



# Birchwood Grove Community Primary School, Burgess Hill

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125944  
**LEA** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 282027  
**Inspection dates** 22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Curtis AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Birchwood Grove Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Burgess Hill
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		West Sussex RH15 0DP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01444 242209
<b>Number on roll</b>	338	<b>Fax number</b>	01444 230042
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs S Hillier
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Catrin Jones

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22 February 2006 - 23 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 282027
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British, with a small proportion from minority ethnic families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is significantly below the national average. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. The headteacher has been in post since September 2005.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and it gives satisfactory value for money. Inspection evidence does not support the school's view of its own effectiveness as being good, although the school has a number of good features. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and achievement is satisfactory. Achievement in Year 6 Mathematics is good. Most pupils achieve the expected Level 4 in the national tests, but too few pupils achieve the higher Level 5, particularly in writing and science. More able pupils have not made sufficient progress based on their test results when they were in Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. Pupils enjoy school and have very good relationships with each other. Behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and at breaks. Attendance is significantly better than the national average. The vast majority of parents agree that their children like school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are strengths in the teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in the teaching of reading across the school. In Years 3 and 4, insufficient attention is paid to why pupils make inadequate progress in writing and mathematics and addressing this weakness. Pupils genuinely appreciate the good range of extra-curricular activities. They feel safe in school and know that adults will always listen to them. The recently appointed headteacher, through good self-evaluation, has identified the need to improve the rate of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 and for more able children in reception. As a result of new initiatives, there are clear signs that pupils' progress in writing is getting better. Standards and provision in the Foundation Stage (reception) are satisfactory and identified by the headteacher as a key area of focus. The school has the clear capacity to build on the satisfactory progress made since the last inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, make the faster progress of which they are capable.
- Build on the good initiatives already in place to improve provision in the Foundation Stage, especially in meeting the needs of more able children.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards are significantly above average. Most pupils achieve the expected Level 4 in the national tests and there is a clear trend of year-on-year improvement. Standards in mathematics are better than those in English and science. In mathematics, pupils' ability to interpret graphs is impressive. In English, particularly writing, and science, too few of the more able pupils achieve the higher Level 5. Since Year 2, they have not made the progress of which they are capable. The school's own data shows clearly that too many pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4. As a result, more able pupils have too much to catch up on in Years 5 and 6 in writing, mathematics and science. When

children start school in reception, most have skills which exceed expectations for four-year-olds. In reception, progress is satisfactory and most exceed the goals they are expected to achieve by the time they start Year 1. However, more able children do not make enough progress and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 2 are consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress and achievement in Years 1 and 2 are good. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, with most doing really well to achieve the levels expected of them in national tests.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and work hard. As one pupil said, 'I really appreciate all the opportunities we are given in this school'. Behaviour is exemplary. Relationships between pupils are very good. Great emphasis is placed on friendship as something which really matters to them. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their very good attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They enjoy recognising and celebrating each other's successes. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They work and play together successfully. Through the curriculum, especially art and religious education, pupils develop a good understanding of how people live in other cultures. Their understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain is satisfactory and an area for further development. Pupils are very aware of the need to keep fit and healthy. Many explain that 'we need to eat five pieces of fruit and vegetables each day' as part of a healthy diet. Through the school council and 'Anti-bullying Week', pupils have the opportunity to express their views on how to stop bullying. They know the importance of staying safe and the dangers of smoking and drugs. Pupils contribute to the community by distributing harvest festival produce and by taking part in music festivals. By Year 6, most have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to prepare them successfully for future life in society.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are keen to learn and many parents are confident that their child is making progress. Whilst good teaching occurs, it is inconsistent. Some weaknesses in planning and assessment mean that the most able pupils, for example, in some mixed-age classes, do not always make the progress they should. Teachers use a variety of strategies to keep pupils interested in their work, but the pace of teaching does not consistently demand enough of them. Where used, new resources such as interactive whiteboards hold pupils' attention well and help to enliven teaching. Teaching assistants also make an important contribution. The school recognises the need to improve teaching in the Foundation Stage. The best marking is giving pupils clear pointers about what they need to do to make progress. However,

