

Brook Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118373
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	379607
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Teresa Redfern
Headteacher	Mary Hewitt
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2009
School address	Brook Ashford Kent TN25 5PB
Telephone number	01233 812614
Fax number	01233 812614
Email address	admin@brook-ashford.kent.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	15–16 November 2011
Inspection number	379607

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 two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, observed six teachers, talked informally to pupils and held meetings with staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's documentation and policies, including those relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress, attendance figures, and the school's development planning. They scrutinised pupils' work and evaluated 53 questionnaire responses received from parents and carers, 13 from staff and 60 from pupils.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress for all pupils, particularly groups such as the most-able, in writing.
- The use staff make of assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning, set high expectations and provide accurate assessments with which to track pupils' progress.
- The effectiveness of leaders in checking, reviewing and taking actions to improve and in tackling any underachievement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Most children travel to the school from outside the village, including the nearby town of Ashford. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. A higher proportion of pupils than usual joins or leaves the school at other than the expected times. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes to personnel on the staff and the governing body.

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. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory and attainment is broadly average at Year 6. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued successfully to promote good pastoral care, guidance and support. It has been a key factor in ensuring that pupils feel safe, well cared for, and thrive in their personal development. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree. Pupils benefit from good relationships with staff, talk with enthusiasm about their school and have above-average attendance. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy, as demonstrated by the enthusiastic take up of sporting and dance clubs and the different healthy activities on offer at playtime.

The school is focused solidly on improving learning, after a period of staff changes, and there is a strong, shared commitment to raising attainment for all pupils. Through recently introduced regular checks on how well pupils are doing, leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's effectiveness and what it needs to do to bring about improvement. That is beginning to enable staff to be held more accountable for the learning and progress pupils make in their classes. Satisfactory self-evaluation procedures, combined with appropriate action to tackle previous underachievement, show the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. However, monitoring tends to be carried out by senior leaders. The headteacher is, rightly, now focusing on ensuring that leaders and staff at all levels, including the governing body, develop the skills to check the school's effectiveness rigorously themselves.

While teaching is satisfactory overall, it is good in an increasing number of lessons and classes throughout the school and securely good, for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. That is because leaders have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching to try to ensure that all pupils, including the most-able, make at least satisfactory progress. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and, as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Consequently, pupils do not build consistently well on their learning as they move through the school. All teachers check how well pupils are doing regularly, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set suitably challenging work for all pupils. That hinders the progress made by some pupils, particularly the most-able. While day-to-day assessment, including marking, is good in some classes, it is not used well enough in others. Not all pupils are made aware of the next small steps needed to improve their work and this limits their ability to take responsibility for their learning. Similarly, opportunities to set high expectations

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

and remind pupils of their individual targets in lessons are often missed. For example, pupils do not always remember to check their own targets or use the skills they have learnt in English lessons when writing in other subjects.

About 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - making better use of assessment information to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well, particularly the most-able
 - ensuring teachers set high expectations always, especially whenever pupils use their writing skills.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - reminding pupils regularly of their individual targets as they are learning, as well as those for the whole lesson
 - developing teachers' use of marking, so pupils understand always exactly what to do to improve their work and know the next steps they should take in their learning.
- Ensure all aspects of the school's work are good or better by:
 - developing the role of leaders at all levels, including the governing body, in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school regularly and rigorously
 - making sure all leaders and staff take increased responsibility for ensuring success.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their academic learning, helped by their good attitudes towards school. However, while progress is good in some classes, it is not yet a consistent feature. That is because planned learning is not always matched closely enough to the differing abilities of each group or individual to enable all pupils to achieve consistently well. In such cases, pupils' interest and progress dip. Where learning is good, pupils are motivated and engaged, talking eagerly about what they have learnt. In a mixed Years-1-and-2 mathematics lesson, pupils worked well together in groups. Using skills from good prior learning, as well as a sound knowledge of both their own targets and the learning target for the lesson, they tackled money problems successfully. As a result of skilful questioning and challenge, they explained their answers confidently, responding enthusiastically to the immediate and effective support of the adults working with them.

