

# Brookfield Junior School

Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 6PY

## Inspection dates

26–27 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- As a result of good leadership and management the school has improved since its last inspection. Considerable staff changes have been managed well ensuring teaching is now good and any inadequate practice has been eradicated.
- Achievement is good and is improving rapidly in all classes ensuring pupils learn well and make good progress across the curriculum. Attainment continues to rise steadily.
- Pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs and those eligible for free school meals make good and at times outstanding progress as a result of the tailored support they receive.
- Teaching is good. Engaging activities, strong relationships with pupils and effective use of additional adults in classrooms ensure pupils are keen to learn and achieve well.
- Behaviour is good and at times exemplary. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. Attendance is above average. Parents, carers and pupils agree that the school is a safe place to be.
- Staff and governors support the school's self-evaluation and development plans well, particularly the improvement of the quality of teaching. Leaders, including middle leaders new to their roles, are fully aware of where improvement is still needed and appropriate plans are in place to address remaining weaknesses.
- Links with the local authority are strong. The school has benefited from its effective support especially when tackling previous weaknesses in teaching and improving the rigour of tracking pupils' progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although standards in English and mathematics are rising they are not yet consistently above average. Progress is currently good for all pupils, but for a small minority there remains a legacy of underachievement over time.
- Some differences remain in the quality of teaching in some classes and lessons. Not enough teaching is outstanding or matches that of the best in the school. In a few lessons, the pace of learning slows and hinders the rate of learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons and part lessons, taught by seven teachers and were accompanied by senior staff for the vast majority of these.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors heard pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 read.
- The inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and a number of letters received during the inspection as well as analysing previous parental surveys and talking to parents and carers informally during the inspection. Questionnaires from staff and leaders were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at the school’s documentation: policies, including those relating to safeguarding; data on pupils’ progress; attendance figures; and the school’s development planning.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
John Mason	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average junior school.
- A large majority of the pupils come from a White British background. Others are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils receiving the pupil premium, including those eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and receive support at school action is above average. The number at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Currently, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught in single-age classes. Older pupils are taught in three mixed Years 5 and 6 classes.
- The school meets the current government's floor target which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Over the past year all but one of the teaching staff have changed. Vacancies in the governing body have been filled, with several new members joining over the past six months. The senior leadership team has remained stable.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment so that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in English and mathematics is above average by:
  - making sure pupils use and apply their mathematical skills and quick mental recall of number facts to carry out investigations and solve multi-step problems regularly
  - focusing on developing some pupils' ability to link letters and sounds so pupils can use these skills to read and spell more fluently.
- Secure a greater proportion of outstanding lessons and thus accelerate achievement by ensuring:
  - pupils are actively engaged in their learning at all times and introductions to lessons are sharply focused so pupils make progress at a faster pace
  - middle leaders share best practice and consolidate new practice in order to tackle remaining minor inconsistencies in teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is average in reading, writing and mathematics. It has risen steadily over the past two years as a result of the increased focus on tracking pupils' progress. The school is currently concentrating on developing pupils' reading skills and how pupils use and apply their mathematical knowledge in order to bring about further improvements and enable pupils to reach above average standards.
- Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with broadly average attainment. The standards now being achieved by pupils in Year 6 demonstrate they have made expected progress over time. Pupils' progress has accelerated over the past two years and is now good, and for some even better.
- Throughout the school, effective systems for tracking pupils' progress ensure that pupils from all backgrounds achieve equally well. Good levels of closely tailored support in class and in smaller intervention groups enable those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium to achieve as well and sometimes better than their peers.
- Lower attaining Year 3 readers recognise words and are able to demonstrate their comprehension of the texts they are reading when questioned. However, their skills in segmenting and joining together their sounds (phonics) so as to pronounce difficult words correctly are less well developed. They sometimes struggle to read with fluency as a result and this inevitably slows their progress. The school plans to provide specific targeted support for phonics as it has done previously in order to further accelerate progress and continue to raise attainment.
- Pupils read a wide range of texts regularly during guided reading sessions, which strongly supports the school's drive to improve reading skills. Lower attaining, older readers enjoy talking about characters and themes in the books they are reading.
- In all classes pupils are clear about their learning, talk with confidence about the learning for each lesson and know what the 'steps for success' are that will help them to achieve well. They are keen to share their ideas with one another and talk about their learning to any visitor to their classroom.
- Pupils pay careful attention to comments teachers make when marking work during lessons and in their books and this engages them effectively in the next steps in their learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- As a result of the elimination of weak teaching, progress in the last two years has improved significantly because school leaders have been effective in setting individual teachers clear targets for improvements.
- With many teachers new to the school over this period, there has been a focus on ensuring a consistency of approach to learning in all classes. This has been successful and provided a continuity of learning for pupils as they move through the school.
- Talk partners are used well to involve pupils in discussing the questions raised by teachers, and teachers use questioning effectively to explore the knowledge and understanding of pupils. Regular checking of pupils' progress in lessons and effective marking ensure pupils receive good advice on how to improve. Increasingly, pupils are becoming skilled at checking their own and each other's work.
- Good account is taken of pupils' abilities in planning lessons, as well as their age in the mixed-age classes. In mathematics, plans have been amended to ensure a focus on mental skills and deepening pupils' understanding of number. However, while this approach has been developed well in some classes in others it is less well embedded. Not all pupils are regularly given the chance to show, by themselves, how to use and apply the skills they have learnt and opportunities are missed for pupils to regularly use what they have learnt

