

Brockhurst Infant School

Avery Lane, Gosport, PO12 4SR

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership. This is recognised by staff and governors, who share their determination to ensure the best experience for all pupils. The school's capacity for further improvement is strong.
- Consistently good or outstanding teaching ensures that pupils make good progress, achieving well in reading and mathematics, and improving in writing.
- By the time they leave the school pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- From a low starting point, pupils' attainment in mathematics and reading matches national averages. In writing standards are rising and assessments show they are improving rapidly.
- Adults set excellent examples of conduct and attitudes to learning. Pupils respond by showing respect to them and to each other.
- Governors are committed and support the school very effectively, both in carrying out their statutory duties and by day-to-day involvement such as listening to pupils' reading.
- Children in the early years enjoy school and make progress quickly from a wide range of starting points.
- Pupils behave well and know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the school and its leadership. All the parents who responded to the Parents' View survey would recommend the school to another parent.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although standards of writing are improving, they do not yet match national averages.
- Teachers' marking does not help pupils to make the next steps which they need to improve their progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons. They also observed individual pupils and small groups working with teaching assistants and volunteers.
- During the inspection, performances of the school nativity play involving almost all pupils took place. Inspectors observed this and were able to talk to parents who attended.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, a group of governors, subject leaders, members of staff, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 58 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire. They also talked informally to parents and took account of 27 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at information on the school’s website. A range of policies was reviewed, together with other documents, including the school’s improvement plan and safeguarding policies and procedures. Information about pupils’ progress and attendance records were also examined.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in lessons, discussed their work with groups of pupils and examined a sample of pupils’ work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to inspectors and talked about their reading records.

Inspection team

John Worgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Corbett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brockhurst is an average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those in the care of the local authority.
- The school has a significant number of pupils with parents in the armed forces; some of these pupils join or leave the school each term. The school receives additional funding for this group of pupils.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- Children in the early years are taught in two Reception classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of marking by giving pupils tasks which will help them to take the next steps to reach higher levels of achievement.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
 - correcting work so that they are aware of errors and can avoid repeating them
 - giving them opportunities for extended writing in a variety of contexts.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the headteacher is recognised by staff, parents, governors and the local authority as a key factor in raising expectations for pupils and inspiring improvements in the quality of teaching. All share his ambition and there is a strong ethos of teamwork and common purpose.
 - Pupils of all abilities, whatever their backgrounds, are valued and encouraged to achieve well. Additional funding is used carefully to ensure that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met and the gap between their progress and those of their classmates is closing.
 - Assessment is a great strength of the school. Teachers assess pupils continuously and their progress is recorded regularly. All teachers use a computer-based system, which allows them to check the progress of individuals and groups at any time. Staff are confident in using this system, which incorporates assessment against the new National Curricular criteria. It is recognised as a model of good practice by the local authority, which confirms the accuracy of the school's gradings.
 - Individual and whole-school targets are set carefully and progress towards them is checked regularly. All staff have clear targets which include whole-school priorities for raising attainment. Professional development focuses on these areas and staff report that they are well supported by a performance management system which incorporates school priorities and their own individual needs.
 - Subject leaders and others with areas of responsibility are enthusiastic and dedicated. They have a range of expertise which is shared so that good practice is recognised and incorporated in planning and teaching.
 - A wide range of subjects is taught, using a variety of teaching strategies so that pupils learn enthusiastically. A range of visits and activities supplements the formal curriculum. Teachers have worked with other schools in planning for the new National Curriculum and Year 1 pupils are coping well with its requirements. Primary sports funding is used exceptionally well. Coaches are employed and during the inspection, an outstanding session was observed, with a coach and teacher working together effectively so that pupils' skills improved rapidly and they greatly enjoyed a game in which their skills were applied.
 - The school liaises effectively with outside agencies. Pupils are well supported when they join the school and the headteacher sees developing links with other early years providers as a priority.
 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. During the inspection, nativity plays were performed to a full audience on three occasions, with high standards of speaking and singing. Pupils show high levels of tolerance and reported that there is no discrimination of any kind.
 - All safeguarding requirements are met and procedures are well understood and followed carefully.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body has recently been reconstituted with a full complement of governors with an appropriate range of skills.
 - Governors share the headteacher's ambition and have a clear understanding of the priorities for raising achievement and for improving the quality of teaching. They understand the assessment system well and play a full part in setting targets based on pupils' achievement.
 - Several governors take an active role in supporting the school's work, including listening to reading and assisting teachers.
 - Governors take a close interest in the programmes for which additional funding is used and ensure that funds are used well.
 - Governors are well informed about the performance management and the way in which it is used to reward effective teaching.
 - Parents are consulted regularly and the website provides a valuable communication channel.
 - Safeguarding procedures are monitored carefully and the governing body ensures that policies and practices are up to date.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They respect each other and are courteous to adults in the school and from outside. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View feel that pupils are well behaved.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good and inspectors saw several examples where pupils demonstrated outstanding behaviour by supporting each other's learning in pairs or groups. On a few occasions, pupils became restless, usually because they had completed a task or were not engaged with it, so their progress slowed. In discussion, pupils say that occasions when lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour are rare.
- At breaks and lunchtimes, pupils behave well and thorough supervision by a well-organised team ensures that they are learning table manners and have opportunities to engage in activities which support their learning.
- Behaviour is well managed and policies are regularly reviewed. Expectations are clear and pupils who do not match them are quickly and sympathetically corrected. Pupils who enter the school with behaviour problems are well supported and respond quickly to support programmes focused on helping them to concentrate and to make progress.
- Pupils take on responsibility readily: older pupils act as play leaders at break and lunchtime and help to organise equipment and support adults who are on duty.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. A home/school liaison worker has worked effectively to improve the attendance of pupils from vulnerable groups.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They have a clear understanding of e-safety and a visit from local fire-fighters inspired learning, including writing, as well as teaching about fire safety.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and when it does occur it is of a minor nature and is dealt with effectively. School records confirm this and there have been no racist incidents since the last inspection.
- Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. They say that if they have worries they know that someone will listen and help them. Parents who responded to Parent View confirm this, as did the parents who spoke to inspectors.

