

Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School

Howlett Drive, Brinsworth, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 5HT

Inspection dates

4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Over time, previously weak teaching across the school, including in the early years, has left gaps in pupils' learning and a marked negative impact on standards.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, standards in reading and mathematics were broadly average but well below average in writing. Too few pupils, particularly the most able, reach the higher standards expected, given their starting points, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough across the school to support good achievement.
- Marking is not always effective in helping pupils to improve their work, particularly for spelling and punctuation errors. Pupils do not always complete corrections or respond to advice given in marking.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of the most able pupils.
- Poor handwriting inhibits pupils' ability to write fluently.
- Middle leaders are not well enough prepared for their roles. They are not fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' work in their area of responsibility.
- The governing body has not held the school to account for its performance with enough rigour.
- The early years outside area is not used effectively to promote learning. Parental involvement in their children's learning is not sufficiently developed.

The school has the following strengths

- Morale is high. The recently appointed headteacher provides inspirational and motivating leadership. She has tackled areas of weakness and rapidly made significant changes to improve the school, including in the quality of teaching.
- The school has a strong sense of community. Staff have good professional relationships and a friendly approach, so that pupils feel safe and are cared for well.
- Pupils behave well, are extremely polite and are keen to learn. They get along well and show great care and respect for one another.
- Arrangements for keeping pupils safe at all times and in all areas of the school are exemplary.
- Pupils acquire a good awareness of British values, and understand the importance of balancing rights and responsibilities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching during 18 visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning. On two visits, inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Year 1 read and spoke to pupils in Year 6 about their enjoyment of reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, a group of pupils, six members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 24 questionnaires completed by staff, 40 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and a letter from a parent. Inspectors also looked at parents' responses to the school's recent questionnaire.
- An inspector spoke with parents informally at the school gate as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors checked a range of evidence including: monitoring records; consultants' reports; the school development plans; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Lindsay Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Nigel Crome-Hawke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- The early years consists of two classes. Children in the Nursery class attend part time, either for the morning or the afternoon and Reception children attend full time.
- Pupils from Years 1 to 6 are taught in six single-aged classes and three mixed-age classes.
- About one in seven pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional government funding to support those children who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- Almost a third of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is slightly above average. The largest group represented are of Pakistani heritage. At one in five, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body took over the role this term. A number of new governors have joined the governing body in the last 18 months.
- The school has experienced considerable change and upheaval in staffing since the previous inspection. Following a series of short-term interim headteachers over a two year period, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2014. A coordinator for special educational needs and a coordinator for the early years were appointed in January 2015. There has been movement of teachers to different classes and a number of new teachers have joined the school. The school has also experienced a number of staff absences due to maternity leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching so more pupils make rapid progress and standards continue to rise in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - sharing the most effective practice that exists within the school
 - ensuring teachers' marking clearly shows pupils how they can improve their work, particularly so they are aware of errors in spelling and punctuation
 - giving pupils sufficient time in lessons to respond to marking
 - ensuring that work is not too easy for the pupils and that it fully engages their interest
 - raise teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils are capable of doing
 - implementing a whole-school policy for the teaching of handwriting.
- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years to accelerate children's progress and raise their achievement by:
 - making more effective use of the outside area to promote learning
 - involving parents more in their children's learning.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - increasing the contribution made by middle leaders to monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and thus supporting the drive for improvement
 - ensuring governors have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and have a greater sense of accountability for school improvement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are not good, although they are both improving rapidly.
- The newly appointed, experienced headteacher provides inspirational and motivational leadership and has established a strong sense of teamwork among all who work in the school. Morale is high across the whole-school community.
- Leaders, including governors have a realistic and accurate view of the school. They have a clear vision for the school with high expectations at all levels. There is a renewed sense of determination amongst all staff and governors to provide the best experiences and learning for pupils and to continue to bring about improvements.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have quickly identified weaknesses in the school's work. School improvement planning correctly identifies the key priorities and focuses on improving teaching in order to raise standards. Leaders have demonstrated a capacity to secure improvement by taking rapid and effective action, already moving the school forward.
- Teaching is improving strongly. Much of the learning observed during the inspection was good, with some that was outstanding, but small pockets of inadequate progress remain. Strong support and training by senior leaders and local authority consultants is in place. However, there are missed opportunities to share some of the high-quality practice from within the school to secure good teaching for all pupils.
- School leaders analyse data about pupils' progress and achievement effectively. Tracking of pupil progress is recorded each term. In response to the abolition of the National Curriculum levels, the school has a new assessment system already fully in place for both English and mathematics.
- There are good relationships with parents, who are mostly very supportive of the school. They appreciate the recent increased opportunities to spend a longer time with class teachers receiving detailed information about their children's learning and progress. Recent improvements ensure early years parents receive regular information about their children's progress, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to be involved in supporting their children's learning.
- Middle leaders with responsibility for subjects are not fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas. Coaching and training to develop these skills has started but are still at an early stage of development.
- The curriculum has been redrafted to comply with the recent changes to the new National Curriculum. It is well planned to cover a wide range of topics and to incorporate all subjects. The topics interest and engage the pupils and offer many opportunities for extended writing and the application of mathematical skills. Parents told the inspectors that their children love the topics, especially those on chocolate and ancient Egypt. This love of learning was confirmed by pupils when they spoke with inspectors.
- Daily assemblies, work within topics and in religious studies, collectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well. Pupils develop a good understanding of different world faiths and cultures and this helps them to acquire tolerance and understanding of others and their differences. The curriculum, especially the work on the UNICEF respecting rights school award, promotes the fundamental British values of respect and acceptance of others, preparing pupils for their next stage in education and for life in modern Britain.
- The school ensures good relations are fostered and there is no discrimination. Equal opportunities are now promoted adequately. The spending of the pupil premium has been reviewed to focus the funding more sharply on programmes designed to accelerate relevant pupils' academic achievement. This is beginning to have some impact in narrowing the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school but the gaps in their attainment remain too wide.
- The school makes good use of the primary school sports funding to ensure pupils experience a wide range of sports and after-school clubs. This is having a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being and healthy lifestyles.
- The management of teachers' performance is now closely linked to pupils' progress and staff are being held accountable for pupils in their care. Targets for staff link to the national Teachers' Standards and reflect the school's priorities to improve further. The impact of performance management is not fully evident in ensuring consistently good teaching and learning.
- Procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully in place and effective.
- The local authority is providing increased monitoring and support for the school and this is helping the school to improve and move forward.
- **The governance of the school:**

