

Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114989
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	378973
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Melanie Clapton

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanna Mallows
Headteacher	Jane Gates
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2007
School address	Marlborough Road Great Bradfords Estate Braintree CM7 9LW
Telephone number	01376 326891
Fax number	01376 326330
Email address	admin@greatbradfords-inf.essex.sch.uk

Age group	3–7
Inspection date(s)	29–30 September 2011
Inspection number	378973

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 16 lessons and saw 10 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including school data, planning and policies. In addition, they considered 95 parental questionnaires and those completed by staff.

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

- Has the decline in reading in 2011 been addressed effectively by the school?
- Is the school doing enough to track and close the gap of attainment for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals?
- Have the previous inconsistencies in teaching and learning across year groups been resolved?
- Are strategies to improve attendance effective?
- Are leaders and managers roles now clearly defined, and are leaders identifying development needs accurately to move the school forward?

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average infant and nursery school. The school community is almost exclusively from a White British background. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just below that found nationally. The proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. There have been several changes in the senior management team since the last inspection, including a recent appointment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and a newly allocated Key Stage 1 leader from within the school staff. The school has an Information and Communication Technology Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and the Information and Communication Technology charter mark.

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

Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery is a good school. A welcoming ethos permeates the school and pupils achieve well because of good teaching and good care. Parents and carers praise the school's caring nature. This appreciation is shown by one parent who confirmed the views of others, saying, 'The school has gone that extra-mile.' Parents and carers show confidence in the school, as reflected in the comment, 'My son's future is in the hands of people I can trust.'

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do well. They behave well and this contributes to their good learning. Good support by adults ensures that those who have particular behavioural needs are managed well. The extremely varied range of extra-curricular sports opportunities, specialist teaching for physical education, and promotion of healthy eating at lunchtime secure pupils' outstanding understanding and knowledge of how to keep healthy. Pupils are proud of their school. They want to make the local community better. Their active involvement as part of a local group of schools to clean up the school and local community environment through litter campaigns was rewarded with a group design for a 'talking bin' being placed in the local town centre. This demonstrates an outstanding contribution to the local community.

Pupils' achievement is good. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average with high numbers of pupils attaining the higher level 3, particularly in mathematics. Attainment in reading has been above average but results in 2010 dipped to average. The quick response of school leaders resulted in improved provision for guided reading and meant that attainment in 2011 returned to above average. Attainment in writing is above average, but numbers reaching the higher level is average. A focus on developing speaking has been introduced to enhance writing and a whole school approach to using joined handwriting has improved pupils' presentation of work so that it is very neat. Links are being made with patterns in handwriting to improve levels in spelling, as children practise their appropriate spellings as part of handwriting lessons. Good support in lessons and from intervention groups enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve well.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from skills that are below those expected for their age when they join the Nursery. They enter Key Stage 1 with attainment that is broadly average and slightly above average in mathematics. However, their attainment in reading and writing is lower because assessment information is not used rigorously to plan specific teaching activities that

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

move learning forward. Children can choose from an extensive number of inviting child-initiated activities but the balance of these outweighs the number of planned adult-led teaching activities. Adults care well for children but opportunities are missed at times during child-initiated learning, when children could be challenged by more careful questioning.

Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Better teaching uses pupils' participation well by engaging them actively in practical opportunities, such as 'talk partners' and involves them in recording their ideas on small whiteboards to move learning forward. However, these methods are not routinely used to best effect in all lessons. Teachers make good use of school assessment data to group pupils, but daily assessment is not routinely used to refine planning and more closely match tasks to pupils' next stage of development. Teachers do not always check learning well enough during lessons to adapt activities to secure better progress.

Effective partnerships with professionals as well as support from school staff have steadily reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Despite this, overall attendance remains average because too many parents and carers take pupils on holiday during term time.

The senior leadership team has changed recently with some leaders new to their roles and the school. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide a strong basis, with good planning, for new leaders to develop quickly. The governing body supports and challenges the school well through good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This continued leadership strength, along with effective self-evaluation, has sustained good achievement and means that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage particularly in reading and writing by:
 - increasing the number of adult-led teaching opportunities
 - making better use of assessment information to plan specific tasks to develop reading and writing skills
 - ensuring better quality adult interaction to challenge thinking and move learning on.
- Increase the number of outstanding lessons to improve achievement by:
 - making better use of pupil participation to drive learning
 - improving the use of daily assessment to refine learning objectives
 - checking pupils' learning more rigorously during lessons to respond more quickly to developing learning needs.

