

Brooklands Farm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135271
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	381859
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	David Radomsky

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	3–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Thelwell
Headteacher	Maxine Low
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	152 Fen Street Milton Keynes MK10 7EU
Telephone number	01908 760081
Fax number	01908 760085
Email address	brooklands.farm@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Age group	3–10
Inspection date(s)	13–14 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Radomsky

Additional inspector

Marion Hobbs

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed seventeen lessons taught by seven teachers. In addition, inspectors made short observations of seven sessions on the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent) for a total of three quarters of an hour. Many of these observations were made jointly with the headteacher of the school. Account was taken of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's development plans, assessment information, safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of books. Inspectors analysed 191 questionnaires from parents and carers, 83 from Key Stage 2 pupils and 11 from staff.

Information about the school

Brooklands Farm is an average-sized primary school. The school, which opened in September 2010 with 49 pupils, is expanding rapidly as it serves the newly-established Broughton Gate and Brooklands communities. The proportion of pupils joining at other than the usual time is well above average. The school's roll has expanded almost five fold in less than two years and currently has pupils from Nursery through to Year 5. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English is an additional language are well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Most of this group have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school runs daily breakfast and after-school clubs which formed part of this inspection. From September 2012 the school will be a two-form entry school and from the following September this will increase to three forms.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Parents and carers are overwhelming positive about all aspects of the school's work. In this very inclusive and caring environment, the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well so that pupils grow in self-confidence and achieve well. It is not outstanding as teaching and the curriculum do not yet ensure that almost all pupils make outstanding progress.
- Achievement is good as pupils make good progress from their varying starting points across the years as they join this new school. Attainment in Year 5 is on track to be above levels expected for this age group in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the year. There are no significant or consistent differences between the achievements of any groups of pupils.
- Most of the teaching is at least good and sometimes it is outstanding. Occasionally, a few pupils are passive in lessons and do not participate in class discussions or respond to their teachers' questions. Pupils do not always respond to their teachers' helpful marking on how to improve their work. These factors inhibit outstanding progress.
- Pupils' extremely mature attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons and around the school are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe, enjoy school and their attendance is above average.
- Good leadership and management have secured the establishment of a successful school where the highly aspirational ethos enables both pupils and staff to flourish. Rigorous leadership of teaching and management of performance, combined with effective training and support, ensure that teachers develop their skills well and are accountable for the good progress of all pupils. The curriculum ensures that pupils enjoy their learning and have numerous memorable experiences. There are many planned opportunities for developing pupils' literacy skills across the subjects. Cross-curricular activities,

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however, are not planned to systematically extend pupils' mathematical skills.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that all pupils actively contribute to class discussions and that all have opportunities to respond to their teachers' questions
 - ensuring that pupils always respond to their teachers' comments for improvement so that they learn from their mistakes.
- Develop the curriculum further by planning opportunities across the subjects for pupils to practise their mathematical skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are in line with their age-related expectations. They make good progress so that by the time they leave Reception their skills are above those expected nationally. Children arrive happy each day and enjoy the many activities available in the stimulating learning environment provided. Staff know the children well and support their academic and emotional well-being very effectively. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning. Self- and peer-assessment is an outstanding feature of child-initiated learning. At the end of each session, the children have to explain their learning to their peers who, in turn, through effective adult questioning, suggest how in the next session their peers might improve their work.

Since the opening of the school, pupils have been arriving on a weekly basis into classes across the school. They enter with a wide range of prior experiences, knowledge and skills. All pupils, some of whom are new to the country, are assessed on arrival and, where appropriate, a personalised programme of academic and pastoral support is put into place. Owing to highly effective induction procedures and teaching that is planned to meet their needs, all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning. Inspection evidence of learning in classes and scrutiny of books supports the school's view that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 5 is on track to be above average. Teachers and support staff effectively use a systematic scheme for the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make). The school encourages pupils to borrow books from the library and reading pod which they read at home. Opportunities are also found in the school day for additional reading. For these reasons, attainment in reading at the end of Years 2 and 5 are above average.

Pupils engage enthusiastically in their learning. In a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson on time, pupils were sitting on the carpet in a way that physically represented a clock

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face. Using a pointer, individual pupils identified various positions on the clock face. They swiftly proceeded to work collaboratively at their table groups on tasks of differing levels of challenge suitable for their abilities. All pupils showed high levels of concentration and worked at a good pace owing to the high levels of support from the teacher and classroom assistant. By the end of the lesson, all pupils demonstrated that they could accurately assess their own learning and progress, doing so with the correct mathematical vocabulary.

