

Brockswood Nursery and Primary School

Shenley Road, Woodhall Farm, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7QH

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen rapidly from below average at the time of the last inspection to above average. All pupils in all year groups make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who receive extra support through additional government funding make the same rapid progress as their classmates. These pupils achieve exceptionally well.
- The headteacher's relentless drive to ensure high expectations results in excellence for all pupils. Her vision is shared by all staff and governors. As a result, all aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection.
- Leaders have used procedures to manage the performance of staff exceptionally well to bring about significant improvements in teaching and achievement since the school was last inspected.
- Teachers set tasks that challenge all groups of pupils effectively and make them think hard. Pupils enjoy learning and they do so very well.
- Teachers regularly and accurately assess pupils' work. Pupils know what they need to do to improve. Just occasionally, pupils do not respond to marking in sufficient depth.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They attend school regularly and punctuality is good.
- Pupils treat everyone with respect and courtesy. This is an inclusive school where everyone feels valued.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school. This view is strongly supported by their parents.
- The effectiveness of the early years is outstanding. Children are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited every class and observed teaching in 10 lessons. Four of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked closely at work in pupils' books, in all year groups, to gauge their progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with pupils to discuss their views of the school and to hear them reading. The lead inspector attended the 'Golden Awards' assembly.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with a group of governors. The lead inspector spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority by phone.
- Inspectors examined carefully a range of school documentation, including information concerning pupils' achievement and progress, the school development plans and information about teachers' performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Minutes of meetings of the governing body were also reviewed.
- Inspectors considered responses from the 71 parents who completed Ofsted's Parent View survey. They also spoke informally to parents who were visiting the school.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 33 staff who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Judith O'Hare, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Zahid Aziz