The quality of teaching is good

- High quality teaching helps pupils to make good progress and to achieve well. Expectations are high and tasks and activities are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Literacy skills are taught effectively throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in reading, and writing skills are improving rapidly. The school correctly identified writing as an area for development and targeted programmes, including higher ability writers' groups and individual support for pupils who have difficulty with their writing, are having a significant impact.
- Pupils read well and thorough checks on their progress, in partnership with parents, help them to achieve. Pupils read confidently to inspectors, and weaker readers are supported by a programme of regular reading sessions led by trained staff.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds which letters make) is improving. Weaker readers are able to use phonics to decode unfamiliar words effectively. In one intervention session observed, a pupil was encouraged to rearrange letters into groups and then to make words, an exercise which she greatly enjoyed, consequently making outstanding progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is of a high standard, especially for older pupils who are able to use a variety of strategies to solve problems, discuss their answers using appropriate language and respond enthusiastically to questioning.
- Although most pupils' work is marked regularly, comments are usually confined to praise or encouragement. Few books were seen where pupils were given practical guidance, showing them how to take the next step in their learning. For this reason, teaching is not outstanding.
- Homework is regularly set, with a particular focus on reading. Reading journals are well kept and show that the majority of parents are playing an active role in supporting their children's learning.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together. Planning is undertaken jointly and in several lessons seen, learning support assistants were working effectively with groups of pupils of all abilities.
- As a result of careful assessment, carefully planned classroom activities, and appropriate individual support, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' overall attainment is good. They enter the school with below average attainment in most areas and then make good progress in reading and mathematics, reaching national average figures by the end of Year 2. Attainment in writing has been less strong in the past, but the school has made this a priority and there has been significant improvement.
- Writing is a priority for the school and pupils are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes. Progress is impressive in the early years and the majority of pupils match or exceed expected standards by the end of their first term. A range of strategies, including separate groups and a club for more able writers, is now sustaining this progress, although the standard of boys' writing is still behind that of girls.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is strong. The teaching of phonics and effective support programmes ensure that all pupils, and especially weaker readers, are encouraged to read with adults. Results in the Year 1 phonics check are improving, and although they do not yet match national average levels, all pupils who attempted the test for a second time succeeded. Reading results at the end of Year 2 are above average, showing that progress is sustained.
- In mathematics, the standard of teaching is high. Practical equipment enhances pupils' understanding and adds to their enjoyment of the subject, Careful planning ensures that the needs of pupils of different abilities are met. Information and communication technology supports learning and inspectors saw more able pupils making good use of netbooks to extend their learning.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally was about eight months and they were a year behind their classmates in school. Because this gap had widened compared to previous years, the school has support for these pupils as a main priority. The actions taken have been effective and recent assessments indicate that the gap between them and their classmates is closing. Pupils from service families make similar progress to others in the school.
- Careful assessment means that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early. Support is targeted from an early stage in the Reception class at children's specific needs, ensuring that obstacles to learning, such as behavioural and speech and language problems, are addressed. These needs are reviewed and re-assessed regularly, enabling pupils to continue to make good progress as they move through the school.
- Higher ability pupils are making good progress in mathematics and reading. Their writing skills are improving rapidly due to effective strategies introduced by the school this year.
- There are variations in the progress made by pupils in different groups. The school is aware of these, especially the weaker performance of boys in writing and the gap between the progress of pupil premium pupils and others. Although actions in these areas are beginning to have an impact, gaps still exist and consequently achievement is not outstanding.

The early years provision is good

- Children's knowledge and skills when they start school in the Reception classes is below average, especially in communication and language. They make good progress from their different starting points because their needs are identified quickly and good teaching enables them to acquire the skills which they need to learn and to work together. By the end of the Reception year, they are well equipped to sustain their progress in Year 1.
- Children have a wide range of opportunities to practise reading and writing. They make good progress in literacy, and reading is above average by the end of the Reception year
- Children enjoy activities which are well planned in order to engage their interest. On a day with a Christmas theme, pupils were making paper chains, using number sequences to add links, for example.
- Good relationships and clear routines ensure that children feel safe and secure. Adults in the Reception classes work effectively together and children feel confident in asking for help whenever they are unsure. Learning support assistants skilfully encourage children so that they develop the confidence to learn independently.
- Children enjoy working and playing together with their friends. In one Reception class, children were playing the role of a teacher, using a whiteboard to demonstrate and explain what they had learned to other pupils.
- The Reception classes are organised so that children can work in different groups and can move freely and safely between activities. The outdoor area is used well. During the inspection, children were flying toy aeroplanes, talking confidently about the effect of the wind on them. The range of activities is limited

in poor weather by the lack of shelter, however.

- Provision is well managed and leadership is good. The team of teachers and learning support assistants work effectively together, supplemented by volunteers, including governors. Assessment is a strength and teachers and others use the school system confidently to record progress and to aid planning.
- Links with parents are strong and parents who spoke to inspectors were highly complimentary about their children's experience in school. Parents are fully involved in their children's education and reading diaries show that they listen to them read regularly.

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	116177
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	443765
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Deacon
Headteacher	Gary Nicholls
Date of previous school inspection	March 2011
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