

# Brandon Primary School

Carr Avenue, Brandon, Durham, DH7 8NL

**Inspection dates** 7–8 November 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is not as good as it should be. This is because the teaching requires improvement.
- The ability of many of these pupils to read unfamiliar words is held back by not being taught about letters and sounds well enough.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 do not have enough opportunities to improve their writing and mathematics skills in all subjects.
- In all key stages there are some teachers who make too little use of information about how well pupils have learned when setting work for them.
- Teachers' comments on pupils' work do not usually help them do better next time.
- Teachers are not giving pupils enough opportunities to discuss and solve problems together in lessons.
- Leadership and management require improvement because key stage leaders are not involved enough in improving the skills of their teams and holding teachers to account for pupils' achievement.
- The quality of teaching is not checked closely and often enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. She has put in place a sound plan aimed at bringing this about and has won the backing of all staff.
- Pupils do well in Key Stage 2 because teaching is typically stronger than in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs do as well as other pupils because of the good support they are given.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They feel safe, get on well with each other, and enjoy school.
- Attendance has improved rapidly, especially this term.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons. One of these was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at their work in books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, a representative of the local authority and school staff. Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and 33 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at monitoring information, the improvement plan, analysis and tracking of pupils' progress, and school policies.

## Inspection team

Mick Hill, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kevin Dodd	Additional Inspector
John Pattinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is a larger than the averaged sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action and at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school is co-located with childcare provision which is managed independently and will have its own inspection report.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School status, Artsmark Silver, Sports Mark, Basic Skills Quality mark and the International School Award.
- The school buildings are new and were opened in April 2012.
- The headteacher is new to her post having started in September 2012.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in all key stages, but particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 by:
  - making better use of information about how well pupils have learned when setting work for them
  - putting comments on pupils' work which help them to do better next time
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss and solve problems together.
- Improve reading, writing and mathematics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 by:
  - better developing pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds to help them read unfamiliar words
  - creating more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to write at length and to apply their mathematics skills in all subjects.
- Increase the impact of leaders and managers by:
  - involving key stage leaders in improving the skills of their teams and holding the teachers to account for pupils' achievement
  - checking the quality of teaching closely and often.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills that are below, and in some cases well below, those typically expected for their age. They make progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 which is similar to that expected of pupils nationally. However, it is not rapid enough with the result that when pupils enter Key Stage 2 their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are still below those expected for their age.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils are not reading as well as would be expected for their age. This is because they are not being taught about letters and sounds (phonics) well enough so they can read unfamiliar words.
- Many pupils also do not reach the expected standard for writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 because they do not have enough opportunities to improve their writing and mathematics skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils do well in Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 they have reached the nationally expected standards for children of their age. This is because teaching is typically stronger than in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and as a result pupils make progress which is often better than that seen nationally.
- In 2010 and 2011 pupils in Key Stage 2 did less well in mathematics than in English. In 2012 achievement in mathematics improved and is now close to that seen in English.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do just as well as other pupils, and often better. This is because of the good quality of the extra support they are given in and out of lessons. This is true in all key stages.
- Those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make at least as much progress in Key Stage 2 as other pupils. As a result, the gap between how well this group of pupils are doing and others in the school is less than that seen across the country.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 requires improvement. This is the main reason pupils are not reaching expected standards by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2 pupils are typically better taught. As a result they are helped to learn and so make stronger progress.
- Where teaching is good, pupils enjoy learning and their relationships with one another and with their teachers and teaching assistants are very positive. In a Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils very much enjoyed writing limericks about their teacher and sharing these with the class.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 the teaching of phonics is not organised in a way that captures pupils' interest and helps them learn. This is because there is not enough choice of books and teachers' comments in reading records do not help them enough in developing their knowledge of letters and sounds.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils who are able to write at greater length and apply their mathematical skills well in literacy and numeracy lessons are not given enough opportunities to do so in other subjects. Where this does happen in Key Stage 2, as in a Year 3 lesson on Roman history for example, pupils have the chance to extend their writing and mathematics skills as well as their understanding of the topic.
- Although teaching is typically stronger in Key Stage 2 than in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, there are some things which should be improved across the school. One of these is the quality of the comments teachers make on pupils' work. While work is marked often and thoroughly, the teachers' comments do not usually tell the pupil what they should do to make their work better next time.
- Teachers in all key stages, but particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1,

make too little use of information about what pupils have already learned when setting work for them. As a result, pupils are too often all working on the same thing regardless of how much they already know and can do.

- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss and solve problems together. Where this is done, as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson in which pupils worked well in small groups constructing quadrilateral shapes, they get on with their work and learn quickly by cooperating with each other.
- Teaching assistants help individual pupils to learn well, in and out of lessons, because they skilfully guide the pupils to think for themselves. As a result of this extra support, pupils at risk of falling further behind in their learning, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs, are doing well and in many cases are catching up.

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

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good because the school has clear rules to follow, relationships are good, and pupils are encouraged to behave well by lots of praise and rewards. There were very few pupils excluded in the last year. Pupils say bullying of any kind is rare and very quickly resolved when it happens.
- Typically, pupils are welcoming, polite, and show kindness and respect towards each other. They enjoy school and are keen to learn. They have a good sense of right and wrong and understand that people have different views and come from different backgrounds and that this is a good thing.
- The school has succeeded in reducing absence, which was lower last year than in previous years and has fallen again since September as the result of strong procedures for encouraging attendance brought in by the new headteacher. Attendance is now close to that typically seen in primary schools.
- Pupils, including those whose circumstances might put them at risk, feel very safe. This is because the new school building and constant staff supervision create a very safe environment for them and because they are taught to be safe, for example through the school's e-safety procedures.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement. However, the new headteacher has a sharp understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. She has shared with her staff a clear plan to make this an at least good school. The staff are enthusiastically behind this plan. They talk of new beginnings and are optimistic for the future improvement of the school.
- Key stage leaders share the headteacher's view of how successful the school can be. At present, they are not involved enough in improving the skills of their teams and holding the teachers to account for pupils' achievement. This leaves too much to be done by the headteacher herself and this is holding back improvements in pupils' achievement, especially in the early years.
- The headteacher accurately checks the quality of teaching and understands how this is helping pupils learn. However, this is not done closely and often enough because the key stage leaders are not yet trained to do this. This means teaching is not improving as quickly as it could.
- The local authority has acted promptly to support the headteacher in improving the school and has an accurate view of how well the school is doing. Importantly, parents are confident that the headteacher will improve the school.
- There are now sound procedures in place for making sure that staff know what is expected of them and to help them to continue to develop their skills. These procedures ensure that rewards for staff are closely linked to helping pupils to make good progress.
- The school has a clear view about how the curriculum needs to develop further and plans are in place to make learning more interesting and make sure there are opportunities for pupils to

improve their writing and mathematics in all subjects. Visits, themes and other activities enrich pupils' learning and contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' social development could be helped further if there were more opportunities to discuss and solve problems together in lessons. The curriculum successfully encourages good behaviour and helps pupils understand how to stay safe.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– A core of experienced and able governors knows the school very well. They often visit and know which parts of the work of the school require improvement. In particular, they are prepared to question and challenge the school's leaders about the quality of the teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors carefully managed the appointments of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who will take up her post in January 2013. They are very clear about the qualities needed of senior leaders. They are equally clear about the need to reward good teachers and to eliminate less effective teaching. The school's budget is well managed. As a result there is money to invest in improving the resources available to the teachers to help pupils learn. The care governors take to make sure that they get value for money is seen in the way they check that the extra staff paid for by the pupil premium funding help these pupils to do at least as well as other pupils. Links with the Parent Group are strong and help ensure that parents who wish to be are closely involved in the work of the school. The governing body fulfils all its statutory responsibilities, particularly the responsibility to keep pupils safe.

## 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>	135207
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	402677

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	329
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	M Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	J Hodgson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 378 0038
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 378 9089
<b>Email address</b>	brandon@durhamlearning.net



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

