

Bradfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114735
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357601
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Cheryl Thompson

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	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Hopwood
Headteacher	Debbie Griggs
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed ten parts of lessons led by four teachers and one teaching assistant. Inspectors held meetings with a few parents and carers, staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at: school planning; assessment data; pupils' work; the school's checks on the quality of teaching; safeguarding documentation; and a number of policy documents. The team received 49 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from pupils and school staff.

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

- Is teaching consistently good, especially for pupils who need extra support for learning?
- How does the school check on the skills pupils learn through topic work?
- To what extent is the leadership and management of the school sufficiently embedded to drive forward improvement?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average school serving Bradfield and the surrounding area. There are four classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, Year 2 are a single age group class, and the other two classes are mixed Years 3 and 4 and mixed Years 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is twice that found nationally. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average.

Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in the teaching and non-teaching staff and several changes in the governing body. A relatively high number of pupils have joined the school other than at the usual time. The school has attained the national Healthy Schools status, Active Mark for high-quality physical education and the European Eco-Schools Green Flag.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pupils get a good education at Bradfield Primary. As one parent wrote: 'This is a very well run, caring and child-centred school with hard working and personable teaching staff who create a stimulating and inspiring learning environment.' The school has sustained its strengths and improved considerably since the last inspection as a result of the headteacher's principled and determined leadership. There is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve which serves as the base for detailed improvement planning. The capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Pupils' attainment is above average and improving. They make good progress, a minority from low starting points. In response to outstanding teaching, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made exceptional progress which has enabled them to catch up on lost learning in previous years.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very positive about learning and make good progress. On occasions there is insufficient guidance for teaching assistants and, consequently, pupils' progress is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities develop well. They have excellent social skills and good manners. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and what constitutes good behaviour.

Strong partnerships with local primary and senior schools have a positive impact on teachers' professional development. These partnerships also provide wider opportunities for gifted and talented pupils and for pupils to enjoy special 'themed' lessons or sports in the senior school.

Teaching is good with almost a third of the lessons observed demonstrating outstanding practice. A strength in the great majority of classes is the astute and precise assessment of how well pupils are learning in each lesson. Consequently, if needed, teachers provide pupils with more time to practise a skill or give further explanations. On rare occasions, there is a lack of challenge for more-able pupils and they do not make fast enough progress.

Links with parents and carers are good although not as effective as the school expects in encouraging parents not to take their children on holiday in term time. Consequently, attendance is average. The impact of parents' involvement in 'talk homework' is very evident in pupils' enthusiasm for writing.

Good systems identify groups or individuals whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Pupils are known very well so any unhappiness or uncharacteristic behaviour is noted quickly and issues resolved. Pupils are very confident that they are safe at school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistency in pupils' progress as they move through the school by:
 - improving teaching so that all is at least good
 - ensuring that teachers always provide teaching assistants with precise directions particularly in the support for pupils with a high level of special educational needs
 - ensure that there is always challenging work for more-able pupils.
- Raise the level of attendance to an above average level by:
 - further and regular encouragement for parents to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time
 - providing whole-class incentives for good attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Year groups are small and children's skills and experiences on entry to the Reception Year can vary considerably from year to year, but are generally similar to those expected for their ages. The attainment on entry of pupils joining the school other than at the usual times also varies widely. Almost all their parents speak highly of the welcome and help they and their children have received and also of their children's happiness and accelerated progress. As one parent wrote: 'I am incredibly happy with everything, the best decision was for my child to go to this school.'

Attainment in the current Year 6 is above average with boys and girls doing equally well. Pupils in Year 5 have also benefited from outstanding teaching this year to help them catch up in all subjects. Their current attainment is now securely in line with that expected for their age and abilities, with challenging targets set for their further improvement in Year 6. Observation of lessons, pupils' attainment data and examination of their books show that pupils are now making good progress. Significant strengths are the way they develop very positive attitudes towards learning and personal qualities such as how to work together and respect for others' opinions. These qualities were very obvious in a Year 2 session where pupils, especially boys, could hardly wait to get into class to start writing in their journals. They applied themselves exceptionally well and wrote a good amount in a short time, making very effective use of strategies for spelling. In an outstanding lesson for Years 5 and 6, pupils made excellent progress in improving sentences to describe a character by the use of adverbs and adjectives. They recognise similes and use these to make their descriptions even more interesting. Examination of these pupils' books indicates that their basic skills have developed very effectively, particularly in the past year. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to consolidate and extend their skills, particularly in writing and topic work.

In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are supported well by detailed planning based on careful assessment of their needs and learning styles and make good progress as a result. On occasions, though, teaching assistants supporting these pupils are not given precise enough instructions and tend to 'over-support' rather than promote independence in working alongside other pupils. As a result opportunities are missed to build self-confidence and, on these occasions, pupils' progress in learning slows. Pupils' good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe is reflected in their keenness to take

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part in sporting activities and good knowledge of how to take care of themselves. They make a significant contribution to their own, the local, and the wider community in numerous ways. These include an impressive commitment to environmental and sustainability issues and substantial funds raised for charities at home and abroad. Pupils are well prepared for the future world of work through their good progress in basic skills, excellent social skills, and outstanding ability to work together in teams. In discussions, pupils demonstrated a mature sense of empathy when talking about their links with children in the Ghanaian school they support. They have great respect for cultures other than their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' planning identifies clearly the different work for each ability group. Lesson plans are headed by the key skills and knowledge to be learned, which are then displayed centrally. Thus, pupils know at the start of the lesson, and are reminded part way, what skills and knowledge they are expected to demonstrate by its end. In outstanding lessons, teaching is at a very brisk pace with challenging timescales for pupils to meet. Occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not note that more-able pupils can be challenged even further in a lesson and change their teaching accordingly.