- In the past, the governing body has not been rigorous enough in holding the school to account. Governors bring a wide range of relevant skills to the governing body but these have not previously been put to good use. The very recently elected, experienced Chair of the Governing Body has given more direction to governors and has identified areas for development to enable them to be more effective in their leadership role. As a result, a range of additional training and support is underway. The governing body is highly committed to supporting the school and is starting to be more involved in leading and managing the school. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development; however, they do not have an in-depth understanding of the information about the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils. Governors discuss whether the primary school sports funding and the pupil premium have been spent effectively, but have limited knowledge of the termly progress of disadvantaged pupils in each year group. Governors are now better informed about the management of teachers' performance and the national Teachers' Standards and how these affect pay rises and promotion. Governors are also aware of what support has been provided to improve teaching and to tackle underperformance. Governors have made many informal visits to the school attending school events and have recently planned a programme of more formal monitoring visits. Governors have a clear overview of the school's finances and make sure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In almost all lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and respond well to adults' questions and prompts. Pupils work thoughtfully during group work, considering and respecting each other's views. Occasionally, when teaching is not as effective, a few pupils lose concentration and do not complete their work as well as they should. Even then, they are careful not to spoil the learning of others.
- Staff promote good behaviour and manage pupils' needs well. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour and staff and parents are positive about the management of behaviour in the school.
- The atmosphere in the dining hall is calm and friendly. Pupils show good manners and engage in conversation with friends. They move around the school sensibly and at break times play well together.
- Pupils talked enthusiastically about their learning and other aspects of school life which they enjoy. They clearly like school. They are courteous and respectful towards each other and adults and are confident talking to visitors. Pupils are proud of their school, wear their uniform with pride and look very smart.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The management of safeguarding is effectively organised and all staff are appropriately trained. Safe practices are emphasised and embedded in all aspects of the school's work and there is some excellent practice evident in the school's records.
- All parents who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View considered their children felt safe and were well cared for at the school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and do not consider there is an issue with bullying at the school. Pupils say that the school is safe because if any problems occur, they can talk to any member of staff who will quickly sort things out.
- The school works hard to help raise pupils' awareness of risk and safety in the wider world. They learn about road and fire safety and the dangers associated with drugs and alcohol. They are knowledgeable about the potential dangers posed by the internet and other social networking sites and can give clear examples about what to do to keep safe in this respect.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been good enough to enable all pupils across the school, including in the early years, to make consistently good progress.
- There are many strengths within current teaching reflecting the recent, rapid drive towards raising achievement. However inconsistencies remain across the school and there is a legacy of weaker teaching that has to be overcome.
- In some lessons, work set is not always hard enough for the most able pupils. At times too little work is

