

# Battling Brook Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119971
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	373148
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<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>	528
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Binns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stewart Marsden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Frederick Avenue Hinckley LE10 0EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 634701
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 June 2011
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons and observed 19 teachers and some teaching assistants who were teaching at the time of the inspection. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils as well as speaking to some parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' work books and heard some of them read. The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils were also inspected. Inspectors looked at the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress. Questionnaire returns from 215 parents and carers were analysed as well as 90 returns from pupils in Key Stage 2, and 20 responses from the staff.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery for three-year-olds who attend part-time, and three full-time Reception classes for four-year-olds. Throughout the school the vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is much lower than the national average and the largest groups are represented by pupils of Indian or Pakistani heritage. A very small number of pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above that of most schools, and the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is average. The main areas of additional need include moderate or specific learning difficulties such as autism or speech and language difficulties. The school has exceeded the government's floor targets for pupils' attainment over the last three years. The school has the Healthy Schools and the Arts Mark Gold awards. The headteacher was appointed in November 2010 and the deputy headteacher in January 2011.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety</b>	<b>1</b>
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

## Key findings

Battling Brook is a good school and is improving well. The quality of teaching is good and pupils are exceptionally well behaved and attentive in lessons. The Early Years Foundation Stage has many strong features, particularly in the Nursery class. The success of the school is underpinned by strong leadership that is ambitious and forward-looking, as well as a highly motivated staff team who are committed to the well-being and academic development of all pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well, their attainment is improving strongly and is in line with the national average in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. However, some pupils fall short of their expected attainment targets because of inconsistencies in teachers' expectations or the opportunities pupils have to apply their literacy and mathematics skills. Pupils' independent writing is sometimes misspelt or has limited vocabulary, and in mathematics, they are taught different methods of calculation. The school has recently introduced more effective teaching in mathematics lessons to continue ensuring consistency of practice so that the impact on pupils' learning is more even across the school. Pupils' progress in reading by the age of six and eleven is good overall but uneven, as some pupils do not read widely or regularly enough to extend their knowledge, or use of, vocabulary and different forms of writing. Over two thirds of the teaching across the school is good or outstanding, and lessons are usually productive and purposeful, although teachers do not always provide precise learning targets for pupils to help them check and improve their work.

School councillors, house captains, librarians and playground buddies enable pupils to support others, reflecting a positive community and climate for learning, as well as the school's strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils feel extremely safe and secure in and around school and form strong friendships. Their behaviour is excellent and records show that bullying or harassment are very rare. As one of many pupils confirmed, 'It's great, everyone is

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so helpful and you learn a great deal, I'll really miss it when I leave this year.'

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

- Accelerate the progress pupils make in English and mathematics to reach above average standards by:
  - ensuring that pupils are taught consistent methods of calculation in mathematics lessons and are provided with more challenging problem-solving tasks that extends their learning towards higher levels
  - assessing pupils' progress more often to ensure that they all reach their expected targets in writing and mathematics
  - encouraging pupils to read more widely to extend their use of broader vocabulary to enrich their writing and improve their reading skills
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to write independently and more extensively in subjects and topics across the curriculum.
  
- Build on the key features of good and outstanding teaching that exists across the school so that it has a greater impact on pupils' learning in all classes by:
  - ensuring that the work provided in all lessons matches the needs and abilities of the pupils
  - using assessments of pupils' attainment and progress more robustly to provide pupils with individual learning targets to aim towards
  - providing more opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect on and assess their own learning
  - monitoring and developing the quality of teaching more sharply to increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching to at least 80% by December 2011.

## Main report

Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. Attainment is improving strongly as, in all year groups, an increasing proportion of pupils are reaching or exceeding the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Although attainment has been typically average in recent years, it is on course to exceed the national average as pupils move through the school. This is because of the improving profile of teaching as an increasing amount is good or outstanding.

