

Brook Community Primary School

Spelders Hill, Brook, Ashford, Kent TN25 5PB

Inspection dates	21–22 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has established a committed, effective and happy staff team.
- Leaders and governors have effectively secured improvements in teaching, assessment and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils make faster progress.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved at the end of both key stages since the previous inspection.
- Teachers' high expectations ensure pupils try hard and do their best. By the end of Year 6, pupils are well equipped with the academic and personal skills to support them in the next stage of their education.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in writing. Pupils in Year 6 regularly produce high-quality written work for a wide range of purposes.
- Pupils take care to present their work carefully in all subjects. They develop neat, attractive handwriting which helps them to write quickly and fluently.
- Disadvantaged pupils do as well as their classmates, making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are kind and considerate. They behave well and look after each other. They feel safe and trust adults in school to take care of them.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, making a valuable contribution to school life.
- Governors are knowledgeable and perceptive. They skilfully balance challenge and support for the school, knowing when to question and when to encourage and reassure.
- Good teaching ensures children make rapid progress in early years and are well prepared for Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers give pupils regular opportunities to use mathematical knowledge in problem-solving activities.
- Teachers do not always give the oldest pupils and the most able in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class sufficiently challenging activities.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that pupils in all classes have regular opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to tackle number problems.
- Provide suitably challenging activities for pupils of all ages and abilities in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has effectively developed a committed and effective team of staff, ably supported by the senior teacher. Governors and staff know the part they play in the school's development. They share the headteacher's determination to secure ongoing improvements in teaching and in pupils' achievement.
- Staff and governors say that the school is a happier and more confident place than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Rising achievement is lifting morale, reflected in the wholly positive response to the staff questionnaire and in pupils' pride in their work. The words of one member of staff reflect the comments made by several in the questionnaires: 'I am a valued member of a fantastic team.'
- The headteacher has created a positive atmosphere in school. Teachers routinely reflect on the quality of their practice, happily taking on board advice and trying new ideas and approaches. Leaders, teachers and governors check each development, reviewing how well it has worked before moving on to the next stage. Leaders and teachers meet regularly to discuss and check pupils' progress.
- The headteacher skilfully spots leadership potential in her staff. She makes sure they have the training, coaching and leadership opportunities which help them to develop their practice. As a result, subject leaders play an increasingly confident and influential role in improving teaching and learning.
- The special needs coordinator has improved support for pupils who need extra help. She works with teachers and teaching assistants to track every pupil's progress, making sure that any additional support is working and making changes where needed.
- Leaders have very recently reorganised classes for the younger children, so that early years children and Year 1 are taught in a mixed-age class. Teachers have made a good start in ensuring that children are settled and confident and most are already doing very well. However, leaders recognise the need to ensure that activities challenge pupils of all abilities and ages to do their best.
- Pupils learn a broad range of subjects, giving pupils a balanced experience in school. Leaders have increased opportunities for pupils to go on trips and visits, an aspect of their schooling which pupils say they very much enjoy.
- Learning effectively supports pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils respect different beliefs and points of view and learn about a number of world religions. Staff and pupils regularly come together to celebrate pupils' work and achievements. For example, during the inspection, pupils enthusiastically applauded the school basketball team, praised at a local competition for its sportsmanship. Assemblies are calm, positive occasions with a strong sense of school community.
- Learning prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities in school, and understand how their actions can affect others and the consequences of their behaviour. They learn how to listen to the views of others respectfully during debates and discussions about challenging issues, such as the 'crime and punishment' topic in the older classes.
- Primary physical education and sports premium is used well to support pupils' health and their sporting development. Pupils have access to more sports and competitions than in previous years and so are more active. Leaders check the difference this makes to pupils' progress in physical education.
- The local authority has kept a close eye on the school's improvements since the previous inspection, with regular visits to the school to check on progress and provide training.
- Pupil premium funding is well spent to ensure disadvantaged pupils do their best. As a result, this group makes the same rapid progress as others, and often better. Leaders track every pupil's individual progress, tailoring support to their needs.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors provide effective support and challenge for school leaders, knowing when to ask leaders searching questions, while recognising the significant improvements made in the school. They have a secure and well-informed understanding of the school's work because they regularly meet with leaders, staff and pupils, attend staff training and visit the school during the day to see it in action. They know what leaders do to support and improve the quality of teaching.
 - Governors bring a wide range of experience and expertise to the school, including safeguarding and leadership experience. They have a good understanding of their role in the school's development. They regularly use information about pupils' achievement to compare the school's work with others nationally and are ambitious for the school's future. They have a sound view of the school's successes and of those aspects which can be improved even further.