its quality is not consistent in all classes. Where targets have been introduced, such as in English, they are driving up standards because pupils know what they have to do to improve their work. Systems for assessing how well pupils are doing identify where there are gaps in learning. However, these processes are not firmly established in all subjects or in all year groups to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to plan for all groups of pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory, providing pupils with a broad and interesting range of work. A systematic review of the curriculum is leading to improvements in literacy, and a specialist teacher from a secondary school is contributing successfully to the teaching of more able pupils in Year 6. Good features include opportunities for older pupils to learn French, residential visits and swimming for pupils in Year 3. The school has improved its use of computers to enhance learning and is continuing to develop this further. The planning in the reception class is not based firmly enough on the regular assessment of what children already know. Some of the activities do not always challenge the most able pupils in reception and in Years 3 to 6. The 'themed week' on creative arts provides pupils with exciting experiences they may not get during normal lessons. Pupils develop their self-confidence and independence as they decide through the school council their choice of playground equipment and the charities they wish to support. Out-of-school clubs and activities are successful in developing a wide range of interests and enjoyment. A variety of activities, such as sports, music and drama, extends pupils' skills well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Schoolbased surveys and the pre-inspection questionnaire show a high level of parental and pupil satisfaction with the school. The school's caring ethos values all children. Child protection procedures are robust and staff are regularly updated. Positive relationships with adults enable pupils to feel well supported. The arrangements for supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. A good feature is that pupils are given individual targets in English to improve their work in writing. The school monitors pupils' attainment closely at the end of each school year, although this information is not always used as well as it could be to extend pupils' learning. Strategies to promote good behaviour are consistently applied so that children feel safe and secure. Class discussions are used regularly to promote emotional well-being and social skills. The school takes effective action to deal with bullying and pupils know where to go for help. Teaching assistants support vulnerable children well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, the recently appointed headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She has a clear vision and the drive and determination to bring about the necessary improvements. In a short time, she has identified critical areas for development, such as provision in the Foundation Stage and the progress pupils make in Years 3 to 6. These have been set out in an interim school improvement plan and positive actions already taken are beginning to bring about change. In addition, she has ensured that issues raised in the last inspection, such as improving the provision for and use of ICT, and the monitoring and evaluation structures in the school, have been effectively resolved. She is well supported by the school staff. Parents and pupils are consulted through questionnaires in order to seek their views on the school. These views are taken into consideration in producing the school improvement plan. Senior staff and key subject co-ordinators now have a significantly more active role in monitoring the work of the school. Staff responsibilities are being revised and senior managers undertake regular observations of teaching. They have begun to use the results of tests and their own observations of pupils' work to monitor pupils' progress more critically. Many governors have had a close and extended connection with the school. As a result of the thorough review undertaken by the new headteacher, they have a good understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has carried out most of its statutory duties effectively over time. However, it now needs to be more rigorous in challenging aspects of the school's performance, particularly pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. In particular, may I thank the School Council for talking to us about your school. These are some of the things we found your school to be successful in. • Your behaviour is excellent. • You clearly enjoy school and we are impressed with your attendance. • You feel safe in school and know that all the adults are there to help you if you have a problem. • Many of you told us how much you enjoy all the clubs that are provided for you. • We think that you work well in lessons. • You enjoy celebrating each other's work, as we saw in the Sharing Assembly. There are two important things that your headteacher, teachers and governors need to do in order to make your school even better. • They need to make sure that those of you in Years 3 and 4 make the best possibly progress in your learning. • They need to continue to make the improvements that have already started to make learning really exciting and challenging for those of you in reception. Yours sincerely David Curtis Lead inspector