

# Brownlow Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379913
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	580
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Bryers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Damien Turrell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Limes Avenue Melton Mowbray LE13 1QL
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	22–23 September 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed all 20 teachers present during the inspection and visited 21 lessons. They held meetings with the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curricular planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 322 parents and carers.

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

- How well do leaders at all levels evaluate the quality of teaching and learning to ensure consistently good practice throughout the school?
- To what extent do pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve?
- How effectively do the curriculum and teaching support and motivate all groups of pupils in their mathematics?

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average primary school where the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has recently gained the Activemark award and achieved Healthy Schools status. A private organisation manages care facilities on the site for children before and after school, but this facility did not form 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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school, held in high regard by the local community. Comments from parents and carers such as 'dedicated and caring staff' and 'excellent ethos' are commonplace, and show their appreciation of the very high quality of the care, guidance and support provided for their children. They value the good teaching for all ages that accounts for the good progress made by all groups of pupils. Their attainment in all subjects by Year 2 is above average, and by Year 6 it is well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Reading is a particular strength because teachers give pupils many opportunities to read interesting books and give them the skills at an early age to tackle new words with confidence. In mathematics, while there is some exceptionally high attainment, some pupils struggle when asked to apply their number skills to solve problems.

Pupils say how much they enjoy school and attendance rates are above average. They have an outstanding awareness of how to stay safe, and speak knowledgeably about the hazards of smoking, misuse of drugs and unsupervised use of the internet. Their thorough knowledge of how to live healthy lives is clearly evident in the way they choose the nutritious options at lunchtime and enjoy the produce they have grown in the school garden. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their community by the enthusiastic way they take responsibility. They help to conserve energy, recycle waste and act with great maturity as members of the school council. Pupils think deeply about those less fortunate than themselves. For example, one group showed great sensitivity when discussing how it would feel to be someone with a disability. They show a very good sense of right and wrong and behave consistently well.

Pupils are right to feel that their teachers do a good job. They appreciate the way that they make learning enjoyable and, as one said, 'can even make writing fun'. Teachers explain new work clearly and give pupils good opportunities to explain how they arrived at an answer. Where the learning is slower, teachers talk too much and leave too little time for pupils to work at their own pace. This is particularly the case in mathematics. Teachers employ good systems to check on pupils' progress, but their marking and use of targets to show the next steps in learning are not always good enough to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.

The school has developed a good curriculum with a strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills while providing much to enhance pupils' creative talents. Their singing is exceptional. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to hone their

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reading and writing skills in the broad topics, but not so many to practise their number skills. There is a very good range of popular clubs at lunchtime and after school to enhance the curriculum.

The headteacher leads well with high aspirations for the school. He has helped create a very good sense of teamwork among staff and pupils that makes this a happy and successful school. The leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly but there remain some inconsistencies, for example in the teaching of mathematics. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in pupils' attainment in reading and writing and the quality of pastoral care. Given the leaders' good self-evaluation systems and prompt action to rectify weaknesses, the school is well set to sustain its improvement.

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

- Raise levels of progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 to those in English by:
  - providing more time in lessons for pupils to work independently at tasks matched to their ability
  - giving pupils more opportunities to practise using their number skills to solve problems
  - planning more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in all subjects
  - carrying out more rigorous evaluations of teaching and learning to ensure that progress in mathematics is equally good across the school.
- Give pupils greater awareness of their learning by:
  - making it clear in the marking of their books how they can improve their work
  - setting them challenging personal targets and referring to them more in lessons.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils make good progress from starting points that are broadly at the levels expected nationally, and achieve well. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment has been above average for some years. Progress in mathematics is particularly rapid because pupils learn to calculate quickly in their head and apply their learning to investigate problems such as the difference between regular and irregular shapes. They use exciting words to make stories interesting for the reader and take great care with their handwriting. They read confidently and many read for pleasure at school and home.

At Key Stage 2, attainment is improving well. Pupils make good progress in reading and speak confidently about how authors capture the reader's imagination. They apply this well to their writing, whether it be to tell a story about fierce pirates or a script for pilots to use to advise passengers about what to do if the aeroplane crashes. Their writing skills show marked improvement over the last year because of

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the strong focus on teachers providing exciting topics to write about and encouraging them to use adventurous words. In mathematics, pupils have very good basic number skills but find it hard to work out which mathematical operation to use to solve problems.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. They do particularly well in reading because they are taught very well how to build sounds into words and this means they grow in confidence. They are supported well in class whilst enjoying opportunities to work independently and find things out for themselves.

Pupils’ strong personal development makes an important contribution to their academic progress. They listen attentively in lessons and learn the rules for good behaviour right from the start in the Reception classes. They enjoy taking responsibility and do it extremely well as house captains, ‘buddies’, lunch servers and gardeners. One group worked tirelessly shovelling bark to make a path during their lunchtime. Pupils are well prepared for the future by their very good literacy and numeracy skills, high aspirations and enthusiastic involvement in projects that teach them about sustainable resources. They are proud of their local community and are often praised for their enthusiastic involvement in town events that raise money for organisations such as the local hospice. They are proud of their achievements but not all have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work. They learn much about different faiths and cultures through close links with schools in the United Kingdom and overseas.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

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

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## How effective is the provision?

In typical lessons teachers capture pupils’ interest through exciting introductions and effective use of resources. For example, one class made excellent progress when asked to use ‘revolting ingredients’ to make a meal. They delighted in calling self-raising flour goats’ dandruff and pickled onions dogs’ eyes before compiling fascinating cooking instructions for a hearty dinner. Teachers show a good knowledge of subjects and explain new work clearly. They are good at making clear what learning is expected by the end and revisiting these goals throughout the lesson. In the few lessons where progress in learning is satisfactory rather than good, teachers talk for too long and give pupils too little time to work independently at their own pace. This is particularly the case in mathematics.

The teachers make detailed assessments of pupils’ progress and use these well to plan future work. The quality of their marking and the use of pupils’ targets, however, vary from class to class, and as a result pupils are not always clear about the next steps in their learning.

The curriculum links subjects together effectively to make learning interesting. Pupils enjoy this approach and say how much it makes topics come to life. For example, they have learned much about different countries through excellent international links that enhance their knowledge of geography, history and science while providing good opportunities to develop their literacy skills. There are fewer opportunities to use their numeracy skills in the topics and the school is right to see this as an area for development to raise standards in mathematics. The very well planned personal, social and health education provision ensures that pupils gain an excellent awareness of health and safety issues and learn the importance of understanding other’s feelings. A wide range of visits, visitors and clubs after school enrich the curriculum and help broaden pupils’ knowledge. Music is a particular strength and many pupils sing and play instruments to a high standard.

Parents and carers are right to feel that the school provides excellent care and support for their children. They appreciate the way staff know their children so well and are always there if they need support. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from outstanding support, both from the school and from a wide range of outside professionals. Their personal and academic development is checked carefully and the school works closely with parents and carers to ensure these pupils’ needs are met fully. The school has extensive systems to help new pupils settle in and they soon feel part of the school community.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

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<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s high expectations for pupils’ personal and academic development are key reasons for the school’s success. The leaders at all levels ensure that pupils feel safe and free from any bullying or harassment. The good focus on providing equal opportunities for all pupils ensures that the leaders have a secure awareness of progress made by different groups of pupils and implement timely strategies to support those falling behind. For example, boys’ writing has vastly improved as a result of teachers providing more tasks that capture their interest.

The systems to evaluate teaching and learning are valued by teachers and give a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. However, not all middle managers are sufficiently involved in this process to prevent some inconsistencies, such as in the use of assessment and progress in mathematics.

Good partnerships are maintained with parents and carers, who are provided with valuable information about the curriculum and their children’s progress. They feel welcome in school and believe their concerns are taken seriously. Links with other schools in the area provide cost-effective training and give staff some good opportunities to, for example, make best use of the abilities of gifted and talented pupils.

The school enhances community cohesion well by creating valuable links with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom and overseas. These involve visits and written communication that provide pupils with good first-hand knowledge of different faiths, cultures and social backgrounds.

The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Its members have a clear awareness of the school’s strengths and weaknesses and are not afraid to hold the leaders to account. The governing body has been involved in the establishment of the school’s rigorous systems for the safeguarding of pupils. Training for staff is thorough and the school keeps rigorous records of any incidents. The policies for keeping pupils safe are reviewed regularly and valued highly by pupils as well as parents and carers.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The consistently good teaching ensures that children make good progress in all areas of learning. The teaching of early reading skills is a particular strength and this ensures that children learn quickly how to build sounds into words. Parents and carers say how much the comprehensive induction procedures help their children settle quickly into school. Children choose happily from the range of activities on offer, enjoying word building games as much as building cars and aeroplanes outside. The adults observe children’s learning and development carefully and make detailed records of their achievements. The curriculum is planned well so that the children have a good balance of activities they choose for themselves and those directed by the teacher. They enjoy opportunities to use the outside area but the staff do not always make the best use of it to continue the work done in the classrooms.

Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Adults encourage them to think for themselves and they quickly become confident and independent learners. Children behave well and soon learn the importance of listening carefully to the teachers’ instructions. The provision is led and managed well, with a good awareness of how it could be improved. For example, the leaders are looking at enhancing the outside facilities by building a covered area.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

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The number of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire is above average for a primary school. Their views are very positive. The vast majority appreciate the way their children enjoy school, feel safe and learn how to live healthy lives. They mostly feel well informed about their children's progress and always feel welcome in school. They believe the school is well led and that their children are making good progress. They say that the teaching and learning are good. Evidence during the inspection supports these views. A very small minority express concerns about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, inspectors found that any rare incidents of poor behaviour are managed well, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brownlow 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 322 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 580 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	209	65	108	33	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	221	68	100	31	1	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	139	43	160	49	19	6	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	157	48	141	44%	17	5	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	167	52	145	45	5	2	1	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	157	48	145	45	15	5	5	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	154	48	150	46	7	2	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)	127	39	155	48	13	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	165	51	136	42	13	4	8	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	149	46	131	40	21	6	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	122	38	157	48	14	4	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	172	53	134	41	8	2	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	202	62	105	32	9	3	5	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 8 April 2011 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 school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Brownlow Primary School, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1QL**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and play so happily outside in your beautiful grounds. Those who were kind enough to speak with us showed how much you like school. You say yours is a good school and we agree.

You behave well, listen carefully to your teachers and make good progress. You have a really good understanding of how to live a healthy life and know all about how to stay safe. We were impressed with the way you take responsibility so well and how you older pupils help the younger ones. The school provides an interesting range of activities for you, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. All staff at the school take excellent care of you. Those in charge of your school do a good job and work very closely with your parents and carers to help you get the best out of your time here.

Your leaders are always looking for ways to improve the school. These are the improvements we want them to make.

- Improve your work in mathematics, especially the way you older ones use your number skills to solve problems.
- Make sure that you know your targets and what you need to do to improve. You can help by learning your targets and using them to improve your work in all subjects.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston  
Lead inspector

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