- Governors have every confidence in the headteacher, one commenting: 'she has grown professionally from being a headteacher when she first arrived in the school, to the leader we have now.' They recognise the skilful way the headteacher has managed a number of staff changes since the previous inspection, while securing improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The website gives useful links to agencies, such as ChildLine. Delegated safeguarding officers are clearly named, with contact details provided for the local authority. Safeguarding policies are current, including advice about what to do in the case of suspected radicalisation or extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers plan and deliver learning which consistently builds on pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have a good understanding of how to teach a wide range of subjects, including French and science.
- In the past year, training has improved teachers' understanding about supporting pupils who find learning more difficult. Teachers are alert to pupils' needs. They are quick to identify pupils whose progress is slowing, putting the special needs coordinator's advice into practice in the classrooms.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved since the previous inspection. Phonics skills are taught consistently across the school, linking in with the teaching of spelling in Key Stage 2. The recently introduced reading records provide a valuable link between home and school, helping teachers to check pupils' reading and to encourage them to read a broad range of books.
- Teachers give pupils a wide range of interesting, stimulating and thought-provoking writing tasks, so that pupils are inspired to write well. Teachers effectively balance regular basic skills practice, such as rehearsing the use of grammar and punctuation, with opportunities for pupils to put their skills into practice. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' work in all subjects, combined with a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting, ensure pupils develop an even, legible handwriting style by the end of Year 6.
- Regular lessons to improve pupils' mathematics knowledge and ability to recall number facts mean that pupils have a confident and secure mathematical base for future learning. However, while some teachers give pupils many opportunities to select and use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems, this is not the case in all classes. Leaders have scheduled training to ensure all teachers understand how to deepen pupils' mathematical knowledge even further.
- Teaching assistants deliver good-quality, well-thought-out support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, ensuring they make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work with pupils individually, as well as in groups, using a range of strategies according to pupils' needs. Practical resources are used well in mathematics and English lessons to help pupils of all abilities to learn. This gives pupils the confidence to have a go without adult support when they find a task tricky before seeking help. Some individual pupils with complex additional needs make dramatic progress, because they are helped to develop the basic skills and attitudes they need to continue to improve.
- Teachers regularly check and mark pupils' work, in line with the school's policy, so that pupils know how well they are learning. They give pupils helpful suggestions about what they can do next, which pupils use to improve their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel that everyone in the school is valued and treated as an individual. Adults listen seriously to pupils' views, so that pupils feel confident and secure. Pupils wear their new uniform with pride, and look very smart.
- Pupils know what to do if they are worried, including when using the internet. Most parents who completed the online questionnaire say that pupils feel safe.
- Bullying is not an issue in the school. Pupils say that there was some bullying in the past but that this is no longer the case. Records support this view, showing that concerns about bullying are very rare and, when they arise, are dealt with quickly and sensitively.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, matching national averages in 2015. Leaders

check pupils' attendance regularly. The recently appointed special needs coordinator plays a key role in identifying those who attend less regularly. She contacts parents promptly to check that all is well, if there are any concerns about a pupil's attendance. She works closely with agencies, such as health professionals, to support families. Her vigilance has resulted in some dramatic improvements in individual pupils' attendance and in their achievement.