Quality of teaching

The typically good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching observed during the inspection ensures that planned activities are well matched to pupils' needs. Well defined 'steps to success' are shared with pupils so that they know exactly what and how they are expected to learn. Teachers and teaching assistants provide well-targeted support within lessons, in small groups and individually, especially to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teachers use their sound subject knowledge to question pupils and encourage debate, although occasionally a few pupils refrain from participating. Activities are fun and engaging and learning proceeds at a good pace. For instance, Reception children reacted with great excitement when the teacher, dressed up as the 'takeaway witch', entered the classroom and role played taking things from them. This was a highly effective stimulus in introducing the mathematical skills of subtraction which pupils then proceeded to learn and practise well in small groups. Pupils self- and peer-assess their work, and the frequent marking by teachers makes clear how well pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work. Occasionally, however, pupils do not make the required improvements in their books. The systematic teaching of early reading by adults skilled in the correct articulation of sounds ensures pupils make good progress and enjoy reading for pleasure.

In a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils built on their prior scientific learning about plant growth to write a plant poem. There was good use of interactive media to stimulate speculation on how a seed germinates. Pupils were increasingly encouraged to use scientific language as they competed to recite their poetic ideas and then in writing their own verses. A scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that pupils have many opportunities to extend the literacy skills learned in formal English lessons across other subjects. Similar opportunities, however, are not planned to extend pupils' mathematical skills systematically. This lost opportunity inhibits pupils from making even better progress in their development of numeracy.

In many lessons teachers promote pupils' personal development well. They reflect on how to deal with the challenges of change, sing the Diamond Jubilee song, and learn about different faiths, cultures and countries. Such activities have a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be outstanding in lessons, assembly, in the

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playground and in breakfast and after-school clubs. There is convincing evidence that this is typically the case. Almost all parents and carers believe that their children are safe and that the school deals effectively with any challenging behaviours. Like their adult role models, pupils warmly welcomed the inspectors and were unfailingly polite. Pupils respond extremely well to the daily 'well-being and ready to learn check' each morning and, along with adults, support and encourage throughout the day any of their peers whose initial scores are low. Pupils, most of whom joined the school during this year, told inspectors that teachers and assigned class buddies make expectations clear from the start and support them to develop highly positive attitudes to learning and to other people. These exemplary attitudes make a major contribution to pupils' good learning and progress.

Pupils confirm that they feel very safe. They are aware that there are different types of bullying such as physical, name calling, cyber and racism. They say that bullying is virtually non-existent and they proudly told inspectors that occasional playground quarrels are resolved amicably by their peer 'Restorative Justice Leaders' whom they are happy to approach in such instances.

Leadership and management

The inspirational headteacher, senior staff and governing body have succeeded in their shared strategic vision of creating this new primary school which has high aspirations for all to succeed and to be included. One parent, echoing the views of many, said: 'Since my child started at Brooklands his confidence has soared. This is due to the nurturing and support that he receives from his teachers and also support and care from his peers. I cannot give enough praise to the headteacher and her wonderful team of staff.' Staff and the governing body work together to ensure that every pupil, whenever they join this rapidly expanding school, has their personal needs met and an equal opportunity to succeed. No discrimination of any kind is tolerated. Leaders have established a rich learning environment, good quality teaching and progress, and attendance rates that are above average. These successes demonstrate that the school has the capacity for future sustained improvement.

All staff and the governing body contribute to the detailed development plan which targets improvement in all aspects of the school's work, including aspiring towards more outstanding teaching. Leaders support teachers well through a programme of classroom observation, mentoring and professional development. Half-termly pupil progress meetings ensure teachers are accountable for their performance. These strategies have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The good curriculum is broad and balanced with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Well-planned enrichment activities, such as dancing, working with an artist to make production props from recycled materials, visits to museums, visitors, and the harmonious relationships evident in the school, help ensure that provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Breakfast and

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after-school clubs are well managed. Pupils are kept safe and meaningfully occupied.

Members of the governing body bring a broad set of skills which they contribute in ensuring high-quality strategic planning for the school's further expansion. They monitor the work of the school well and provide good support and challenge in helping to drive improvement. Leaders and managers ensure arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust, effective and fully meet statutory requirements.

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.



17 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brooklands Farm Primary School, Milton Keynes, MK10 7EU

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave us when we visited your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to many of you, listening to some of you read and reading the questionnaires some of you completed. We wish that we had more time to meet all of you. Yours is a good school and these are some of the reasons why.

- Your headteacher, staff and governing body care a great deal about each of you and want to help you achieve your very best in all that you do.
- You enjoy coming to school a great deal. You support each other's well-being and positive attitudes to learning every day and are always interested in learning new things.
- You feel very safe at school and told us how well the staff and class buddies help every individual pupil settle down quickly as they arrive new to the school.
- The school provides you with many enjoyable and fun learning opportunities, including visiting so many interesting places and lots of clubs.
- Your teachers prepare good lessons, and work with you to make your learning exciting.

We have asked the school to do these things to make it even better.

- Make sure teachers encourage all of you to participate in class discussions and that all of you take turns to answer your teachers' questions during lessons.
- Ensure that teachers always give you enough opportunities to correct your work so that you can learn from your mistakes.
- Make sure the teachers give you even more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills when you work in different subjects.

All of you can contribute to these improvements by working hard and responding well to all that the teachers ask you to do.

We wish you all the best for the future and thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

David Radomsky
Lead inspector

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