

Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106908
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	377487
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2011
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Heeley
Headteacher	Emma Rodgers
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by 10 teachers and a higher level teaching assistant. They held meetings with school leaders, groups of pupils and two members of the governing body. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress and a range of management documents, including policies and records for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils. They analysed completed inspection questionnaires from 73 parents and carers.

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

- The progress of more-able pupils in mathematics.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The consistency of good teaching and pupils' progress across the school.
- The extent to which recent curriculum changes are contributing to pupils making good progress in developing their English, mathematics and enterprise skills.
- The extent to which the recently restructured leadership team has developed the capacity to sustain improvements in standards of attainment.

Information about the school

The school is similar in size to most primary schools. One eighth of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Two fifths of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and for one tenth of pupils, English is not their first language. Similar proportions are found in most schools nationally. Around one tenth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is close to the national average.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a period of significant disruption to the work of the school due to a number of key leaders requiring extended periods of sick leave. There is now a stable team of school leaders and the leadership structure has recently been re-organised.

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 that enables pupils to make good progress. As one parent said, summing up the views of many, 'I think it is a fantastic school and would recommend it to everyone.' When pupils start, their skills and knowledge are below those typical for their age and, by the time they leave, their overall attainment is broadly in line with the national average. Standards of attainment dipped in 2010 due to the turbulence in school leadership; however, with a new and more stable leadership structure, they recovered strongly in 2011. As a result, attainment in English was above average in the most recent National Curriculum tests and assessments, and in mathematics it was average.

More-able pupils achieve much better in English than in mathematics and this largely accounts for the difference between the two subjects. Fewer of the more-able pupils reach high levels in mathematics because the confidence and subject knowledge of many teachers is not as secure as it is in English and less challenging work is provided. The leadership of work in mathematics is not strong enough to ensure the same consistency of highly effective teaching as there is in English. In general, the quality of teaching in most classes is good, with stimulating lessons that enthuse pupils and extend their skills in learning independently. Teachers plan support programmes that enable most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. The recently revised curriculum provides interesting first-hand experiences for pupils and the many enterprise activities such as 'make £5.00 blossom' contribute significantly to their understanding of the business world. Work across a range of subjects is linked to pupils' everyday experience and helps them to extend their English skills, but this is less the case for mathematics. The curriculum increases pupils' knowledge of the different community groups in the local area, but it does not sufficiently make the links between these and cultural diversity nationally and globally.

The new leadership structure involves the delegation of responsibilities to a wider group of staff. Most new leaders have quickly developed their roles and are having a positive influence on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress across the school. Their good capacity to raise standards is evident in the significant improvement they have already brought about, their accurate identification of future priorities for development and their clear plans for tackling them. The governing body makes a strong and rapidly improving contribution to the school's leadership and management.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of attainment in mathematics to the same above-average level as English by:
 - improving leadership of the subject so that more effective teaching approaches can be quickly embedded in all classes
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge and their confidence in making learning in mathematics as stimulating and relevant to pupils' everyday experience as is the case in other subjects
 - ensuring that work is planned to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, especially the more able
 - ensuring that the learning environment for mathematics is as stimulating and informative as it is for English
 - ensuring that work across the broader curriculum extends pupils' mathematical skills as much as it does their English skills.
- Broaden pupils' experience and understanding of social diversity nationally and globally and ensure that they develop the attitudes needed for living harmoniously with people from different backgrounds.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in English and mathematics combined is above the national average. However, attainment overall in mathematics is lower than that in English because fewer of the more-able pupils achieve higher than expected levels. This links to the fact that in mathematics there is less emphasis on identifying and supporting under-achieving pupils than there is in English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English make good progress. This is because staff accurately assess their needs to make sure that programmes of support have a quick, positive impact.