The curriculum is well-balanced and increasingly rich and relevant. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the topic work they undertake. The skills they develop are tracked rigorously and if key

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skills are not learned, further opportunities are planned into an individual's work. Displays of pupils' work indicate high standards of art work and competent use of ICT for research and presentation. The programme of out-of-school activities is varied, much appreciated by pupils and makes a significant contribution to their learning. Pupils are very proud of their trophy table which demonstrates their considerable success in sports such as cricket, netball, rounders, hockey and basketball.

Relationships are excellent. Pupils know they are valued as individuals and very confident that any member of staff will help them if they have worries. The school's system for tracking pupils' progress is used most effectively by senior staff to check that pupils are doing as well as possible in English, mathematics and science and also to target those needing extra help with learning. Pupils are left in no doubt what their teachers expect them to do to improve their work and are praised for their efforts to do so.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Principled leadership and attention to detail are at the heart of the school's many successes. For example, explicit guidelines are set for displays of pupils' work. Consequently, throughout the school, high-quality displays of work and sporting successes provide a vibrant and inspirational working environment. The employment of a very experienced teacher to cover teachers' planning and preparation time has brought added expertise to the school and wider dimensions such as the Eco-school curriculum and wider sports opportunities. Well-established links with a primary school in Ghana and developing links with another school in the United Kingdom have done much to widen pupils' good understanding of communities and cultures other than their own.

The previous two inspections identified instability in staffing and governance. Consequently, the headteacher had an excessive workload. Currently, the school has stability in both areas and is improving well as a result. Everyone, adult and pupil alike, has high ambitions and the energy and drive to attain their goals. Success is measured diligently. Interventions to increase pupils' and teachers' performance are then focused precisely on their individual needs and checked for success. The school promotes equality of opportunity in social and academic matters well.

Governance is good. The governing body has the expertise and experience necessary to oversee the school's work in depth. They are well trained to ensure the good safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive and adhered to by all. They are diligent in pursuing those responsible for the management and safety of the school site to ensure all safeguarding concerns are dealt with swiftly. Its members are highly motivated to ensure

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pupils receive the best possible education and, while very supportive, they are not afraid to ask difficult questions and challenge the school to do even better.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

School leaders have worked successfully to provide ample opportunities for children in the Reception Year to work separately from those in Year 1. These lessons are geared firmly to the children's needs and provide good opportunities for them to investigate and explore the six areas of learning with enjoyment and great gusto. This was very evident when children were measuring and carrying water to make a muddy paddy field to develop their understanding of where rice grows for making a paella. Children make good progress. The current group of Reception children started school with skills and knowledge a little above that typical for their ages. By the time they move to Year 1, their levels are well above average. For their ages, they read enthusiastically and are very keen to share the parts they like best. In their 'Big Writing' session, they made good use of the letters and sounds they know to write the ingredients and method for making a paella. Children's welfare is promoted very capably. Their behaviour is outstanding. They show a mature kindness and consideration to their friends and know how to keep themselves and others safe. They know that fruit and vegetables are good to eat and say that the lettuce they pick from their garden 'is really good because it's fresh'. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is developing well. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be improved further. The teacher and nursery nurse work very effectively as a strong team to meet the needs of both age groups in the class. Assessment is comprehensive, accurate and used well in planning the next steps in learning.

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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

There was a higher than usual return rate for the parents' and carers' questionnaire. The very large majority hold very positive views of the school. The main concern expressed was that the school does not take account of suggestions and concerns. Discussions with parents and their written comments indicate that a very small minority find the headteacher unapproachable and this appears to stem from changes in the past that the headteacher has made with which they disagree. There were far more favourable comments than concerns. The main view of parents and carers is that the staff provide a motivating, caring and interesting education for their children. These views are borne out by the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bradfield 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 98 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	67	13	27	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	37	76	11	22	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	49	22	45	0	0	3	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	53	19	39	2	4	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	30	61	16	33	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	55	18	37	3	6	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	57	18	37	2	4	1	2
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)	28	57	18	37	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	55	17	35	3	6	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	51	20	41	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	41	20	41	4	8	4	8
The school is led and managed effectively	28	57	17	35	2	4	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	57	18	37	1	2	2	4

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.



11 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bradfield Primary School, Manningtree, CO11 2UZ

Thank you for your enthusiastic welcome when we visited your school recently. We were impressed with your excellent behaviour, politeness and friendliness and think Year 6 are excellent ambassadors for your school. We have written in our report that you go to a good school. Your parents and carers agree.

In our report we have written about many good things in your school. These are the most important ones.

You make good progress and are very positive about your learning.

Children in Reception are very keen to learn and are doing well.

Your lessons are usually well taught and you are given interesting work and topics that help you learn successfully.

You are well cared for and feel safe because all the adults know you well and keep a close eye on how well you are doing.

Your school is led and managed well. All the staff expect you to work hard, which you do.

We have also written about a few things that could be even better than they are. Two are particularly important.

We want all of you to make as much progress as you can as you go through the school. Those of you who find learning easy need to always have work that makes you think hard. Some of you need more support at times.

Your attendance is satisfactory but we would like to see it become good.

We hope that you will all try to improve your attendance and not take unnecessary time off school.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Thompson

Lead inspector

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