

# Brooksward Primary School

Tower Drive, Neath Hill, Milton Keynes, MK14 6JZ

**Inspection dates** 7–8 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	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.

- It has improved since the previous inspection because the headteacher and the governing body have concentrated on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching.
- Standards throughout the school have risen steadily so that by the end of Year 6 they are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Most of the teaching is good with some outstanding examples.
- Pupils behave well and have a good understanding of personal safety.
- High quality art work and imaginative displays in classrooms and around the school support pupils' learning well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not yet make good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2, and in writing in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- More-able pupils are not always given hard enough work.
- Occasionally, lessons are not taught well enough.
- The pace of some lessons is too slow.
- Teaching assistants are not always used to best effect.
- There are insufficient opportunities for staff to share and build on good practice.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other shorter visits to lessons and attended an assembly. They heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) in making their judgements and 33 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

## Inspection team

David Wynford Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to the average primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are White British. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is considerably higher than average but few are currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportions identified for additional support through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or whose families are in the armed forces) is average.
- There are no pupils currently being looked after by the local authority or whose families are in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The on-site privately run pre-school and nursery were not visited as part of this inspection.

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

- Make sure all teachers consistently:
  - plan more demanding work for the more-able pupils
  - move lessons on at a quick pace
  - make better use of teaching assistants, especially at the start and end of lessons.
- Raise standards and quicken pupils' progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and in writing throughout the school by:
  - giving pupils more problem solving and investigations in mathematics
  - placing a greater emphasis on developing pupils' basic writing skills
  - making sure staff have the chance to share and build on good practice.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising steadily throughout the school. By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. This represents good achievement because most children enter the Reception classes with knowledge, skills and understanding below those expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. In Year 6, pupils read confidently, with expression and good pace. They use a number of ways to read and understand unfamiliar words. Many are able to express their views about their favourite author and make comparisons with others. The large majority read above the level expected for the age. In Year 2, pupils are developing their reading skills well. They use picture clues and their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make) to tackle unknown words.
- Pupils are developing a love of books. Most are eager to read regularly so that they can enter the weekly competition which offers books as prizes. This initiative, the focus on improving pupils' phonic skills and the high profile of books, for research and enjoyment, are helping drive up standards.
- Although pupils reach broadly average standards in writing, their progress is not as rapid. This is because many pupils have not yet mastered basic punctuation and common words are often spelt incorrectly. Some pupils' writing is not brought to life through the use of imaginative and descriptive vocabulary. More-able pupils are able to use metaphors, similes and alliteration but do not do so consistently.
- Nevertheless, pupils write for a range of purposes and for different audiences. They write accounts, letters, stories and poems. They apply their writing skills in other lessons and are able to record key facts. The emphasis placed on developing the pupils' speaking skills is having a positive impact on improving the content of their writing.
- In mathematics, pupils make slightly better progress in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. In both key stages there is a good emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of number and shape. However, pupils' skills in undertaking mathematical investigations, particularly in Key Stage 2, are less secure. This has been identified by the school and more opportunities are being offered but this is not yet consistent in all classes.
- Children settle quickly into well-organised Reception classes. They make good use of the shared indoor and outdoor areas to work and play together harmoniously. Improvements made since the last inspection have resulted in a steady trend of improvement. The large majority of children are now reaching the expected level of development in all areas of learning by the end of the year.
- The progress of the pupils supported by the pupil premium is now broadly similar to that of their peers. This is an improvement because the progress of these pupils who left Year 6 in 2012 was marginally below that of their classmates. The 2012 Year 6 results show that the standards reached, by pupils in this group, in English and mathematics were broadly average overall when compared to the national average for pupils eligible for free school meals. However, the overall figures mask slight variations. Standards were above average in reading, below average in writing and broadly average in mathematics. The overall standards, for this group of pupils, in English and mathematics were roughly six months below those reached by 11-year-old pupils nationally.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make similar progress to their peers. This is because regular checks are made to see how well they are doing and they receive additional support to move learning on when necessary.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Most of the teaching is good. There are some examples of outstanding teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- Teachers and support staff from parallel classes work together to plan lessons. Most lessons are well planned and mean that all pupils, including potentially vulnerable pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.
- In most lessons the work is pitched at the right level across the full range of ability. However, in some lessons the level of work produced by some of the more-able pupils is not high enough. This is because some teachers do not make clear what they expect these pupils to achieve.
- Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Lessons proceed at a quick pace and teachers skilfully build on pupils' earlier learning. They make effective use of small group work and pupils are encouraged to share their ideas with each other and with the adults. Pupils work with sustained concentration and take an active role in their own learning. At appropriate times during the lessons and at the end, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their work and to think about how it could be improved.
- The marking of pupils' work is informative. Pupils are offered clear guidance to improve their work and reach their targets.
- Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support group work. However, not all teachers make best use of the teaching assistants while the class is being taught as a whole at the beginnings and ends of lessons.
- In the occasional lesson the pace is too slow. Pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet listening to the class teacher. As a result, there is not sufficient time for them to undertake independent tasks.
- Relationships with pupils are good. Teachers act as good role models and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