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- About half of the pupils are White British, half come from minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately one in ten speaks English as an additional language.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join or leave during the school year.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is almost double the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support disadvantaged pupils including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- Early years provision is part-time in Nursery and full-time in the Reception Year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils respond fully to the advice they are given on how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is a strong and effective leader. She is supported very well by a dedicated team of staff and governors. Together they have created a culture of high expectations where all pupils, whatever their backgrounds or abilities thrive and achieve exceptionally well. This is a positive, caring school community, free from discrimination where all are treated equally. The quality of teaching and learning, achievement and behaviour have all improved significantly since the previous school inspection in 2013.
- Pupils really enjoy the wide and varied programme of projects on offer at school. Classroom learning is enriched through additional activities, clubs, trips and visits to places of historic and cultural interest. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the Key Stage 2 residential trip as well as visits to the Natural History Museum and to St Albans as part of their history project on the Romans.
- The school pays careful attention to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its commitment to promoting fundamental British values of tolerance and respect is outstanding. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong behaviour. They take great pride in doing the right thing. The school prepares pupils very well to face the opportunities and challenges of life in modern Britain.
- Senior and middle leaders have focused rigorously on improving standards across the school. They make regular checks on pupils' progress. Prompt action is taken to ensure any pupil at risk of falling behind is suitably supported and that the help they receive is effective. As a result, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able, those with a disability or who have special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language all make outstanding progress. Extra funding available, including the pupil premium funding, is used very wisely.
- Leaders and governors make regular checks on the quality of teaching to ensure it has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders examine the work in pupils' books carefully and observe teaching in the classroom. Teachers receive focused training and support to help them improve their skills. Teachers learn from each other through shared observations of teaching. As a result, the quality of the teaching is now outstanding. The local authority has helped the school to develop links with other schools. They have identified teachers from Brockwood as experts in their field. Teachers new to the profession quickly become skilled practitioners. Teachers say they feel well supported.
- The primary school sports funding is used outstandingly well. Pupils benefit from access to a wide range of different activities such as swimming, gymnastics, karate and dance. Pupils receive regular tuition from a qualified coach and a sports apprentice. Evidence of the impact of this spending can be seen in the school's increased success in inter-school matches. All pupils now participate in regular sport and exercise. Teaching in physical education has improved because of the specialist training given to staff.
- Leaders ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is robust. Governors share senior leaders' ambition to ensure all pupils make excellent progress and achieve their best. They undertake regular training, including how to interpret school performance data. As a result, the questions they ask about the information they receive enables them to challenge the school effectively.
 - Each governor is linked to a specific area of the school's work as outlined in the school development plans. They hold regular meetings with the senior leader in charge of managing their area of responsibility. This means that governors are able to hold school leaders to account robustly.
 - Governors keep a careful watch on the school's finances to make sure pupils receive the best possible value for money. In particular, they check the effectiveness of pupil premium spending to confirm that disadvantaged pupils make the same rapid progress as others.
 - Governors visit the school regularly to make checks on the quality of teaching. They make sure that teachers' pay awards are only made when there is strong evidence of quality teaching that has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They work consistently hard in all lessons and strive to achieve their very best. Pupils are polite and considerate to everyone. They make visitors feel welcome in school. The school regularly receives positive comments about pupils' excellent behaviour on visits and trips.
- Children in the early years behave very well indeed. They cooperate well with each other, share equipment and take turns kindly when choosing activities. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy working and playing with their friends.
- All parents who spoke to the inspectors, and those who responded to the online questionnaire, made very positive comments about pupils' behaviour. Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance has risen rapidly from below average to above average, and punctuality is good. Pupils said, 'This school is wonderful. Everyone knows everyone, and everyone is kind and thoughtful.' The school is prompt to contact home if anyone is absent. Good attendance and punctuality are recognised regularly through newsletters to parents, 'Golden awards' and assemblies.
- Pupils make a strong contribution to leadership of the school. For example, the school council worked together with staff to decide the school behaviour policy. Other roles and responsibilities include membership of the eco committee, sports leaders, lunch time supervisors and play leaders. All interested pupils apply for these posts and are selected through a rigorous election process. This helps pupils to understand the fundamental British value of democracy.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. There are robust systems in place to check and record safety matters. Leaders ensure that any concerns are dealt with swiftly and important points are not missed. All staff are carefully checked prior to their appointment. Staff and governors are extremely vigilant in carrying out regular risk assessments and making sure that pupils remain safe at school. The school site is secure and there is no public access.
- Bullying is extremely rare. There are occasional incidents, which pupils describe as 'minor incidents of unkind behaviour'. They say staff respond quickly if it occurs. They told inspectors there is always an adult on hand to talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying. Even the youngest children are able explain how important it is to treat everyone with respect and courtesy.
- Parents receive good advice on all matters relating to health and safety via the school website and through regular letters sent home. Parents say they have every confidence their children remain safe, both at school and on trips and visits.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand the importance of safe behaviour. In a recent project on local issues that affect their community, pupils in Year 6 were involved in a successful campaign to install a crossing outside their school. Children in the early years take road safety seriously. While playing with scooters, they took turns in stopping traffic and patrolling the road as lollypop people. Police and the fire brigade are regular visitors in school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching across the school has improved significantly. This is because staff work together as a team to develop their skills and share good practice. In all lessons, teachers and teaching assistants track each pupil's progress carefully. They are quick to spot where any pupil is at risk of falling behind and adapt their lessons appropriately.
- Teachers are most enthusiastic. They use their excellent subject knowledge to plan interesting lessons which challenge pupils effectively. Pupils enjoy the subjects they study at school. They particularly like to use their skills to solve problems. Pupils say this helps them to learn well. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils

worked effectively in groups looking at different sets of data about results in the local football league. They asked each other challenging questions to decide which team was the most successful. Their final conclusions were very detailed and accurate.

- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the learning and progress of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who find learning more difficult. All support given, both in and out of the classroom, is planned very carefully. They make regular checks on pupils' progress to ensure that all support given is effective. As a result, these pupils make outstanding progress.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is outstanding. Teachers provide excellent opportunities for pupils to use and apply these important skills in all subjects. For example, in a science lesson in Year 1, pupils used their reading skills to find out the names of different fruit and vegetables they were sorting into groups. All written work in all subjects is completed carefully and to a high standard of accuracy.
- Teachers set home learning tasks on a regular basis. Pupils complete these tasks diligently. They told inspectors how important it is to practise when away from the classroom and to read regularly, which they do. The additional homework clubs the school runs, before and after school, are attended well. Parents regularly attend the special 'class learning days' and celebration assemblies. Parents say this helps them to understand how they can best support their children's learning at home.
- Teachers mark their pupils' work regularly and give them detailed and helpful advice. Pupils read these comments carefully and as a matter of course. They understand fully the assessment processes teachers use. Pupils explained this to inspectors and talked knowledgeably about what they need to do to improve their work. Just occasionally, however, they do not give detailed responses to the advice they have received.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Thanks to excellent teaching, achievement across the school for all pupils, including the most able, is outstanding. Carefully targeted support given to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, ensures that all pupils make rapid progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is outstanding. Pupils enjoy reading. They use the school library regularly to borrow books to read at home and to assist them with their research in lessons. The proportion of pupils achieving the standard expected in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1 has been above average in each of the last two years.
- Pupils make excellent progress in Key Stage 1. Standards pupils achieved in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014, just above the national average, were the highest the school has achieved in the last five years and notably higher than at the time of the last school inspection.
- Standards that pupils achieve in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have risen rapidly over the last three years. Pupils' outstanding progress in Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is clearly evident in the school's national test results in 2014, which were above the national average in mathematics and reading. The proportion of pupils now achieving the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics is above average.
- Current school data and work seen in pupils' books provide convincing evidence that standards across the school continue to rise. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are all on track to match or exceed the very challenging targets they have been set for 2015.
- The school makes excellent use of funding available to support all disadvantaged pupils. In 2014, these pupils made the same outstanding progress as their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Although disadvantaged pupils were about two terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and one term behind in reading, they achieved higher results than other pupils nationally in both subjects. Pupils were two terms ahead in mathematics and one term ahead in reading. In writing, although they were four terms behind other pupils in the school and a term behind other pupils nationally, almost every pupil

reached the nationally expected Level 4. School data seen and work in pupils' confirm that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is outstanding.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress. The school makes very early assessments of each pupil's learning needs and tracks their progress carefully. The support these pupils receive is targeted very carefully to ensure that they achieve their very best. Pupils and parents comment favourably on the support they receive.
- The most able pupils are supported well to master the skills and knowledge they need to develop their confidence in working at the highest levels. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They are highly adept in giving the most able appropriate work to do. This means these pupils often exceed the standards expected for their age.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Most children join the school in the Nursery Year. Staff work closely with all parents to ensure they have a good understanding of each child's special needs and interests. Routines are established right from the start so children settle very quickly to life at school and quickly make friends. Children interact well with the adults who teach them, listen carefully in class, and follow all instructions without a fuss. Parents say their children love coming to school because they find learning fun and exciting.
- Children generally enter the early years with significant gaps in their skills and knowledge, most particularly in communication and language, speaking and listening and managing behaviour. Children make rapid progress from their different starting points in all aspects of learning as they move through Nursery and Reception because their needs are identified quickly and support is put into place promptly.
- In 2013, fewer children reached typical levels in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case seen nationally. In contrast, in 2014, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year was close to the national average. While gaps remain between disadvantaged children and the rest, these are closing rapidly. As a result, children are prepared well for the start of Year 1.
- Children's increasingly rapid progress is because teaching in the early years is outstanding. All adult-led and child-selected activities are planned carefully to capture children's imagination, to help them become more self-confident and to encourage them to solve problems for themselves. In one activity observed, children carefully and successfully counted the number of bricks they would need to build a farm. Teaching assistants work effectively alongside teachers to support all groups of learners.
- Behaviour in the early years is outstanding. Children have good manners and are kind to everyone. The children feel very safe, and staff ensure all safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively.
- Leadership is outstanding. The early years leader ensures that teachers make accurate assessments of children's work and progress. She makes sure that all play their part in ensuring children's safety and well-being. Links with other local schools are well established. This provides additional opportunities for staff to enhance their teaching through observing best practice and sharing their skills with others.

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	117349
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	462093

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amy Harper
Headteacher	Carley Holliman
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2013
Telephone number	01442 404000
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@brockswood.herts.sch.uk

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