The pace of learning is good overall but uneven, reflecting some inconsistencies in the expectations set by teachers. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise problem-solving skills in mathematics lessons but these are not always challenging enough for all pupils. There are inconsistencies in the way pupils use mental number calculations which slows their progress. The most effective teaching provides sufficient time for pupils to learn through trial and error with more precise learning objectives for them to aim towards. Good teaching in English lessons, for example, provides pupils with ambitious learning targets and opportunities for them to read widely, such as play scripts, newspaper accounts or historical diaries and

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extracts. This was seen to good effect when pupils in Year 4 generated ideas about the expressions of different characters as they read aloud from a play script. In an outstanding English lesson in Year 3, the pupils generated ideas and wrote sophisticated accounts to construct riddles. However, these strong features are not evident in some lessons because the tasks are not ambitious enough to extend pupils' writing or improve its accuracy. In some lessons, the tasks provided for pupils are not matched closely enough to their abilities, which slows their progress. Pupils' workbooks show that some make regular spelling errors and use limited vocabulary as teachers do not focus sufficiently on the accuracy, form and structure of pupils' writing. In the best mathematics lessons, pupils are given clear targets to achieve. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils were able to break down a complex number problem into small manageable stages and were all challenged to reach higher levels. Some lessons, however, though satisfactory, do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to explore or experiment with calculations to give them more confidence when working independently.

Although teachers make good use of their assessments to plan their lessons and to check how well pupils are doing, they are not always checking often enough to see if pupils are on course to reach their targets. Some lessons provide opportunities for pupils to correct their work but teachers do not always provide time for pupils to reflect on, or assess their own learning. The leadership team has introduced more reviews of learning through 'pupil progress' meetings. Class and group learning targets are generated from these reviews and these are listed on what are termed 'target mats', which are visible and accessible to the pupils. This is particularly helpful when pupils are engaged in self-assessment or when they are expected to check, correct or improve their work. However, some pupils just fall short of their expected targets because these are not individualised sufficiently or broken down into manageable steps. There have been very good improvements to the oversight and assessment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has resulted in consistently good rates of learning by pupils who find learning difficult or who have particular learning difficulties. Pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English also do well and make rapid progress. They quickly acquire competence in spoken and written English by the end of Year 2, and most catch up to reach or exceed age-related levels by the end of Year 6.

Children join the Nursery or Reception classes with skills and abilities that are below those expected of three and four-year-olds. They make rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development, particularly in the Nursery, and there are good opportunities provided for them to engage in conversations, role play and use stories, songs and nursery rhymes to develop their early communication and language skills. These experiences provide strong foundations for their development in early reading and writing, so that the majority of children are reading at levels appropriate for their age by the time they are six. Children have stimulating opportunities to count and explore shapes and spaces. They are encouraged, with good success, to identify patterns in numbers and sequences of shapes, or solve problems using building blocks and malleable materials, which improve their reasoning and problem-solving skills. The teaching of letter sounds in both the Early

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Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is helping pupils to break down words and syllables to sound out blends of letters accurately. However, there are some inconsistent methods used as some lessons do not extend pupils' knowledge of letter sounds sufficiently to help them make consistently good progress in reading.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they thoroughly enjoy their time in school. This is reflected in above average attendance rates and excellent punctuality. The effective support provided by skilled teaching assistants and nurture staff also helps to improve the behaviour of those who have emotional difficulties. There is a strong sense of spirituality and moral responsibility throughout the school, which is underpinned by warm and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel safe and trust that the staff will deal with rare incidents of bullying. The school's records show and pupils confirm that incidents of racism or harassment are extremely rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils are very considerate and cooperate well at all times. They accept that everyone has something to offer and encourage each other to do well. During one history lesson for example, pupils in Year 6 worked in groups to generate discussion and ideas about the life of a famous pop star in the 1960s. Both boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic minority backgrounds mixed very well, reflecting the positive and supportive climate for learning and the consideration that pupils afford each other.

Pupils enjoy undertaking research in the exciting and well-resourced library, although some pupils do not choose to read a broad enough range of books of different genres. Excellent displays and illustrations of pupils work reflect how high the staff value pupils' efforts. The school environment is outstanding and encourages pupils to offer ideas or suggestions, such as the way the 'learning bus' is displayed in the playground. Elected school councillors, house captains and librarians are highly organised. Their involvement in representing and helping other pupils is of enormous benefit to the school and local community. Pupils have good opportunities to study different cultural traditions and religions during special topics or themes such as Chinese New Year, Easter and the Hindu festival of Diwali. However, they have less direct experience of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in communities beyond the local area. A good start has been made to accommodate this as the headteacher is establishing a link with a school in the city of Leicester which comprises of pupils from a broader diversity of backgrounds.

