numbers of parents and carers who do not send their children to school regularly.
- Ensure that more teaching is consistently good in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - making sure that higher-attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently in their learning
 - planning activities that motivate pupils' learning in English and mathematics
 - reviewing the school's current policies on learning and teaching to assess what aspects of these can be improved to raise the quality of teaching further.
- Accelerate the school's capacity to improve by:
 - ensuring there are further opportunities for staff to contribute more fully to the process of self-evaluation
 - making sure that the monitoring of teaching concentrates closely on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that governors review their new visiting arrangements to assess their effectiveness in holding the school to account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils often enjoy their learning, particularly when teachers add more spice to activities. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils, while learning how to write instructions, were very enthusiastic about making unusual sandwiches and even invited the teacher to taste them at the end. In other activities, pupils' learning only proceeds at a satisfactory pace, particularly for the higher attainers. Skills are sometimes learnt in isolation and are not always applied to 'real-life' problems. Pupils' current work indicates more are on track to reach the expected levels, improving from their low starting points. Pupils say they are more confident, if not yet avid, readers. Pupils are naturally confident to speak to others. Pupils write for

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different purposes, but not often at length and their written vocabulary is often narrow. In their science work, their knowledge and understanding are satisfactory, as are their abilities in using information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils learning English as an additional language often achieve well given their starting points as they are helped both by support staff and often by fellow pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have a range of support in class and some good one-to-one support on occasions. This enables them to keep pace with classmates.

A particular strength of the school is the pupils' understanding of the environment and sustainable living, aided by initiatives such as 'High Weald heroes' which promotes understanding of the local area. Their careful and enthusiastic care of their livestock and allotments reflects their care for their environment. Their efforts were rewarded by winning a competition for the best school wildlife garden in the town. They have a good sense of their locality and local culture as well those events taking place globally. Their knowledge of others further away in the United Kingdom is a weaker aspect of their understanding. The school's good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps pupils to behave well, respect others and develop a sense of mutual responsibility. They say they feel safe as they know they are listened to by staff. The school council actively asks for the opinions of others, both within and beyond the school, when deciding on what improvements to aim for. Other children enjoy responsibilities such as answering the phone at lunchtimes. Although pupils' good level of maturity, behaviour, collaborative skills and the improving attendance of most pupils aid their preparation for their next schools, weaknesses in their basic skills mean their preparation for later life is satisfactory rather than good.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	4
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?

There have been some improvements to the quality of teaching which have led to better learning and have helped to raise pupils' basic skills. However, too many activities in Years 1 to 6 engage the interests of some, but not all, pupils. Explanations are sometimes too long and the questions teachers pose are too predictable so pupils' learning moves at a satisfactory, rather than at an exciting pace. Teachers plan appropriately for the mixed ages found in some classes, although the spread of ability sometimes makes it difficult to stretch the highest-attaining pupils. There is good use of interactive whiteboards, but mostly to share information rather than fully engage pupils' imaginations. The curriculum has strengths in the way it promotes pupils' awareness of environmental principles and good links with others in the town are valuable in this respect, but exciting or enticing topics to enliven pupils' learning are not yet a regular feature. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, with cooking and opportunities to work outdoors being favourites. ♦ Teaching assistants help support pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to a level which is effective in helping them keep pace with fellow pupils. Teachers' marking of work gives praise regularly and guides improvement. Pupils know the targets they are working towards, which is increasingly helping their learning.

Underpinning the pupils' good behaviour and attitudes is the effective pastoral care shown to pupils. They appreciate that adults are approachable and help them through difficult

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times. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are catered for well and the needs of high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported by good identification of their weaker areas. This ensures that their social and emotional requirements are addressed and developed particularly well. Transition arrangements from the school ensure that changes are as smooth as possible and the good partnerships and links with other schools are particularly effective at providing for pupils' social and emotional and, increasingly, their academic needs. Good links with the adjacent children's centre help potential and existing parents and carers with advice and support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported by staff and governors, has driven some improvements, particularly in raising pupils' attainment overall and maintaining the quality of work in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, aspects of mathematics and pupils' writing skills have been slower to improve. The focus of actions to remedy weaknesses is right, as the school's self-evaluation is largely accurate. Staff feel valued and are ambitious for improvement, but some would like to be even more involved in the school's self-evaluation routines, aided by more training. The headteacher, and more recently subject coordinators, monitor teaching regularly, but this is not always rigorous in focusing on pupils' learning. The teaching and learning policy is not always helpful or up to date in identifying what approaches make for better teaching and learning. The school develops good partnerships with others, particularly other local schools and the adjacent children's centre to share good practice and resources. Links with parents and carers are good, reflected in their very positive questionnaire returns and comments. Despite the school's best efforts to encourage attendance, including enforcing legal options, a small number of parents and carers find it hard to ensure their children attend regularly.