Pupils have good independent learning skills: they are keen to contribute to discussions; they work well in teams; and they persevere with tasks until properly completed. The majority behave well, often showing they can do so without adult supervision. Because pupils' academic progress is also good and they develop useful enterprise skills, they are laying a strong foundation for their future education and career. Pupils enjoy school although their attendance dropped from an above average to an average level last year. Pupils and their families, however, are responding well to the school's efforts to reduce unnecessary absence, therefore attendance is on the rise again this year.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to avoid dangerous situations involving, for example, misuse of drugs and the internet. They also have a good understanding of which foods are good for them and why exercise helps them to stay healthy. Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities in school, for example, in promoting road safety or as members of the school council making decisions about the behaviour policy. They have little involvement in contributing to decisions that affect the community beyond the school.

Pupils can make appropriate choices in the way they behave and relate to others in school. The school is therefore a very pleasant and sociable place to be. While pupils are learning about a range of cultures and religions, they do not confidently demonstrate a strong understanding of the attitudes necessary for harmonious living in a diverse society.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	3
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	
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	3
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is mostly good and in some cases outstanding. A very small proportion is inadequate. The most effective teaching makes learning very interesting, often by linking it to pupils' everyday experience. All pupils are kept busy on interesting practical and problem-solving activities. Lessons have a clear, focused learning objective and teachers regularly use probing questions to check which pupils need more support or challenge. These features are not so evident in the teaching of mathematics as they are in other subjects. In the very few lessons that are inadequate, work is uninteresting and there is insufficient activity to keep pupils engaged. As a result, pupils become restless and their low-level disruptive behaviour slows the pace of learning.

Teachers set suitably challenging targets and keep detailed tracking records of pupils' progress towards them. They use this tracking data to identify pupils whose progress is stalling so they can be helped to catch up quickly and achieve well. This work is much stronger in English than in mathematics, especially for the more-able pupils.

The school plans the curriculum effectively to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes receive work at the correct level without repeating or missing any topics. Their learning is enhanced by a good range of educational trips and visitors to school, for example an outing to York brought the Vikings topic to life and resulted in very vivid

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

writing. Well-attended extra-curricular activities extend pupils' understanding of the importance of a good diet and exercise to healthy living.

The school works very well in partnership with external support services to ensure that pupils with additional needs receive appropriate support. For pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, staff involve parents and carers to ensure that additional support is as effective as possible. School leaders closely monitor the causes of pupils' absence, which has enabled them to put in place measures to improve attendance that have quickly reversed a decline last year.

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 headteacher and the majority of new leaders show a very strong determination to return standards of attainment to the high levels of previous years. They have set ambitious targets for improvement and made a very successful start in achieving them. Although it has been necessary to make difficult decisions about the allocation of leadership responsibilities and the deployment of teachers, senior leaders have the support of most staff and there is a strong shared commitment to improving pupils' outcomes.

The headteacher forms a detailed, accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in provision by bringing together evidence from a wide range of sources. This helps to pinpoint exactly what support each member of staff needs to improve their practice and what priorities should be in the school improvement plan. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in the consistency of effective teaching over the past year.

The governing body has maintained its effectiveness during a recent period of significant change to its composition and leadership. The new body has made a very strong start in understanding the work of the school at a practical level. Governors have gained this understanding in a wide range of ways including observing the school at work and attending training days with staff. This enables them to make a strong contribution to strategic planning. They have played a central role in managing the restructuring of school leadership and communicating this to staff, parents and carers. In particular, they help school leaders to consider all possible alternatives when introducing changes and they check that new measures are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. They work closely with school leaders by very rigorously ensuring that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Staff use a wide range of methods to keep parents and carers fully informed about the work of the school, their children's progress and how they can be more involved in supporting learning. These methods include regular reports, workshops about

aspects of the curriculum and family learning activities. A recent invitation to be a 'buddy reader' with pupils received a very positive response. A strong partnership with a learning community of Rotherham schools is a source of useful guidance and support for school leaders, which they use effectively. Good links with a specialist college and the Royal Shakespeare Company help the school to enrich the sports and arts curriculum.