to devise their own way of solving a problem in mathematics.

- Play and learning leaders (PALLs) are especially well deployed to ensure pupils' individual needs are met. Whether it is supporting those eligible for the pupil premium, with special educational needs or extending the most able, they have a good understanding of what pupils are learning and, in small focused groups, are able to help pupils achieve well.
- In the best lessons pupils' learning is moved on quickly with little time wasted as pupils move from one activity to the next and teachers' input is effectively focused to maximise learning. For example, in a Year 6 class, learning questions and 'steps for success' pre-prepared by the teacher were waiting for pupils on their tables. Pupils moved from the carpet to start their learning as part of a well-established routine. As they began to read, the teacher and PALL were able to target their teaching quickly rather than laboriously explain what needed to be done several times to different groups. This is not yet the case in all lessons. In some, pupils wait to get going or spend too long listening to teachers repeating instructions for other groups. This hinders their progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- As a result of the school's actions attendance is above average. It is effective in its support for those families who may otherwise find attending school regularly difficult and the popular breakfast club has been instrumental in improving attendance and punctuality for some. Consequently, progress for these pupils is at least in line with their peers.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils as well as the interesting activities they plan keep the pupils focused and support learning well. Their attitudes to learning are good and they show their enthusiasm for learning in subjects across the curriculum. On occasions there is minor off-task behaviour when in a few lessons pupils have to wait, for example listening to instructions for other pupils, before they can begin their own learning.
- The school's positive promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key factor in pupils' good and sometimes exemplary behaviour. Pupils' moral awareness and social skills are developed well so that pupils work cooperatively and develop an awareness of their similarities and differences. As a result pupils get on together well and show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Pupils say this is typically the case and think behaviour is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk and how to keep safe. This is supported well by the school's input on personal and internet safety. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who expressed an opinion agreed the school kept the pupils safe.
- Incidences of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying, are rare. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded commented positively on how the school deals with behaviour and bullying. Pupils agree and know who they could turn to for help if they need to.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Effective leadership from the headteacher and senior leadership team has ensured their aims and aspirations for the school are being achieved. Strongly supported by the local authority, they have been responsible for tackling underachievement, addressing weaknesses in teaching and raising attainment from a period of low standards.
- School leaders are consistently focused on improving the quality of teaching. Performance management is rigorous and provision for the training of all staff is good. A systematic programme of monitoring and evaluation to improve staff performance has enabled prompt actions to be taken to ensure weaker teaching is tackled.
- The skills of middle managers are being developed effectively. As a result they are very committed and through their checks increasingly know what needs to be done to build on current improvements. This process has highlighted the need to focus next on tackling those inconsistencies in teaching that remain, as well as sharing best practice already seen

in the school in order to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching.

- The school is effective in ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities. Pupil progress meetings are increasingly holding teachers to account and are effective in tackling any discrimination between groups. They enable interventions and additional support to be effectively tailored to the needs of individuals and groups such as those eligible for the pupil premium.
- Progress since the last inspection has been good. Standards have risen and the quality of provision has improved. The school demonstrates that, independent of the effective local authority support it has received in recent years, it has capacity to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - systematically challenges the leaders and is effectively involved in tackling any weaknesses in provision and strengthening the effectiveness of the school
  - is keen to become less reliant on the headteacher and senior leaders for the information and data governors use to gain insight into the school's effectiveness
  - ensures that statutory duties are met, particularly regarding health and safety and safeguarding issues.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118869
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401790

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Chapman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Blewer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–19 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 843667
<b>Fax number</b>	01732 871422
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