Governors have revised their visiting arrangements and have held two 'governors weeks' this year. These have proved popular with staff, pupils and governors, although these changes have not yet been evaluated. The governing body ensures safeguarding arrangements are carried out to a good level. This includes site security and checks on staff, which are thorough and meet current requirements. The school monitors the performance of different groups of pupils to see if any are lagging behind and whether differences between groups are reducing. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school ensures pupils have equal opportunities whenever possible. The school promotes good levels of cohesion within the school and locality and, to a lesser extent, globally. Community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good, however, as the pupils'

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awareness of others from differing backgrounds in this country is a weaker part of their understanding.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress from their starting points. A good range of activities develops their simple coordination, social, early language and number skills effectively. Well-thought-through induction procedures help them settle into school smoothly. Adults gain a good knowledge of individual children, and activities in Reception cover a wide area. For example, children enjoyed pretending to be working in a hospital and took delight in bandaging the inspector's 'poor' knee. Children develop positive attitudes and they socialise well, enjoying their practical work both inside and outside the classroom such as water play and role playing. They acquire a good understanding in important areas such as learning letter sounds and numbers. Simple activities, for example reading together, writing imaginary prescriptions and counting how many bandages, help to develop their basic skills. Children develop their independence skills well, and although the teacher and helper supervise these activities, sometimes children are left for a little too long before their interests are re-energised with a word of help from an adult. Children are regularly assessed and activities are modified to help their learning move on. Their good progress means that although their writing and language skills have room for improvement, they enter Year 1 at levels expected for their age in areas such as their social, emotional and physical abilities. The outside areas are used well in most respects, but some of the resources are looking in need of renewal so are not as enticing in promoting childrens' learning.

Staff work well together as a team and keep a close eye on progress and on recording children's 'learning journeys' for others to see. Staff forge a very positive partnership with

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parents and carers and the local children's centre, which is maintained well throughout the year and helps ensure children's welfare to a good level.

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 rate of return for the questionnaires was around average for the size of school. There were comments on about a third of those returned. The majority contained positive comments and some contained both positive comments and suggestions for improvements. Most comments were of an individual nature but many parents and carers commented about how much their children enjoyed being at school and felt happy. Other parents and carers had some concerns over the rates of progress their children make and others felt there were weaknesses in management as sometimes activities were changed or cancelled at short notice. A very small number felt that behaviour levels sometimes dipped. The inspectors found that pupils enjoy school, but need to make quicker progress to make up for past low attainment. The school acknowledges that occasionally not enough notice has always been given when changing arrangements for events and is seeking to eliminate such times, unless unavoidable. Although behaviour occasionally dips, during the inspection it was good and pupils agreed this was the normally the case.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 97 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	72	10	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	58	14	39	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	61	13	36	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	53	15	42	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	22	61	12	33	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	53	14	39	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	58	14	39	1	3	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)	11	31	18	50	2	6	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	50	16	44	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	42	16	44	3	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	36	19	53	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	44	17	47	1	3	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	58	14	39	1	3	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.



24 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Broadwater Down Primary School, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 5RP

I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection we carried out recently. Most of your parents and carers think you are happy at school and that it provides a satisfactory education for you. We agree.

Here are some of the things we found out.

- The youngest children settle in the Reception class happily and enjoy all of the activities that take place. They learn well.
- You behave well and try hard in lessons, so you make satisfactory progress.
- You achieve satisfactorily in your work, particularly now in your reading, ICT and science work.
- The school works well with others to help it become even better.
- Your activities, such as breakfast club and cooking club, are good.
- You learn a lot about the environment and I liked your allotments. The chickens were definitely cute.
- You are good at keeping active at playtimes and know lots about eating healthily.
- The school helps those of you who sometimes find work difficult to keep up with classmates.
- Teaching is satisfactory and getting better, but not all teaching is as good as it could be.

We have asked the school to do three things to help it improve further.

- Give those of you in Years 1 to 6 more guidance and opportunities to improve your writing and mathematics work.
- Help your teachers to make lessons even more fun and help increase the pace of your learning.
- For the headteacher, staff and governors to continue to work together so they can help the school become even better.

You can all help your teachers by keeping up your good behaviour and tending your allotments well!

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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