

Bruche Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133915
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	360590
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	David Byrne

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Rosemary Panting
Headteacher	Miss Karen Hulse
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons, taught by nine teachers, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan and policies for securing safeguarding and child protection. The questionnaires returned by 72 parents and carers were analysed together with those supplied by pupils and staff.

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

- How far the quality of teaching and the curriculum ensures that progress, particularly at Key Stage 2, is good enough and likely to be sustained.
- Whether the use of assessment, the tracking systems and the involvement of pupils in assessment are raising attainment.
- Whether procedures for monitoring the school's performance for informing targets for school development are of a good quality.
- How effective are strategies in building partnerships with others and in engaging parents and carers in their children's education.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin and none requires support for English as an Additional Language. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average as is the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection there have been some staff changes including a new headteacher who took up post in September 2010. The number of pupils on roll has declined sharply since 2009 but numbers are now stabilising. A new Early Years Foundation Stage building was opened at the beginning of the current term.

There is on-site childcare provision, Bruche Wasps Link Club, managed by a private provider which is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving under the clear leadership of the headteacher supported by an effective deputy. Positive changes are accelerating progress. Staff and the governing body are building up a new philosophy for the school; this is to inspire pupils, set the highest academic expectations and promote the best possible levels of personal development. The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school's impact on their children's development. The following comment is typical of the view of most, 'My child is enjoying school and is flourishing academically'. The pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in high rates of attendance.

Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is average. Given children's starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which are typical for their age, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. The rate of progress is accelerating after a period when it was inadequate in Key Stage 2. This improvement is because of better quality good teaching, more rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress by school leaders and better use of assessment to tailor work to meet pupils' needs. Planning of the curriculum does not yet take enough account of pupils' interests or allow them to learn independently and investigate aspects of their learning on their own. This reduces achievement, particularly of the more-able pupils. Attainment in writing is less strong than in reading. This is because not enough opportunities are given for pupils to write across the curriculum and some pupils are not guided well enough to understand how to improve their work. Attainment in mathematics is rising steeply but many pupils lack the skills to apply their good basic numeracy skills to solving mathematical problems.

Pupils benefit from a caring and supportive environment. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress. Pupils are well behaved, polite and sociable. Many do their best to live safe and healthy lives and thrive in participating in sport and exercise, often taking advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular clubs on offer. The school is working hard to increase the engagement of parents and carers in their children's education and to widen partnerships with other schools and organisations.

Recent upgrades to the accommodation, stronger teaching, and accelerating progress represent a number of good improvements since the last inspection. These factors, coupled with an accurate school self-evaluation that is used to plan improvements, give the school a satisfactory capacity to improve in future.

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.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics and English by:
 - increasing opportunities for writing across the curriculum
 - improving the pupils' understanding of their own performance in writing and how to improve it
 - widening opportunities for pupils to develop good skills of solving mathematical problems.
- Improve the impact of teaching on the achievement of all pupils, but particularly the more able, by:
 - extending opportunities for pupils to learn independently and follow the aspects of learning that interest them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their high rates of attendance. The comment that 'lessons are fun and getting better because we are being asked to think more for ourselves', typifies the view of many pupils that school is getting better. Pupils are conscientious, work hard and demonstrate a desire to do well. They respond positively to expectations for them to take more ownership for their own learning. During a good lesson in Key Stage 2 pupils were engrossed in exploring standard and non-standard English by comparing the text of the traditional poem 'Daffodils' with a modernised rap version. In so doing they demonstrated a good understanding of the features of different texts. Pupils like the practical approaches that are increasingly being promoted but say that they are not able to develop fully their investigative skills in some subjects, for example, mathematics.

Attainment at Year 6 has been broadly average for many years. Attainment in reading is a relative strength but it is not as strong in writing. Recent improvements to the curriculum are increasing opportunities for pupils to complete pieces of extended writing but the impact of this is yet to filter through to attainment. Attainment in mathematics is held back by a weakness in pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. The legacy of underachievement in the past remains in Year 6 results but improvement is underway across the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils exceeding national expectations for their age is increasing strongly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from detailed individual action plans for improvement. These guide support very well and, as a result, pupils make good progress towards their targets. The achievement of boys and girls is not statistically different.

Pupils' effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to good behaviour and the creation of good friendships. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community, proudly acting as school councillors and developing mediation skills to help pupils who fall out. The samba band and gospel singing group have participated in local community events and for the first time, this year, some pupils participated in the local Whit Walk. The pupils' good personal development coupled with their average academic attainment prepares them satisfactorily for their next stage of education.

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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	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	1
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?

Pupils benefit from dedicated teaching and support teams that have raised their performance significantly since the last inspection. Teachers are increasingly taking account of pupils' good use of vocabulary, their good speaking skills and general knowledge to provide activities that interest and challenge them. Although there are occasions when pupils are given too much direction, which discourages them from working independently, expectations are being raised for pupils to think for themselves and direct their own learning. The best lessons provide pupils with opportunities to set their own questions and then develop the skills required to find answers. This was seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson in which pupils used their own ideas and thoughts to develop an empathy with the characters from the book 'Green Children'. There have been significant improvements in assessment. Teachers are increasingly using their knowledge of individuals to sharpen their planning and pupils are developing a better understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to reach higher standards. These improvements are relatively recent and are not yet consistent, nor are they impacting fully on test results.

