

Bramham Primary School

Clifford Road, Bramham, Wetherby, LS23 6JQ

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Following poor results in 2010, the school has made a good recovery and in the last two years pupils aged 11 made good progress.
- Many pupils have good reading and speaking skills, and they often use an impressive vocabulary.
- Child-protection arrangements are a strength of the school and it has also showed initiative in working with partner organisations to support children with specific learning needs.
- All lessons showed at least some elements of good teaching or planning with pupils making good progress where teaching was clearly structured and carefully explained.
- Behaviour is good and the large majority of pupils behave well in lessons
- Leaders in the school and federation have shown strength of purpose in stabilising the school following a period of uncertainty.
- Governors have shown strengths in the area of strategic planning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make as much progress in their writing as they do in their reading and speech.
- Some aspects of the curriculum have not yet been improved and pupils' knowledge of other cultures is limited, including other cultures found within Britain.
- Teaching does not always ensure that all pupils fully grasp what is required from an activity, especially when they work together in groups.
- The use of learning objectives and targets is not yet well developed, so some pupils do not understand what these mean for them.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spoke with three governors, a representative of the local authority, and a small number of parents.
- The 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 12 responses to the staff questionnaire were taken into consideration.
- The inspector observed 11 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the executive headteacher.
- A small group of pupils read with the inspector and a discussion was held with Year 5 pupils.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding, and the minutes of various meetings.

Inspection team

Adrian Gray

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than average but has grown from 37 to 69 pupils in the last two years.
- The school has been through a period where it had a number of different temporary leaders before becoming part of a federation.
- It is now federated with Shadwell Primary School with which it shares an executive headteacher, governing body and some members of staff.
- The school had two classes until January 2013, when a third was added due to the increased pupil numbers; there has been some changeover of teaching staff in the last year.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after).
- Levels of special needs are slightly above average, and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in their writing by:
 - developing teachers' skills in tracking and analysing the details of pupils' writing over time so that common errors are identified and addressed
 - ensuring that the assessment and marking of written work prioritises the most important persistent errors and demands a response from pupils.
- Improve the management of classroom activities by:
 - ensuring that the transition from one activity to another is handled more smoothly by including a clear explanation of the expectations of pupils in the next stage of their work
 - developing approaches that enable earlier checking that pupils engaged in a task all understand what is expected, or ask for help
 - ensuring that group activities are appropriate for the numbers in the group and that they are clearly defined with expectations of what each individual will do.
- Improve the use of learning objectives and pupils' targets by:
 - ensuring that objectives are displayed and used in ways that are meaningful to pupils
 - ensuring that pupils' personal targets, if used, are known and understood by them
 - using all the adults in the room, as well as the teacher, to check that all have understood the learning by the end of the lesson.
- Ensure that the curriculum prepares pupils for life in modern Britain by giving them a better understanding of the main cultural groups they will meet.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Children enter the school at levels of development generally in line with those found nationally although there is an increasing spread in areas such as reading. They then make good progress to attain expected levels at age five with some, who started from a weaker position, doing especially well. Two thirds of pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics last year but, although all girls did, the level achieved by boys was much lower reflecting the varying starting points of children who have recently joined the school.
- As the number of pupils in the school is very small, the school's track record in national tests and assessments over time has varied more than is normally the case. Attainment at age seven dipped sharply in 2010 but in the last two years it has risen and in 2012 was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. There has been a similar pattern at age 11.
- The school accepts that in the recent past some pupils still at the school have made less progress than they should have done and, although progress is now more rapid, there are some year groups and areas where attainment is still currently behind national expectations.
- The school has worked hard to accelerate learning which is now more consistent. Pupils make good progress in speaking and reading; a number of pupils have an impressive vocabulary and are able to add interest to their writing though their choice of words. They enjoy talking and writing about lively subjects such as wolves and pirates. However, a few pupils still make less secure progress in their writing because habitual errors persist for too long, while not all of a small group who were heard read were confident in strategies to handle unfamiliar words. Pupils enjoy mathematics and many are making better progress than in the past, including where they are well supported by additional adults.
- A small number of lessons were seen in subjects other than English and mathematics. Learning in these subjects appears less coherent where staff lack expertise in how to approach and organise particular skills-based tasks.
- There can only be cautious comparison of achievement for pupils from specific groups, such as those in receipt of the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or pupils from minority ethnic groups as numbers are very small. Pupils receiving the pupil premium benefit from additional activities and support, with some of the funding providing extra training for teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- All lessons observed were carefully planned and contained a variety of appropriate learning activities. Teachers communicate well and are often highly expressive; they seek to engage pupils in interesting activities matched to their abilities. Teaching assistants often play a leading role in the learning, providing effective support for pupils with particular needs. Examples were seen of some good question and answer work, with teachers asking for and receiving a good level of oral response, including from the less-able pupils. Discussion between pupils sometimes takes place in pairs but teachers rarely ask pupils to respond to each other's thoughts.
- All lessons contained at least some elements of good practice, but some were less effective in their impact on pupils' learning than could have been the case. This occurred where pupils were set learning objectives or tasks which were not clearly explained, so that some did not fully understand what they were to do. In some cases the display of learning objectives was confusing. It also occurred where pupils were given too many resources to use without some guidance as to how to use them, or when groups were working together and individuals did not play a full part because they had not been assigned specific roles. For example, in one practical activity, a confident girl took control of most of the tasks and a less focussed boy spent his time without purposeful activity.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, good use is made of the outdoor environment and seasonal

opportunities or special events – such as a crane toppling over into a ditch – to promote learning through talk and activity. Teachers and assistants reinforce good habits in speaking so that children make good progress in saying and using sounds that are the key building blocks for good reading.