- The older pupils take on extra responsibilities maturely and sensibly. They play a valued role in the school. For example, during the inspection, some younger pupils proudly explained how the Year 6 'digital leaders' give them tips and reminders about how to use the internet safely.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well in lessons, during breaktimes and in different parts of the school. They respect everyone in school and respond quickly to adults' requests. For example, at the end of playtimes they lose no time in lining up quickly and returning to their classrooms.
- Pupils say that behaviour is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Most parents who completed the online survey feel pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club and after-school club behave very well. They enjoy participating in activities such as board games, table tennis and craft work.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because sometimes a few pupils lose concentration during lessons, quietly opting out of an activity or task. Pupils themselves say that, while behaviour is good most of the time, occasionally one or two do not listen to teachers well enough.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Very small and varying numbers of pupils in each year group cause fluctuations in attainment each year. However, pupils' work and information about their progress show they make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make rapid progress in writing. Pupils regularly write for different purposes and learn how to edit and improve their own work. They develop a consistent and attractive handwriting style which helps them to write quickly, confidently and fluently, enabling them to concentrate on ideas and vocabulary when completing tasks. In 2015, attainment in writing was in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. The proportion attaining the higher levels at the end of both key stages was above the national average.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, developing a secure grounding in mathematical knowledge and understanding. However, some pupils make slightly slower progress than others because they do not have the same opportunities to use and apply number to tackle mathematical problems, and so test and deepen their understanding. In 2015, attainment in mathematics was in line with the national average at both key stages.
- Pupils regularly read a wide range of texts. They are keen to read. They know what to do if they find the text more difficult to read, confidently using strategies such as phonics when reading trickier words. The results of the Year 1 phonics check have improved since the previous inspection to match national averages in 2015. Attainment in reading was in line with the national average at the end of both key stages in 2015.
- In science, pupils learn key facts about topics such as electricity and conductors, testing and reinforcing their understanding through practical activities.
- Groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, are making faster progress than before because extra help is planned more carefully to meet their specific needs. They make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils do as well as their classmates, making good progress and often better progress than other pupils in the school. There are very small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group and so their achievement is not reported in detail.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. More pupils attain the higher levels at the end of both key stages than at the time of the previous inspection, although the small number of pupils in each year group, combined with differing starting points, cause some variations each year.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years leader is knowledgeable about children's needs and development. She successfully steers improvements in early years provision and makes sure that children are safe and happy. She works positively with parents and with pre-schools, so that she can get to know the children well.
- Children settle very well into school life, supported by caring and attentive adults and their friendly Year 1 classmates. They behave well and enjoy school, quickly growing in confidence.
- Teachers plan activities which appeal to children's natural curiosity. For example, during the inspection, children enjoyed using and exploring ice in the outdoor area, going on to practise and strengthen writing skills on the whiteboard.
- Children quickly learn how to use phonics knowledge to help them to read and write. Adults are alert to children's individual needs, helping each of them to improve by, for example, gently reminding children about how to hold the pens correctly when drawing and writing so that they develop good learning habits.
- Children make good progress from each of their starting points. The proportion achieving a good level of development has been consistently in line with the national average and increased substantially in 2015. In 2015, most reached expected levels of achievement in literacy and mathematics at the end of Reception, with some exceeding in reading, number and shape.
- The very recent reorganisation into a mixed Reception and Year 1 class has presented a challenge to adults in making sure the oldest and most-able pupils continue to make rapid progress. Leaders recognise that this is not yet happening consistently; consequently, at times, some of the older and most-able pupils make slightly slower progress when activities are not sufficiently challenging. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve provision. For example, the early years leader is scheduled to visit other schools with mixed-age classes to consider how best to plan learning.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective. The classroom and outdoor areas are well organised and secure. The buddying system pairs the youngest children with some of the oldest in the school, helping them to feel secure.

School details

Unique reference number	118373
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10002349

This inspection 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	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dominic Urand
Headteacher	Suzanne Arnold
Telephone number	01233 812614
Website	www.brook-ashford.kent.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@brook-ashford.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school provides full-time education for Reception children in a mixed early years and Year 1 class.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club, both of which were included in this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in eight lessons or part lessons.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. She also met with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- The inspector took account of 24 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, she considered the views expressed by parents who spoke with her informally at the end of the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies.
- The inspector looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. She also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