The curriculum meets requirements but is not planned effectively enough to fully match learning to pupils' interests so that their motivation increases. There are strengths in provision for the arts and sport. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills in

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musical performance, participate in the local primary school arts initiatives and join with other schools in sporting events. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities but insufficient attention is given to meeting the needs of the more-able pupils. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the wide range of extra-curricular activities available which are very popular and well attended. Educational visits are used to support learning and at times visitors widen pupils' experiences, for example, by enabling some pupils to build scaled Tudor houses, but the use of the outstanding natural resources within the school grounds are rarely exploited.

Each pupil and their family are known well. Staff are caring and employ a variety of effective strategies to support pupils who may be vulnerable owing to their circumstances. This enables pupils to overcome any barriers to learning, attend regularly and participate in all aspects of school life. The school has effective systems to induct pupils to school at the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Care is also taken to apply good strategies to ease the transition of pupils when they move on to secondary education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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, ably supported by the deputy, has raised expectations across the school and improved the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are confident in the new approaches being adopted and have 'signed up' to the vision set by the head and deputy to raise achievement. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning, improvements to the quality of data analysis and its use to inform pertinent areas for school improvement are increasing academic progress. Leadership responsibilities are being shared amongst staff, although staff are still developing their management skills. Target-setting is realistic and challenging and contributes to pupils' accelerating progress. The governing body is satisfactory. It is increasingly working with staff and sharing all information about the school's performance in order to identify weaknesses and to bring about necessary improvements.

The inclusion of all reflects the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and to fighting discrimination. Some gaps exist, however, in the achievement of some groups of pupils, for example, the more-able pupils. Staff welcome parents and carers into school, promote discussion and provide them with adequate information on their children's progress. Initiatives are planned to promote their greater involvement in learning at home, for instance by improving information about the way the school teaches basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Satisfactory partnerships exist between the school and others, but they are strengthening. Staff are increasingly accessing professional

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development courses to broaden their experience and to benefit the learning of pupils. There is good provision for safeguarding; care is taken to minimise all reasonable risks. Procedures for maintaining the safety of pupils are secure, with effective systems for managing child protection. Strategies to promote community cohesion within the locality, the wider United Kingdom and globally are satisfactory. There are developing strengths in the promotion of cohesion within the school and its local community. Links with a school in Cumbria, coupled with curriculum opportunities to learn French and find out about different countries in the world, widen pupils' understanding of life in a rural community and in different societies and cultures. Given the school's currently satisfactory outcomes and effectiveness, it provides satisfactory value for money.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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 enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development that vary but are generally within the typical range for their age. Progress is accelerating. Most children start Year 1 securely in line with expectations for their age. These good outcomes are due to effective teaching and a well-planned curriculum that meets the children's needs. Children enjoy their learning and benefit from a good balance between independently selected activities and those directed by adults. Children are developing a good awareness and understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, they wash their hands at the right times, are encouraged to eat fruit and take lots of exercise as part of outdoor learning. Good attention is given by staff to promoting letters and sounds and early ideas related to mathematics. Learning usually occurs as part of well-planned themes such as castles, fairies and princesses. This gives children a reason for exploring new ideas and developing new skills. One group of children, for example, were play-acting as princesses and this led them to attempt to write letters to their mums about what they were doing.

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The new accommodation is well managed and both the Nursery and Reception work together closely. Good attention is given to the individual needs of children and to their welfare. Assessment is effective and used to monitor the children's needs, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and given good-quality support. The new staff team share a clear vision of how to make best use of the good-quality resources available. Good links with parents and carers and other providers enhance the children's learning.

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

Just over 40% of parents and carers returned their questionnaires. This is above the average return for primary schools. The vast majority are very supportive of the school and expressed positive comments about recent improvement. They are virtually unanimous that their children enjoy school and are very happy. One parent or carer of a younger child stated that their child loved school so much that 'she cries when she can't go!' The good range of extra-curricular clubs is praised. There were virtually no negative comments. The inspectors agree that pupils are happy at school and confirm most of the positive comments, although there remains scope to raise attainment and improve academic progress in writing, aspects of mathematics and for more-able pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bruche 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 171 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	68	23	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	79	15	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	44	38	53	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	43	38	53	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	47	36	50	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	47	37	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	44	39	54	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)	31	43	35	49	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	44	38	53	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	36	41	57	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	42	40	56	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	50	36	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	60	28	39	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	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).

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">■ 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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bruche Community Primary School, Warrington, WA1 3TT

Thank you for being so helpful to me and my colleagues during our recent visit to your school. Your school is improving and, while it is satisfactory, it has some good features. You told me that you feel safe and that bullying is very rare. You enjoy school because teachers are making learning more and more fun. You benefit from lots of clubs and like the opportunities to play sports, learn music, take part in drama and display your art work alongside that of other pupils in other schools. I was impressed by how those of you who sometimes find school difficult are supported so that you can benefit from all that goes on.

Your attainment is average overall and there is scope for improvement. I have asked that you have more opportunities to write and that in mathematics lessons you are challenged more to solve problems. Many of you are capable of working independently but too few opportunities are given for you to do this. This holds back your progress, particularly for those of you who find your work easy. I have asked the school to work with you to find ways of improving this.

The headteacher and deputy head are successfully improving the school. Important changes are being made to the way you learn. Your progress is getting better as a result but more needs to be done to give you all the chance to learn about what interests you as well as what you are told to learn.

I was impressed by how you care for others and your mature, thoughtful behaviour; well done for attending so well!

I wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne

Lead inspector

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