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

Pupils show good attitudes to learning. They enjoy their work, are generally excited about what they are doing and are keen to share this with adults. All pupils are confident to 'have a go' at writing and use their skills well when making links between sound and letters. Pupils enjoy lessons, particularly those that are part of the newly introduced programme to improve the quality of their writing. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils enthusiastically, used different voices and actions whilst following a story map to recite the whole story of 'Mrs Armitage on Wheels.' In a physical education lesson, pupils' enjoyed using ribbons as part of rhythmic gymnastics to make patterns and sequences of moves.

Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1, attaining above average levels overall. The number of pupils attaining higher levels in mathematics is a particular strength of the school. The introduction of more rigour in guided reading successfully addressed the dip in reading in 2010 and pupils' current work shows a return to previously above average levels. Attainment in writing, while slightly above average overall, shows conversely that the number of pupils attaining the higher levels is less than in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities achieve well as a result of good support both in class and when they learn in small groups. Pupils of minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English is an additional language also achieve well.

Attendance is average as too many parents and carers take their children out of school in term time for holidays. Pupils' behaviour is good because of clear routines and the high expectations of staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show appreciation of music, for instance, through their spontaneous movements to salsa music in assembly and celebrate other pupils' achievements in art. Pupils' contribution to their school and wider community is outstanding for their age. They are involved in an extremely wide range of community activities, for instance, performing at the residential centre, contributing to community improvement initiatives include designing posters displayed at a local building site, saving energy campaigns and attending learning network curriculum meetings. In addition, pupils are involved in extensive fundraising for national and international charities. They are also very responsive to opportunities to find out about other cultures and ways of life, for instance, in their 'Around the world' topic. Pupils know how to keep safe in and out of school and are very aware of internet safety. They have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, recognised through national awards. Pupils' awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is outstanding due to the wide range of health promotion activities in school. Pupils were excited about explaining the healthy contents of their 'sunshine' lunchboxes.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2

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

Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	
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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching, with some that is outstanding, leads to good progress for all pupils. Positive relationships mean that pupils develop confidence. The best lessons make excellent use of opportunities for pupils to participate in learning, with all actively involved. Excellent use of pupil participation in a session on sounds that letters make contributed to exceptional progress as pupils were continuously involved by reciting back letter sounds, blending of words, reading and improving sentences. The pace was fast and the activities were continually adapted during the lesson to meet the developing learning of all pupils. Groups of pupils broke away from the whole class sessions to work on activities that were extremely well matched to their prior attainment.

In some lessons, opportunities for such high levels of pupil participation are missed. For example, in an English lesson where pupils were deciding what different animals would do to show they were happy, not all pupils were able to write their ideas despite their obvious keenness and confidence. Pupil tracking information is used well to group pupils into three different abilities. Marking examples seen celebrate pupils' successes but do not routinely give advice as to how to improve further. Oral feedback to pupils about how to improve is stronger. Questioning is good and probes pupils' thinking and reasoning. However, this daily assessment information is not consistently used to alter groupings neither for following lessons nor during the lessons to lead to even better progress.

Excellent enrichment opportunities and a wealth of extra-curricular activities enhance the good curriculum. Pupils' suggestions influence the choice of clubs with some unusual choices, for example, golf. Visitors such as 'Dinosaur Dome' bring the curriculum to life. Themed weeks such as 'International Week' help pupils understand

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

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

other cultures. The topic-based curriculum links all areas well making it interesting. For example, pupils enjoyed comparing different bicycles through the ages because of its clear link to work on the book 'Mrs Armitage on Wheels' in English. Specialist teaching in physical education supports outstanding outcomes for healthy lifestyles. The development of musical skills is enhanced by good specialist teaching. Pupils working in groups kept accurate beat and rhythm using a range of percussion instruments. The curriculum is modified for pupils who speak English as an additional language to ensure full access. Planning systematically builds on previous experiences. ICT is used well to support the curriculum.

Pupils are well cared for. The school knows them as individuals and gives good support for pupils and families. Good use is made of a wide range of partnership links and expert support. Examples include speech and language therapy, play therapy, and nurture groups; these add to the good care offered by the school. The school works effectively in a local partnership cluster and makes good use of a family support worker, leading to effective transition arrangements into the junior school, particularly for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have carefully designed individual education plans which are reviewed regularly and contribute to their good progress. Effective systems are in place to encourage regular attendance and work with parents and carers of pupils who are persistently absent have improved their attendance.