Children start in the Reception class with skills levels and understanding expected for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, attainment in national tests is broadly average. Previous underachievement in the progress pupils made was recognised by

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

the school, which has worked hard over the last year to reverse this trend. However, whilst progress for some is good, there remains too much inconsistency in the rate of progress across the year groups for progress as a whole to be any greater than satisfactory. All pupils, including those of different ethnic heritages, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those newly arrived at the school, achieve as well as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress often in small targeted groups, or when working one to one with an adult. However, that is not always the case when they are participating as part of a whole class and, consequently, they make satisfactory progress overall.

Pupils achieve well in many aspects of their personal and social development. Behaviour is managed well, with most pupils saying that they enjoy school, feel cared for and know they can talk to someone if they have any problems. From an early age, they are keen to take on responsibilities, whether tidying away in the Reception class, being part of the school council or acting as peer mediators in the playground.

Pupils’ spiritual, moral and social and development is good. With many different ethnic heritages represented in the school population, the cultural awareness within the school is strong, relationships are good and children are considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each others’ differences. Pupils’ development of basic skills and preparation for their future life and learning are satisfactory.

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	3
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	2
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

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

How effective is the provision?

Some lessons are planned and organised well, with interesting activities to engage pupils and with appropriate expectations set by teachers. For example, in a mixed Years-3 and-4 class, pupils were able to use their reading and spelling skills effectively to create a glossary using information about bones and muscles. They ordered the words successfully, as a result of the teacher’s good questioning that challenged their ideas about the order of similar words, such as vertebra and vertebrate. Similarly, in a literacy lesson, pupils combined their writing and technology skills to create a cartoon strip. Effective modelling by adults ensured pupils understood clearly the difference between dialogue and narrative and how to insert both into their work. In other lessons, teachers miss opportunities to capitalise on pupils’ enthusiasm for learning, encourage them to explain in detail their ideas and to challenge their thinking further, particularly the most-able. In those lessons, the tasks do not move pupils’ learning forward rapidly and the pace of teaching is not quick enough for them to achieve well. As a result, pupils become less engaged and attentive.

Through its evolving tracking systems, the school is increasingly holding teachers to account for pupils’ progress. Improvements in those systems are enabling staff to track pupils’ progress more closely and identify particular learning needs more rapidly than before. As a result, the curriculum is increasingly tailored carefully to individuals’ needs in lessons. However, some inconsistencies remain and the changes are too recent to have secured good achievement. Good links are made between subjects in teachers’ planning to add interest and pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Nevertheless, pupils are not encouraged enough to transfer the skills they have been learning in their English lessons into their writing, or to remember their targets whenever they write a piece of work. The curriculum is enriched well through a wide variety of visits and visitors, as well as a good range of extra-curricular activities that help to promote pupils’ enjoyment of learning.

Pupils’ welfare and personal, social and health needs are well catered for because the school works closely with parents and carers and outside agencies where needed. Transition arrangements are particularly strong, especially when children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, those pupils who join the school at times other than the usual ones are helped particularly well to settle very quickly. The school’s effective efforts to support the whole school community are evident in many ways. For example, its work with pupils and families who might otherwise find it difficult to access education is evident in the families’ increasing involvement in school activities, as well as in rising attendance. Workshops involve parents and carers successfully in improving their understanding of the curriculum.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
--------------------------------	----------

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

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 has a clear vision for how the school can improve and has developed good links and partnerships with parents and carers, the local authority and a group of similarly sized local schools to help achieve this. After a period of staff changes, she has built a positive team spirit and encouraged a strong atmosphere of 'can do' among the staff, who feel 'supported' and able to use their 'talents and build on them wherever possible'. Performance data are used by the headteacher to see how well the school is doing and to plan actions for improvement. However, while such information is increasingly being shared with all, some other staff with responsibilities have yet to use it fully when checking how well the school is doing. Not all those with responsibilities monitor teaching and learning, which remain uneven in quality. The governing body is conscientious in fulfilling its statutory duties to ensure the safety of the children and agree policies. It provides satisfactory challenge and knows the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is keen to develop its role further by becoming more involved in checking how well the school is doing and playing a larger part in setting the agenda for improvement.