Through the school's developing approach to community cohesion, pupils are increasing their knowledge of the range of cultural and faith groups that make up the local society. There is, however, insufficient emphasis on understanding community cohesion on a wider scale. The community within the school is very cohesive, with pupils from a wide range of backgrounds getting on well together. School staff ensure that groups of pupils needing support have an equal opportunity to achieve well: for example, considerable adaptations are made to enable those with a disability to participate fully in the life of the school. Newly arrived pupils who cannot speak English are given very good support, carefully tailored to their needs, which quickly enables them to participate fully in lessons alongside all the other pupils in their class.

These are the grades for the 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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in Early Years Foundation Stage, the majority have a lower level of skills in language, number and personal development than is typical for their age. They make good progress and largely catch up in these areas of learning and development by the time they move into Key Stage 1. They learn enthusiastically, share with their friends and persevere with tasks for a good length of time.

Children's progress is good because staff accurately observe and assess their achievements as a basis for planning activities that match their learning needs and interests. Children make good progress in developing independent learning skills, for example, when they are playing in the role of managing a post office or a 'bonfire'. During these child-initiated activities, staff talk with children in a way that extends their language skills and prompts them to practise such mathematical skills as using

a weighing scale. There is also a good balance of effective adult-directed work and this helps the children to make good progress in areas like linking letters to the sounds they make. The outdoor area is used regularly to extend all aspects of pupils' learning and development, although, at times, this work is hampered by the cramped space.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well. The leader regularly involves staff in evaluating provision and deciding where it can be better. Improvement plans are manageable and focused on the correct priorities, although they do not always make clear how they will be evaluated in terms of improving children's outcomes. Partnership with parents and carers is a significant strength. Many of them gain a good insight into how to support their children's learning by attending 'stay and share' workshops in the morning and by reading the very helpful guidance pamphlets provided for them.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who returned a questionnaire are happy with their children's experience in school. They feel that the quality of teaching is good and that their children enjoy school and make enough progress. They are satisfied with the information they receive about their children's progress and the way the school helps them to support their children's learning. The inspection evidence supports these positive views.

A small minority of parents and carers do not feel that poor behaviour is dealt with effectively. The inspection team found that behaviour in almost all lessons and at playtimes is good. A similar-sized group of parents and carers feel that their suggestions or concerns are not considered and that the school is not led effectively. Comments on the questionnaires of many of this group indicate that they are not happy with recent changes nor do they feel these have been communicated effectively to them. Inspectors looked closely at this issue and found that the governing body and school leaders have distributed letters informing parents and carers about new ways of working. Nevertheless, leaders of the governing body have decided to respond to these concerns by inviting a group of parents and carers to assist them in a review of communication methods to see how they can be improved further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brinsworth Whitehill 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 293 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	64	23	32	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	51	33	45	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	33	45	62	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	30	45	62	3	4	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	33	45	37	51	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	27	46	63	5	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	29	49	67	2	3	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)	23	32	35	48	4	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	30	43	59	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	27	35	48	10	14	5	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	23	37	51	10	14	6	8
The school is led and managed effectively	20	27	36	49	1	1	13	18
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	47	33	45	4	5	1	1

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 up 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.



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School, Rotherham, S60 5HT

Thank you for being so helpful when I came with my colleagues to inspect your school. I found my discussions with you to be most useful because you were very polite and you had so much to say about all your interesting learning activities. You helped me to make my judgement that your school is providing you with a good quality of education.

You make good progress because most of your teachers provide you with very stimulating lessons. I can see how much you enjoy your work and you are very enthusiastic learners. You work very well on your own and I saw some great teamwork in your English lessons. I also saw how well you work as a team when planning how to make a profit in some of your business enterprises. These skills are giving you a good foundation for your future learning. You behave very well for most of your teachers, but I've noticed that your attendance was just beginning to go down a bit last year. It is better this year and I hope this continues because you have so much to gain by coming to your school.

The headteacher, staff and governing body want to go on improving your school so I have agreed with them what they can do next.

- They will help you to make as much rapid progress in your mathematics as you do in your English.
- They will make sure you learn more about the different groups of people in the United Kingdom and further afield and that you understand how these different groups can live happily together.

You are already being very helpful to your teachers, but I would now like you to work even harder on your mathematics. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector

