

Great Bradfords Junior School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Unique reference number | 114984 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 378972 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Selwyn Ward |

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

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 351 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Karen Ogan |
| Headteacher | James Couves |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 January 2008 |
| School address | Marlborough Road Braintree CM7 9LW |
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| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Age group | 7–11 |
| Inspection date(s) | 1–2 May 2012 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Selwyn Ward

Additional Inspector

Janice Williams

Additional Inspector

Janev Mehmet-Christofides

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 27 lessons taught by 12 teachers, with a particular focus on pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with parents and carers, groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, school development planning, school self-evaluation, leaders' monitoring of teaching and the questionnaire responses of 118 pupils, 50 staff and 120 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average. It shares a site with the adjacent infant school, from which most pupils join at the start of Year 3. Most pupils are White British, with around 10% coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Only a small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, supported with school action plus or with a statement, is broadly average. The school has Healthy Schools status. It runs a breakfast club before the start of each school day. Since its last routine inspection, the school was inspected in November 2009 as part of a subject survey which focused on English. The school meets floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress.

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 | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 3 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key findings

- Great Bradfords Junior provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is not good because there is too much variation in the quality of teaching, the support in lessons for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not as focused as it should be, and some management systems are not robust enough. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. School tracking data shows attainment to be above average this year as should be expected given pupils' above average starting points. The progress of many disabled pupils and those with special educational needs slows because their individual education plans are not always sharply focused on the specific steps these pupils need to take to move their learning on.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall but work is not always sufficiently matched to pupils' different learning needs. This means that activities do not always stretch more-able pupils but are often too difficult for lower attaining pupils and some of those with special educational needs. Pupils learn best in those lessons where teachers ensure a brisk pace and where they challenge pupils to think about their work and how to improve it.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Though behaviour is mostly good in lessons, with pupils demonstrating positive attitudes to learning, there is some boisterous behaviour in the playground. This is raised as a concern by pupils, parents and carers.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is regular monitoring by leaders of lessons and pupils' work, but the follow-up on points identified for improvement has not proved to be rigorous enough in tackling inconsistencies in teaching. School development planning is comprehensive but does not incorporate measurable success criteria against which the governing body can

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gauge progress in securing improvements. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but there is an over-reliance on worksheets in some subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the spring term 2013, accelerate pupils' progress in lessons by ensuring consistently good or better teaching by:
 - always matching work to pupils' different capabilities, including the more-able, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - reducing the reliance on worksheets that constrain opportunities for pupils to write and present information in their own way
 - making more effective use of 'talk partners' to engage pupils and develop their speaking and listening skills
 - during and at the end of all lessons, consolidating learning by giving pupils the opportunity to summarise what they have learnt
 - consistently giving all pupils the clear guidance through marking in mathematics and other subjects that they have in English
 - in all year groups, reserving time for pupils to read and respond to the comments teachers make when they mark their work.

- By the end of the summer term 2013, raise attainment and rates of progress for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs by ensuring that in all cases:
 - pupils' individual education plans are regularly updated and incorporate accurate assessments of their specific learning needs
 - pupils are given sharp, measurable targets, broken down into manageable steps which they and their parents and carers understand and for which appropriate time limits are set
 - progress is monitored continuously to ensure that the pupils are benefiting from educational experiences that are well matched to their needs and which are moving their learning on.

- Develop more robust management systems by the end of the autumn term 2012 through:
 - rigorously following up the points for development identified by school leaders when they visit lessons and scrutinise assessment and pupils' work
 - extend staff training in phonics so that all those who teach reading skills are equipped to accurately model letter sounds and blends
 - ensuring that the school and subject improvement plans set out specific measurable targets against which the governing body can gauge the school's success.

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Main report

Achievement of pupils

The large majority of parents and carers are generally happy with the progress their children make at school, but around 15% voice concerns. Although inspectors identified examples of good progress in some lessons and for some pupils over their time at the school, progress is usually satisfactory.

Pupils join the school with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is generally above average. For example, pupils in the current Year 6 were the equivalent of around six months ahead of national averages when they started in Year 3. Attainment of these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is above average, with a much higher proportion expected to attain higher levels in English and mathematics than in previous years. This represents satisfactory progress in relation to the pupils' starting points. Progress in most lessons is satisfactory. It is good in those lessons where pupils are challenged appropriately and where they are pressed to reflect on their work and how they can improve it. This was seen in lessons in English and mathematics in Year 6.

Although some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do well, progress for too many is slow because their individual education plans are not focused sharply enough on their specific learning needs. Some have targets that are too broad because they are not broken down into small, manageable steps which pupils and their parents and carers readily understand. This means that pupils are often stuck for too long on the same broad targets. The progress of pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory but, again, it varies too widely. As with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, teachers too readily delegate the responsibility for pupils with additional learning needs to support staff rather than planning directly for these pupils' support in lessons and continuously monitoring their progress. For pupils in Years 3 and 4 who are behind in their reading, support is hampered by gaps in staff expertise in teaching letters and the sounds they make (phonics).

Quality of teaching

There are examples of good teaching, well matched to pupils' specific learning needs, but there remains too much variation in the quality of teaching. In too many lessons, all pupils are given similar work to do, which can mean it is too easy for more-able pupils and too difficult for lower attainers and those who need extra help with their learning. This is recognised by those parents and carers who say that more-able pupils are not always stretched. Occasionally, in lessons where pupils are taught in mixed-ability groups, more-able pupils dominate the discussion to the extent that some others contribute little. It is rare for teachers' planning to reflect the specific individual learning needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

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A strength of teaching throughout the school is teachers' use of learning objectives that set out at the start of the lesson what it is that pupils are expected to learn. The impact of this is dissipated, however, when all pupils are given similar success criteria, regardless of their prior attainment, and when teachers do not consolidate pupils' learning by summarising with them what they have learnt during and at the end of lessons.