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?

The leadership team keeps a close eye on the school's performance and provides a clear drive for securing improvement. Leaders set challenging targets and monitoring systems are robust, supporting a continued drive to improve the quality of teaching to outstanding. The newly-formed leadership team is settling together well because of the strength of the headteacher and her deputy, who have maintained high expectations. The new internally allocated leaders, including the recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader have already identified accurate development needs. They are excited about the opportunities and have clear visions for improvements of their respective areas.

Parents and carers develop good levels of trust in the staff because of the good communication that exists between them and the school, through newsletters,

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

texting and the recently introduced podcasts. Good partnerships with a wide range of agencies provide effective opportunities for pupils to engage in many activities within and beyond the school day, which the school could not otherwise provide. Good links with the partner junior school ensure effective transition and work with the behaviour support service adds to pupils’ personal development.

Members of the governing body are aware of the strengths and development areas of the school. They actively evaluate their own performance and skills so they can plan effective training and focus to move the school forward. A recent self-audit identified communication with parents and carers as a slightly weaker area so this is a key part of the governing body’s action plan.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Well-organised arrangements ensure that pupils are safe at school. The depth of information and record-keeping is a particular strength. Staff promote equality of opportunity well. Progress for different groups of pupils is tracked carefully to identify any underachievement resulting in prompt action to address this. For example, this led to recent improvements in the achievement of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has considered its community make up and promotes community cohesion well. The feeling of community within the school is particularly strong and pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the wider community, and to learn about a diversity of cultures through the curriculum. Links with schools nationally and internationally are being established, including with an inner city school whose cultural diversity is greater.

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

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

Children enter the Nursery with varying social, language and number skills but attainment that is generally below that expected for their age. They make good progress and by the time they leave Reception, reach levels generally in line with those expected, except in reading and writing which are slightly lower.

Children feel safe and protected because of the good quality care they receive. They enjoy a good range of stimulating activities in a bright environment. For example, children in Nursery enjoyed washing cars using a range of materials, with one group writing invoices and others going to the office to pay. Children have many opportunities to learn independently, choosing a range of activities both inside and outside. The outdoor area is vibrant and interesting, in particular through the different levels, and the children’s tile designs on the patio area add to the interest. Children play well together and are confident to explain what they are doing, for instance, why they were sweeping up coloured rice in ‘tidy up’ time.

Planning takes account of all areas of learning and assessment information is organised well, including very detailed information about individual children. However, this information is not always routinely and effectively used to plan sufficient adult-led activities that move children to the next step in their learning. Activities in Reception classes at times lack focus and do not challenge children’s thinking or extend their language well enough. However, there are good arrangements for transition from home to school, between Nursery and Reception and into Year 1, which enable children to settle quickly.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is new to the school. She has significant early year’s leadership experience. With good support from the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, she has quickly and accurately identified the main areas for improvement.

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

Around 28% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Most are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A few expressed concerns about the information that they are given about how well their children are doing. Inspectors investigated this and found that the school has regular meetings with parents and that staff are available at the end of each day at the classroom doors.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 341 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	71	26	27	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	63	32	34	0	0	2	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	37	39	47	49	5	5	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	42	35	37	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	53	56	36	38	0	0	2	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	51	54	41	43	1	1	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	67	28	29	0	0	2	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)	49	52	34	36	1	1	2	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	48	51	41	43	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	45	42	44	3	3	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	44	41	43	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	52	55	37	39	0	0	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	68	72	23	24	0	0	2	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 08 April 2011 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.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery School, Braintree CM7
9LW**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Great Bradfords Infant and Nursery is a good school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and the books that you like reading, such as 'Mrs Armitage on Wheels', which is helping you understand your topic on inventions.

You behave well and enjoy your learning. The tiles that you made for the Reception class outside area make that more colourful. You showed us your excellent understanding of keeping healthy by explaining about your 'sunshine' healthy lunchboxes. We saw how proud you are of your school and how hard you all work. You all do well because your teachers are good at teaching you and look after you well. We know that your headteacher and all the staff are working together to make the school even better. We have asked them to do some particular things. We have asked them to make sure that in the Early Years Foundation Stage there are more chances for you to work with adults in class or small groups and for adults to talk to you more about your learning. We have also asked your teachers to check more closely how well you are doing with your learning and to make sure you are more involved, such as using talk partners. You could all help your teachers by making sure you all come to school as often as you are well and able to.

We hope you continue to enjoy your learning and wish you success.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Clapton
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**