The headteacher and staff are very good at listening to, and acting on the views of pupils, parents and carers. In a short time the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been successful in working with the school community to take the school forward and have earned the respect and admiration of pupils, parents and carers. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction and are very pleased with their children's experiences in school.

The headteacher has sharpened the process of review with more systematic moderation meetings between staff to ensure that they assess pupils' work consistently across classes. New additions to the middle leadership team of phase

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leaders have improved the capacity for the school to monitor, support and evaluate teaching. This is improving the consistency of the teaching and is setting the right priorities for improvement in the school's improvement and development plan. The school is on course to increase the proportion of good or better teaching to more than four in five lessons. The leadership team has stepped up the intensity of its monitoring of pupils' and staff performance. The observations of lessons made by senior staff are providing teachers with key strengths and areas for improvement. The leadership team and staff recognise that this level of monitoring needs to be sustained to increase the proportion of good or better teaching.

There is a strong commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity, reflected most in the sensitive care and management of all pupils. The school is particularly successful in caring for those whose circumstances cause them to become vulnerable, utilising its effective partnerships with other schools and agencies. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Pupils learn about the main world religions with good opportunities for them to experience different cultural traditions and the diversity of its community, but less so the community beyond the local area.

The governing body is supportive and diligent in exercising its statutory responsibilities, particularly in relation to pupils' health, safety and well-being. At the time of the inspection all safeguarding requirements were being met and there are robust arrangements in place to ensure that only suitable adults come into contact with pupils. The governing body increased its monitoring activities and created strong links with the newly formed leadership and middle management teams of phase leaders and subject managers. Senior and middle leaders work closely with the governing body's school improvement committee to check the performance of staff and pupils and to hold the school to account. They undertake reviews and joint observations with phase leaders and subject managers, so there is an increasing focus on improving teaching and learning which is ambitious and strives for continual improvement. The school has good capacity and is well placed to improve further.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Battling Brook Community 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 215 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 528 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	159	74	49	23	2	1	2	1
Q2 My child feels safe at school	164	76	49	23	0	0	0	1
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	139	65	62	29	9	4	4	2
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	127	59	76	35	9	4	2	1
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	146	68	63	29	3	1	2	1
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	159	70	59	27	5	2	1	1
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	133	62	74	34	4	2	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	105	49	86	40	11	5	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	106	50	79	37	10	5	2	1
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	135	63	67	31	4	2	7	3
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	126	59	74	35	8	4	5	2
Q12 The school is well led and managed	165	77	47	22	0	0	3	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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 achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>■ Behaviour and safety.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of leadership and management.</li> </ul> <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</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.**



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Battling Brook Community Primary School, Hinckley, LE10 0EX**

You were all so welcoming when the inspectors visited your school. Many thanks also to those of you who completed the questionnaires. The inspectors enjoyed meeting and talking to you, as well as observing some of your lessons. Inspectors have judged that you go to a good school. Your behaviour is excellent and we found you to be courteous, polite and sensible in lessons and at other times. You are making good progress in English and mathematics because your teachers and support staff provide you with many good lessons and exciting work. Many of you told us that your work is fun because of the opportunities you have to go on visits or learn interesting things in that fantastic library or in the learning bus. You also have good opportunities to undertake high quality art and design work, music and a range of activities like sports and fund raising like the Nursery children who are raising money to help newly born babies. The headteacher, staff and governing body are continually improving the school and have successfully made improvements since the last time your school was inspected three years ago.

Your reading, writing and mathematics work is improving well, but inspectors have judged that some of you should be doing a bit better to raise standards even further. Inspectors have asked your teachers to help you improve your spelling. In mathematics, the inspectors noticed that some of you struggle with times tables and mental number calculations so have asked the school to give you opportunities and more challenging work to improve these skills. Inspectors would also like your teachers to make more regular checks to ensure that all of you reach your learning targets and to make the targets more personal to each of you so you can also check how well you are doing and know what to do next to reach higher levels. Most of the teaching across the school is good or better but inspectors would like the headteacher and senior staff to check more often and closely to make sure that they work towards making all the teaching good or better.

You can all help too by keeping up your excellent attendance and behaviour. I wish you, your parents, carers, staff and governors the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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