Pupils like the way that teachers make the curriculum interesting by creating memorable activities in subjects such as science, geography and history. Pupils' interest in other cultures and ways of life are stimulated by, for example, learning about other countries and different beliefs. Year 3 pupils, for example, took a keen interest in the video clips they were shown contrasting town and country life in India. However, learning in humanities and science is more pedestrian in those classes where teachers place an over-reliance on worksheets. These, and the indiscriminate use of writing frames for pupils without regard to their specific learning needs, limit opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

The subject survey inspection called for more opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills. Teachers routinely invite pupils to discuss their ideas with a 'talk partner' but the impact of this initiative in promoting speaking and listening is limited when teachers only ask pupils to report back their own ideas rather than what they were told by their partner.

There are examples in the school of first-rate marking, especially in English. In this subject, pupils are given detailed feedback on how to improve their work, they are involved in evaluating their own and each other's work, and they are pushed to reflect on how they can improve. This, however, is not the norm in every subject. Where marking in subjects other than English does not pick up errors in pupils' writing, pupils are given mixed messages about the importance of accurate spelling and punctuation. Pupils are not always given time to read and respond to teachers' queries and comments. This means that the questions teachers pose sometimes go unanswered.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Relationships throughout the school are generally good and pupils usually treat each other and staff with respect. In almost all of the lessons seen during the inspection, behaviour was good. Pupils listened well to the teachers and to each other, they usually worked effectively together in pairs and small groups, and they mostly settled to activities quickly and without fuss. Pupils confirmed that this was typical of their everyday experience, and the large majority of parents and carers echoed this view. Behaviour is judged satisfactory rather than good because inspection evidence supports the view of a significant number of pupils, parents and carers who felt that playground behaviour sometimes gives cause for concern. Several pupils say they have been bumped or knocked over as a result of boisterous play, although pupils

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are generally happy at school and say they feel safe. This is in no small part due to the prominence of the 'Be Safe' initiative that forms part of the school's agreed code of conduct. They say that there are occasional bullying incidents, including name-calling, but these are dealt with effectively by staff when they occur.

Attendance has improved. It was higher in the first two terms of this year than it was in the corresponding period last year. This shows it is on track to be above average.

Leadership and management

Though school leaders can point to some success in tackling the issues from the last inspection, attainment and rates of progress are not as good as they were; a fact that is raised as a concern by some parents and carers. The sharp rise in test scores in English in 2009 has not been sustained. However, school tracking data and Year 6 pupils' current work show improved performance, with a higher proportion of pupils on track to attain Level 5 and some expected to attain Level 6 in the end of year assessments. This upturn shows the school's satisfactory capacity for improvement. Targeted support has helped to boost the performance of some groups, tackling, for example, gender gaps of previous years between the attainment of boys and girls. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory rather than better because specific learning needs are not routinely catered for in teachers' planning. Those pupils who attend the breakfast club benefit from a good start to their school day.

Leaders' monitoring of lessons and of pupils' work is assiduous. Most leaders are careful to appropriately focus their lesson observations on the progress pupils make in their learning rather than on the features of teaching. However, the impact of leaders' monitoring is lessened where points for development are not followed up. This means that weaknesses in teaching seen during the inspection mirror those already picked up by leaders' own lesson observations and in their scrutiny of pupils' work. Leaders have generally well-structured arrangements for the professional development of staff but gaps remain, for example in the expertise of teachers and support staff in teaching phonics for those pupils who are behind in their reading when they join the school in Year 3.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, with pupils covering more ground in subjects like science and the humanities than routinely seen in other schools. The over-reliance in some classes on often unchallenging worksheets reduces the impact of an otherwise strong curriculum. Nevertheless, the curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It succeeds in raising pupils' horizons, broadening their understanding of different ways of life, and gives them good opportunities to work supportively together.

The governing body has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding meet government requirements. It has a good knowledge of what goes on in school and its members mostly have a realistic picture of where the school is doing well and where improvements are needed. However, the governing body has not set measurable targets in school and subject improvement plans. The absence of these

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limit the ability of the governing body to rigorously check on the school's performance.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards: | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Great Bradfords Junior School, Braintree, CM7 9LW

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, for talking to us about your work and for completing questionnaires to share your views. We have judged that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. You are on track to improve on past performance by attaining above average standards, but that is only as it should be given how well you were doing when you joined the school in Year 3. You make reasonable progress in lessons, but we would like to see you make faster progress. We have therefore suggested some ways of ensuring that more of the teaching is good so that teachers can help you to do better. You can help too by always taking care to act on the comments teachers write when they mark your work.

We were pleased to see that behaviour in lessons is good, but we judged behaviour as satisfactory overall because a few of you do not behave in the playground as well as you do in lessons. You care about each other, and this is shown in your good personal development, so we would like to see the same considerate behaviour during breaktimes that we saw in most lessons.

Those of you who need extra help with your learning are often well supported in the intervention groups but we would like to see better tailored support in all lessons. For that reason, we have suggested some changes to the way in which your targets are drawn up and your progress is measured. Through these changes, we expect to see you make faster progress in lessons.

The headteacher and leadership team keep a close check on lessons and on your work but the suggestions they make for improvements are not always chased up firmly enough. Again, this is something we have asked the school to look at as a way of further improving teaching and the progress you all make during your time at the school.

Thank you again for being so helpful during our visit, and our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward
Lead inspector

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