- A group of pupils spoken to were very positive about their lessons; they said the best feature of the school is, 'the teachers in the lessons' and 'Sometimes it is fun, and you learn a lot.'
- The teaching of reading is effective with many pupils, but a few have not yet consolidated secure skills in handling less familiar words. Writing can be weaker because persistent errors are not always singled out for attention as teachers' marking has not identified them. As a result pupils do not always know what they should be focussing on; for example, some know that 'spelling' is their target, but do not know what specific weaknesses they are meant to be addressing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and at break times is good. In lessons, behaviour is generally good and pupils are keen to do well. Attitudes to learning were often better for younger pupils when they were in more formal situations and where expectations were clearly set out by the teachers. Some pupils are very enthusiastic and committed to their learning, but a few drift away when working in groups or in more open-ended tasks, or when they do not ask for help. Pupils' concentration was noted to be greater in the morning sessions than in the afternoon.
- Some children who have joined the school in the last two years have presented challenges in conforming to the rites and expectations of school life, especially in the younger classes. The school has been very pro-active in seeking out and working with all available partners to provide support for these children and has been using appropriate plans to work towards this. As a result of this support these pupils are starting to adjust to expectations and make progress in their learning.
- Most pupils spoken with said that there is no bullying in the school, although one or two, and a handful of parents, disagree. In a lesson about social and emotional issues, pupils were seen to be maturely reflective and thoughtful. Pupils are able to explain what to do if a friend is being bullied and are sensitive to the need to resolve any such issues quietly.
- Exclusions are rare but are occasionally used where necessary. The attendance of pupils is a strength; in 2011/12 it was well-above average and no pupils were persistently absent.
- A clear strength of the school is its support for safeguarding and child protection. Staff are knowledgeable about the warning signs of problems and are conscientious in investigating further when these arise. They are adjusting to the increasing needs of local families and are working with partners to establish more extensive on-site support. As a result they are able to ensure a very good level of protection for their pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- There has been significant change in the leadership arrangements since the last inspection; the school is now federated and has an executive headteacher and deputy headteacher, together with a governing body that is jointly responsible for this school and its partner. This has brought much needed stability after a period in which the school had many temporary leaders. Governors and federation staff have worked effectively to pull the school back from the brink of possible closure, managed important changes in staffing, and have overseen the challenge of a substantial percentage rise in pupil numbers.
- Following the large influx of additional pupils, leaders made a brave but necessary decision to reorganise classes in the middle of the year. This was the right decision but the full benefits are only now starting to be seen as pupils and staff settle to the new arrangements.
- After the last inspection, the school was asked to provide greater challenge to the more-able pupils, provide greater guidance to pupils on how to improve their writing, and to make more effective use of the outdoor learning environment. Progress was inconsistent during the period

when there were several different temporary leaders, but more recently the school has been largely successful in two of these, although there remain inconsistencies in how it reinforces high quality writing.

- The cost per child of providing education is higher than is typical; the federation arrangement provides opportunities for greater efficiency and deployment of specialists across both sites but the premises and administrative costs still represent significant pressures on the school budget.
- Leaders have reorganised the curriculum so that it is more appropriate for the school's situation. At the moment the curriculum requires improvement because leaders have sensibly prioritised English and mathematics; there remains some work to be done in the foundation subjects and also in ensuring that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistent. Pupils spoken with had only limited understanding of other cultures and faiths common in Britain today and, in a few situations, some pupils described fairly stereotyped attitudes to other groups.
- The school has been effective in using performance-management processes to improve the quality of teaching in the school over the last three years and most teachers are new to the school or working through the federation; there are also secure arrangements for the performance management of teaching assistants.
- Leaders have been proactive in seeking support for the additional number of pupils with specific needs. Although slow in being deployed, the school now feels that support from the local authority's Special Educational Needs Support Team has been excellent and the Behaviour Support Team has been very effective in improving behaviour of children when they start in the Reception class. The authority's Inclusion Team also provides help but there is only limited support available from educational psychologists.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have faced a challenging period during several years of uncertainty over the school's leadership and future. Governors at Bramham demonstrated strategic thinking in identifying federation as a way of ensuring the school's long-term position and of providing leadership and specialist skills that might not otherwise be available to a small school. The schools together have formed an effective partnership because Shadwell also identified common interests in being able to attract and retain strong leaders, plan for succession, and also to share its expertise in the area. The joint governing body has a number of skilled governors who are both passionate about the school but also equipped with skills in areas such as finance, planning and human resources that enable them to contribute very well to the federation's strategic development. Governors engage well in the performance-management process and know the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance including its teaching. Targets set for the headteacher include some that are based on task completion rather than impact on pupils' outcomes.

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

Unique reference number	107844
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	400941

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Drew
Headteacher	Sue Pyatt
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2009
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