At the time of the inspection, leaders and staff were seen to play their part in ensuring that safeguarding procedures were carried out robustly. The governing body makes regular checks on the school's procedures and systems. All staff support the drive for equality of opportunity and freedom from any form of discrimination appropriately. They have recently established more rigorous systems to make sure pupils from all groups achieve well, but, as yet, there has not been sustained improvement in pupils' performance. Pupils are encouraged to play their full part in the school and the local community and their understanding and contribution are developing well in these areas. The school is making good progress in promoting pupils' understanding of communities and cultures in national and global contexts.

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	3
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	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

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception class grow quickly in confidence, becoming enthusiastic learners because of the strong focus on their pastoral care. In general, children start with expected levels of understanding. Last year, children made good progress in their learning and joined Year 1 with above-average attainment. The current children continue to make good progress because teaching is good and they learn well from the wide range of activities and learning opportunities that are available. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to plan activities that extend specific children's learning and accelerate their progress.

During teacher-led activities, children make good progress because adults have good subject knowledge and use their knowledge of the children well to ensure children achieve the next steps in their learning. That is particularly successful in developing children's vocabulary, spelling and reading skills. Similarly, as children play independently, learning opportunities are planned well to engage them in their learning and stimulate their curiosity effectively. For example, during one session children were highly motivated by the problem which awaited them in the outdoor area. Creatures frozen in huge blocks of ice needed to be released in order to be identified. Children worked well collaboratively to chip away at the ice or drop the blocks from a height to smash the creatures free. As a result of good questioning, the children sought other means to achieve their goal, with one child suggesting they should 'get the sun to melt it as it's hot and that's what happens with ice cubes'. As a result of such interventions, children build on their knowledge and understanding both indoors and outdoors, often with adults using the children's own interests to engage them in learning.

Communication with parents and carers is good. Regular opportunities for them to discuss their children's learning are provided and the home learning journal is much appreciated by families, who sometimes live some distance from the school. Assessment information is used effectively to promote learning and to demonstrate the good gains that children make in all areas of learning. The early years' team ensures children are provided with a safe environment in which to learn and grow. Supported well by the headteacher, it has a clear understanding of the next steps to be taken to strengthen provision and ensure children achieve well in all aspects of learning.

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

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

The return of questionnaires from parents and carers was above average for this type of school. A very large majority of the responses were positive and most of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. Typical comments about the school included: 'We could not be happier with our experience.' 'My child (and I) love this school'; 'My children are happy to go to school every day'; 'The school has a good family atmosphere.'

A small minority of responses reported concerns over how the school is led and how it deals with unacceptable behaviour. While there are occasional displays of challenging behaviour, these are dealt with effectively and the impact on other learners is minimal; behaviour management is good overall. Evidence gathered during the inspection showed that leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness, what needs to be done to improve and they have ensured this remains a caring and supportive school for pupils and families. The school's partnership with parents and carers is good, with a very large majority noting that the school takes account of their views and suggestions. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, as well as a number of comments in the questionnaires, praised the effort the school took to involve them in their children's learning. Similarly, most parents and carers appreciated the 'strong communication between school and parents' and that 'the school has always actively encouraged parental involvement and we do feel part of the school'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brook Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. The questionnaires were sent out by the school to each family. In total, there are 81 pupils registered at the school from 61 families.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	53	25	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	66	18	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	25	47	25	47	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	38	31	58	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	24	45	27	51	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	24	45	24	45	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	53	21	40	4	8	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)	24	45	16	30	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	36	27	51	2	4	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	26	18	34	8	15	4	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	40	20	38	4	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	17	32	22	42	13	25	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	25	47	25	47	1	2	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	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.



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brook Community Primary School, Ashford TN25 5PB.

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear from talking to you and from your responses in the questionnaires you answered for us that you like school. Certainly, that can be seen in your above-average attendance. We agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do. You get on with one another well and behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help, so that you know how to keep healthy and safe.

The inspection team has found that your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs as it should and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work. The leaders in the school know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the staff at your school to do three things;

- make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and that teachers have high expectations of what you can do, especially whenever you are writing
- make better use of marking and your targets to help you understand how to achieve your best and make sure you always know what the next steps in your learning are so you can improve your work
- keep checking to make sure all your lessons help you to make good progress and the school is doing as well as it should.

You can all help by continuing to respect others' values and always using the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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.**