expected from pupils and they spend too long going over work they can already do.

- Marking is not always effective in helping pupils to improve their work and is often limited to praise comments to motivate pupils. Some teachers mark work in English and mathematics extremely thoroughly offering advice about how work can be improved and identifying spelling and punctuation errors. However, this is not the case in every class. In addition, opportunities to develop pupils' basic literacy skills are often missed when they write in other subjects because topic work is not marked regularly enough. Pupils do not always have enough time to make corrections or to respond to advice given in marking in order to improve their work.
- The teaching of reading has not been consistently good over time but it is generally good now. Rates of progress are accelerating and attainment is rising across the school, including in the early years. Pupils in Year 6 who spoke with an inspector emphasised their love of reading explaining, 'When you're reading it takes you to another world, a fantasy world where you can relax and imagine you're in the story.'
- Pupils' writing skills are improving, but not rapidly enough to match national standards. The school is aware of this and is putting in place initiatives to improve writing, especially for boys.
- Previous weaker teaching has left gaps in pupils' knowledge of problem-solving skills and basic mathematical facts. These have been identified as barriers to learning in mathematics. Daily 'maths passport' sessions, in ability groups, have been introduced to plug the gaps in these skills and knowledge. These are taught well and are speeding up pupils' progress in mathematics.
- Teachers manage behaviour effectively and strong relationships between pupils and adults create a positive and purposeful atmosphere. Teachers and teaching assistants ask probing questions to assess pupils' understanding and to promote the use of subject-specific language. This is particularly evident in the teaching of mathematics where pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking using mathematical language.
- Pupils are proud of their work in books and on display. However, the quality of handwriting is not good enough and teachers' expectations of presentation are not consistent across the school. Correct letter formation and pencil grip are not fully established for younger pupils. Older pupils remain writing in pencil often using print because there is not a consistent approach to the teaching of joined handwriting.
- Leaders have accurately identified that weaker aspects of teaching remain within subject knowledge, marking and matching work to pupils' needs and have begun to tackle these rigorously, but have not seen the full impact.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Frequent changes in teaching staff have resulted in a lack of continuity in learning. Frequent changes in assessment systems resulting in a lack of clarity over the attainment and progress of groups of pupils. As a result, although most pupils make the progress expected of them by the end of Key Stage 2, too few pupils make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Current school assessment information shows that progress has accelerated in all years and for all groups of pupils, due to recent more effective teaching.
- The progress made by pupils from ethnic minority groups is accelerating. These pupils are making progress in line with their peers.
- In 2014, the proportion reaching the required level in the national Year 1 phonics screening checks (letters and the sounds they represent), although an improvement on the previous year, were just below that found nationally. The current Year 1 pupils are making good progress in phonics and standards in the current Year 1 are higher than those of their peers last year. There have been changes to staff and additional staff training to support the new approach to the teaching of phonics, which have raised standards.
- In 2014, standards in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 were broadly average. However, standards in writing dipped from the previous year and were well below average.
- In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2014, writing was well below average, with pupils being about two terms behind pupils nationally. Standards in mathematics and reading were broadly average although a little lower than the national average. Too few pupils, particularly the most able and middle-ability pupils, reach the higher standards expected, given their starting points, in reading, writing and mathematics. Weaknesses in progress and attainment have been identified by the headteacher and senior leaders, and staff are taking positive steps to raise pupils' achievement. Pupils' writing is particularly spoilt by weak spelling and punctuation. Regular, focused additional lessons and a whole-school spelling programme have been introduced since September to address these issues. Mathematics is being strengthened by regular practise of instant recall of basic mathematical facts and pupils are increasingly applying their knowledge

and skills to solve mathematical problems. Pupils are now making faster progress and the current Year 6 pupils are already working at average standards with over a term to go to achieve even more before they leave.

- In the end of Year 6 national tests for 2014, the proportion of the most able pupils that reached the higher Level 5 was broadly average in mathematics and significantly below average in reading and writing. School information for current Year 6 pupils shows that an increasing proportion of pupils are working at the higher Level 5, with a small number working at the highest Level 6. The work seen during the inspection confirms this.
- Until recently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was not good enough. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils who left Year 6 in 2014 was five terms behind non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in mathematics and writing and two terms behind in reading. A smaller proportion, compared to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics, but a higher proportion made more progress than expected in reading. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was about five terms behind their classmates in mathematics, just over a term behind in reading and four terms behind in writing. Their progress from differing starting points was similar to their classmates in mathematics and writing, but they made more progress than their classmates in reading. Effective management and use of the pupil premium funding to provide small group support and teaching are now leading to gaps in attainment in all year groups closing rapidly.
- Over time, the progress of those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities has not been good enough. It is now improving because of better teaching. Pupils are receiving well-targeted, specific support that meets their needs.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The early years requires improvement because the quality of teaching has not been consistently good enough in recent years to ensure that children make good progress. By the end of the early years a below average proportion of children achieve a good level of development and are, therefore, not fully ready for Year 1 learning. The proportion of boys reaching a good level of development was particularly low in 2014. Children's skills in reading, writing and number were the weakest areas.
- Most children start in the early years with skills and experiences that are typical for their age, although this is variable year on year. They settle quickly and take a keen interest in what is happening around them.
- An experienced early years leader was appointed in January 2015 and she has taken positive action to strengthen teaching and improve the learning environment. Staff work well together as a team and now have an accurate view of how well children are progressing and where further improvements need to be made. Teaching is improving. However, on occasions, activities are not demanding enough to extend children's learning, particularly in the outdoor area.
- More effective use is being made of assessment information to inform planning and children's needs are now being met more fully. The curriculum has been adapted to engage the boys better and progress across the setting has accelerated. The teaching of early reading, writing and number skills is now good.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors were highly positive about the early years and the progress their children were making. Parents are appreciative of the newly introduced 'Stay and play' sessions so parents can see first-hand how their children learn. There are further plans to involve parents in their children's learning, but there has not been time to action these.
- The needs of individual children are now met and they are now making better progress. This includes disabled children, those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the school receives additional funding.
- Children are cared for well. Effective procedures are in place to keep children safe. Children are well-motivated and show good attitudes to learning. They cooperate well and are confident to make independent choices in their play. Behaviour is good and children's personal and social development is strong.
- Early reading and number skills are now taught more thoroughly and adults use questioning effectively to promote children's speaking and listening skills.

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	106908
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	456098

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beverley Clubley
Headteacher	Ann-Marie Lee
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2011
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