

# Brookvale Primary School

Northwich Road, Brookvale, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 6BZ

**Inspection dates** 24–25 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They consistently reach high standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. They make excellent progress, often from very low starting points on entry to school and often exceeding the progress expected for primary-age pupils across the country.
- Outstanding teaching means that after an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes pupils continue to build on their skills, year by year, as they move up through the school.
- Teachers have high expectations. Learning activities are carefully matched to pupils' needs, with a well-judged balance between challenge and support for pupils of all abilities. This contributes strongly to pupils' excellent achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They feel extremely safe, they are happy and secure, ready and able to learn and progress successfully. They have trusting relationships with the adults in school. Their attendance is above average.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They contribute in many ways to making it a happy place for everyone, including acting as influential school councillors.
- The headteacher's excellent leadership is strongly supported by an effective deputy headteacher, by very knowledgeable governors and by staff at every level in the school.
- There is a relentless pursuit of on-going improvement; for example, the school is currently focusing on ways to help pupils develop their literacy skills even more rapidly.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons. They also made a number of short visits to lessons. They listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and they observed the teaching of letters and sounds in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, with staff, with a group of pupils and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed information from 11 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). They also met with a group of parents to hear their views about the school.
- They took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they completed.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, development plans, local authority reports, records of pupils’ current attainment and progress, documents relating to pupils’ attendance and behaviour and pupils’ work.

## Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to most other primary schools.
- Most pupils are White British, with English as their home language. Currently, no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average as is the number of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club every day during term-time.
- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2010 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2011. There have also been a number of changes in teaching and support staff since the time of the school's previous inspection, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Since the school's previous inspection it has gained the International Schools Award (Intermediate Level) and has received the National Princess Diana Award for its work on school buddies.

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

- Implement plans to build further on pupils' excellent achievement in reading and writing by:
  - continuing to develop and extend the school's 'reading buddies' strategy, where pupils across the age-groups enjoy reading together
  - using the outdoor classroom and story-telling area to develop opportunities for reading and writing out of doors.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children's skills, especially in language and communication, are often considerably below expectations for their age when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make rapid progress, however, and by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1 their skills are only slightly below the expectations for their age and they have gained extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- From these very good starting points, pupils continue to make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 and, as a result, their attainment catches up with and then overtakes that of pupils across the country.
- Pupils reach nationally expected levels of attainment in all subjects by the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment continues to rise as they move up through the school and for the past three years it has been significantly above the national average in all subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track for high attainment by the end of the year.
- Pupils' reading skills are developing very well. Systematic teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are giving pupils the tools they need to become proficient readers. Attainment in reading is at nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2 and it is well above average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve extremely well in relation to their abilities and starting points, as a result of the excellent learning support and care they are given.
- The achievement of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of the other pupils in the school. They make excellent progress and their attainment is above the national average in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- Pupils apply themselves extremely well in lessons, showing interest in their work. They work together very well, with a partner or in a group. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to instructions from their teachers and show they are keen to produce their best work.
- Parents' responses to Parent View and their comments in the meeting with an inspector indicate that they are very pleased with their children's achievement in school.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching has improved from good to outstanding since the school's previous inspection.
- Typical features of the excellent teaching seen during the inspection are:
  - very well-planned lessons where activities move along briskly and pupils' interest is sustained throughout
  - purposeful learning, with pupils given a clear understanding of what they are expected to do, of how the lesson links up to what they have already learned and of what they will be doing next
  - activities with high levels of challenge, indicating teachers' high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - effective teamwork between teachers and well-trained teaching assistants, ensuring that pupils of all abilities, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, are given the support they need to achieve their objectives.
- Vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs and those who may be underachieving are identified promptly. The school has developed a range of strategies to provide the different levels of support that individuals or groups of pupils require. Their success is reflected in

consistently positive outcomes for all groups of pupils.

- Outstanding teaching and a lively curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage contribute very well to the excellent start children make in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Lessons engage pupils' interests fully and this is helping them to achieve very well. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2, pupils enthusiastically set to work to identify and correct the errors in a piece of writing that they were told was the work of their favourite puppet. In a class discussion they spotted the mistakes and they tried very hard to think of interesting and well-structured alternatives to improve on what the puppet had 'written'. In the writing activity that followed, they showed they had made excellent progress in developing their sentence construction skills.

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

- Pupils' exemplary behaviour is reinforced by warm and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are polite and considerate. They understand the school's simple 'golden rules' for behaviour very well because they have helped to develop them and they keep the rules diligently.
- Pupils are cooperative and hard-working in lessons and this is an important factor in their successful learning. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They are confident that there is always someone on hand to help if they have a problem.
- Older pupils act as play leaders and reading buddies to younger ones, carrying out their responsibilities sensibly and contributing strongly to a happy school.
- Discussions with pupils showed they have a very good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying. They say that there is very little unkind behaviour in school, but that they know that staff will deal with any such problems quickly and nip them in the bud.
- Parents express their confidence in the care the school provides for their children and their appreciation of the caring and welcoming attitudes of the headteacher, teachers and support staff, including the learning mentor. They say communications between home and school are excellent.
- Attendance is above average and punctuality is very good, reflecting the school's positive partnership with parents.
- The school works sensitively and extremely supportively with families and children whose circumstances might put them at risk. Nurturing programmes are provided for identified pupils who are potentially vulnerable and the school works productively with a wide range of agencies that promote pupils' learning, health and social needs.
- The staff who manage the well-attended breakfast club provide pupils with a warm welcome and a nourishing breakfast and this gets their day off to a very happy start.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are effective leaders who drive improvements forward energetically. With good help from the middle leaders in the school, they regularly check on the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress pupils make. The leadership of teaching is supported by an extensive programme of staff training and development.
- Progress reviews every term give the school a clear and detailed picture of how well every pupil is doing and help identify anyone who may need extra support.
- The well-crafted school-development plan sets out improvement aims and priorities and identifies well-chosen actions to enable the school to continue improving. For example, the school is currently devising ways to help pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 to do even better in

reading and writing, through a number of planned actions, including developing outdoor learning opportunities in literacy and increasing opportunities for younger pupils to read together with an older 'buddy'.

- The school's creative curriculum brings subjects together into topics that pupils find very interesting; this helps to make learning fun, especially as many topics include visits to places of interest. The curriculum is also enriched by visitors to school, by residential trips, by opportunities to develop sporting, artistic and musical skills and by a wide range of well-attended after-school clubs.
  - Pupil-premium funding is used to provide additional teaching assistants, to enable small group or individual support for pupils who need it and to help to pay for visits and other enrichment activities for them.
  - The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors have a clear and detailed overview of pupils' achievement because they take regular opportunities through the year to examine data on how well pupils are doing. They receive regular reports on the quality of teaching and learning in school. All of this enables them to play an active part in evaluating the school's work and to ask searching questions from a well-informed standpoint. They manage staff performance effectively, ensuring that everyone is held to account for pupils' progress. Governors are fully aware of the link between staff performance and salary progression and this informs all decisions about staff pay. They ensure that the school's finances are well-managed and that pupil-premium funding is spent wisely to help overcome barriers to learning. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively, ensuring that safeguarding procedures are managed well and reviewed regularly. They ensure that equal opportunities are promoted vigorously and that discrimination is not tolerated in school.
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## 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>	132195
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	403644

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>	279
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julie Karmy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paula Casey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 September 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 711401
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