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

- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning help them to make good progress and develop their social skills. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are very rare. They value and respect each other's heritage. This, together with the pupils' enjoyment of art, music and dance, contributes much to pupils' cultural development.
- Pupils are proud of their school, take pride in the environment and make sure that the attractive displays and good quality equipment are treated with respect. Pupils are polite and routinely demonstrate good manners as they move around the school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers, for example when using computers to access the internet. Pupils say that there have been no bullying incidents, such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious or cyber-bullying. They are confident that if an incident occurred, it would be dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Pupils' attendance has improved steadily and is now average for primary schools. This is because pupils enjoy coming to school, lessons are more interesting and they are given more responsibilities.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Senior leaders know the school well and use this knowledge effectively to bring about improvements. These areas are identified in the detailed school improvement plan.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' progress has improved because senior leaders monitor

teaching and the impact on pupils' learning well. Pupils' progress towards their targets is assessed several times during the year. The headteacher discusses assessment information, lesson observations and pupils' work with each class teacher. The teachers are asked to explain if any pupil is not on track to achieve their target and what the teacher intends to do about it. This information is used to recommend to the governing body if individual members of staff should be paid more.

- Teachers have responded enthusiastically to the initiatives to improve their professional skills by attending courses and whole-staff training sessions. However, there are insufficient opportunities for some teachers to share and build on examples of good or outstanding teaching so that their teaching is consistently of this high standard.
- Staff work together well to plan topics or themes which capture the imagination and interest of the pupils. In all classes, there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. High quality art displays throughout the school reflect a broad range of subjects. The effectiveness of the arts curriculum has contributed to the school being awarded the Gold Arts Mark for the fourth time. Pupils are given many opportunities to enrich their education by taking part in educational visits and attending before- and after-school activities. Opportunities for pupils to work together in this culturally diverse school promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has provided reasonable support. There have been several changes in the adviser for the school over the last few years. The most recent was during the course of this term. Good relationships have been established and discussions are taking place on possible further support. In the past, effective advice has been offered on improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in analysing and interpreting school performance information.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school has improved significantly. Members of the governing body regularly attend training sessions and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governors are working closely with senior leaders to improve outcomes for pupils. The governing body makes certain that the school meets the latest statutory requirements, including those for keeping pupils safe and for teachers' appraisal. The governing body has a good overview of the quality of teaching and the impact on pupils' learning. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and how it tackles any underperformance. They compare the school's results with national and local information and are fully aware of the key areas for development. They provide a good level of challenge by asking searching questions of senior leaders. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and attainment gaps are narrowing. Discriminatory practices are not tolerated. The impact of the improvements can be measured by the rising standards and improved attendance. There are good systems in place to monitor the school's finances. The governing body makes sure that pupil premium funding is being spent appropriately, for example on additional staff for one-to-one teaching, small group work and supporting extra-curricular activities, and that the impact is leading to improved attendance and higher standards for these pupils.

## 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>	132210
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	402550

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	263
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sidney Hewitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deborah Dawson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2010
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