



Brighton Avenue Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108368
Local Authority Gateshead
Inspection number 288080
Inspection dates 5–6 October 2006
Reporting inspector Gianna Ulyatt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brighton Road
School category	Community		Gateshead, Tyne and Wear
Age range of pupils	3–11		NE8 1XS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 4218080
Number on roll (school)	185	Fax number	0191 4210775
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Steve Potts
		Headteacher	Mrs Moira Pallent
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 5–6 October 2006	Inspection number 288080
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brighton Avenue is an inner city school and includes a resource base for pupils with emotional and social difficulties. A number of pupils have recently been integrated from nearby schools that are scheduled for closure. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high compared with the national average and around 20% of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average. Over half the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this is much higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school where staff work hard to overcome barriers to pupils' progress. Parents are pleased with the work of the school and they are satisfied that their children are safe and well cared for. Most pupils enjoy school and know that they can always talk to a caring adult if they need to. Pupils say that there is no bullying and the 'Brighton Buddies' are on hand should anyone need help. The school has worked hard to improve attendance although it remains below average. The breakfast club is popular and ensures that pupils have a healthy meal before they start their lessons. Behaviour is satisfactory and parents say the behaviour policy has been clearly explained to them. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibilities, for example, through membership of the school council. By the time the pupils are ready for secondary school, they have the basic skills necessary for their next stage of learning and their future economic well-being.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery with very poor communication and mathematical skills. Recently, provision in the Foundation Stage has improved dramatically and it is now good. The establishment of a new Foundation Stage Unit, which is well managed, is having a good impact on provision and the children's progress, which is good. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. In Key Stage 1, the 2006 test results show that a declining trend over previous years has been halted, though standards are still below average. In Key Stage 2, the test results at the end of Year 6 are also below average and they dipped in 2006; standards in mathematics are not high enough.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2, where work is not always matched accurately to pupils' abilities. Relationships are good and pupils try hard to please their teachers. Teachers make good use of resources to motivate pupils and help them to concentrate on their work. However, the teachers do not always take enough account of what pupils already know. On such occasions, the work set for the pupils lacks challenge and does little to encourage them to think for themselves. This is the main reason why standards, particularly in mathematics, are lower than they should be.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and follows national guidelines. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities outside the school day and these are very popular with pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's evaluation of its work is accurate and the senior staff are aware of what needs to be improved. Because of this, and because of recent improvements, the school shows that it has a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the work set for pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 challenges them and matches their needs and abilities.
- Raise standards in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory although standards for both boys and girls are below average.

The children enter the Nursery with very low levels of attainment. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage although the standards they achieve by the time they are ready for Year 1 are below those expected for children of this age. Nevertheless, they are well taught, especially in reading and listening.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards are below average but improving. The 2006 test results for Year 2 pupils were an improvement on those of the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics, and more pupils exceeded the level expected for their age.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. The pattern of national test results for Year 6 have been below average for some time and the 2006 test results showed a decline in mathematics, which is the weakest subject. Pupils who had been at the school for all of their junior years reached the levels that their teachers expected in English and science, but not in mathematics. This is largely because mathematics lessons, in particular, do not challenge pupils enough and do not have enough emphasis on problem-solving and getting the pupils to think for themselves.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of good support in lessons. Most pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as the majority of pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in developing their personal skills. Pupils like school; they are welcoming and friendly towards visitors and engage them confidently in conversation. Attendance is below average although the school does everything it can to improve matters, including rewards. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils try to please their teachers in lessons.

Spiritual development is promoted effectively through reflection time in assembly and the grace before lunch. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the European-African project and know about the different cultures which make up modern British society. They are enthusiastic participants in charity work, which reflects a concern for those less fortunate in the world. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and care for younger ones. They have a clear understanding about healthy lifestyles and are increasingly taking up the healthy food options at mealtimes and engaging in a good range of sports activities. Participation in enterprise projects gives pupils an understanding of financial skills and promotes team work; this provides them with a valuable insight into the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and good in the Foundation Stage Unit. In the Foundation Stage, the sensitive interaction between adults and children results in increasingly good concentration and the development of good listening skills. Activities are well matched to children's stages of development and the detailed plans support teaching and learning well. As a result, children make good progress and there is challenge in all they do.

Throughout the school, teachers interest pupils and motivate them to learn. Relationships are good so pupils try their best. Teachers plan competently, but in Key Stages 1 and 2 there is little evidence of a consistent approach in the way assessments are used to make sure the work provided matches different levels of ability. Therefore, activities are sometimes too difficult for some pupils and too hard for others and this slows progress for all. In some lessons, pupils are challenged to think and engage in collaborative activities and discussion. In other lessons, teachers are satisfied with short and simple answers to their questions and do not encourage more complex and thoughtful solutions. This means that pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills are insufficiently developed, especially in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and the school makes satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The school benefits from links with other organisations such as the Primary Care Trust and holds the Healthy schools and Eco schools awards. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of how to lead a healthy life.

The curriculum includes sound provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. It is enriched through a range of international projects, residential and local visits. Pupils particularly enjoy mixing with others from local schools during sporting events. Clubs outside the school day are popular and make a significant contribution to pupils' health, social development and well-being. Provision in the Foundation Stage has greatly improved and children now have many opportunities to make choices and take responsibility for their own learning, both in the outside and indoor environments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Staff visit children in their homes before they start in the Nursery and this helps them to feel at ease in new surroundings. Procedures for protecting children and safeguarding their welfare are in place. The

school makes very good use of external agencies to make sure that pupils with emotional difficulties are given effective support and to ensure that they make good progress. Pupils say they particularly like the nurture group because 'you can go there whenever you feel nervous'. The learning mentor helps pupils discuss issues in confidence and this helps them cope better in lessons. Although assessment procedures are in place, the information is not used consistently to plan work for individuals and groups of pupils at the appropriate level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school uses its resources effectively and gives satisfactory value for money.

The headteacher is well supported by an enthusiastic management team and by a core of committed and knowledgeable governors who discharge their responsibilities well. Together, through accurate self-evaluation, they have a clear view about what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement and there has been a satisfactory recent improvement. The management, the teaching and children's progress in the Foundation Stage are better and the decline in standards in Key Stage 1 has been checked. However, standards are not rising in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, given the accuracy of the school's identification of its strengths and weaknesses and its recent improvement, the school shows a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Brighton Avenue Primary School

Brighton Road

Gateshead

Tyne and Wear

NE8 1XS

5 October 2006

Dear Pupils

First of all, I would like to thank you all for being so helpful, kind and polite during our visit to your school. We really enjoyed talking with you about your work, the meals you enjoy and your varied interests. You were so helpful and friendly. Well done!

We like the way your teachers and all the other adults care for you and give you the chance to learn new things, in lessons and in the activities you do after school. Most of you try to listen to your teachers and you try to concentrate in lessons.

It was nice to see the way you care for each other and the way the 'Brighton Buddies' make sure you are safe and have friends when playing outside. We like the way you welcome newcomers to your school so no one is left out. We know you like school very much, especially the healthy activities.

As you know, we saw some of your lessons and thought they were interesting. Teachers use the interactive white boards well to help you concentrate and there are plenty of adults in classes to help you when you get stuck or feel uncomfortable or nervous. We have asked your teachers to think about some more ways in which they can make the work more interesting for you. We have asked them to make sure the work is different for various groups of pupils so that you will all make faster progress. We especially want you to try harder in mathematics, and we want the teachers to stretch your brains as far as they can in this subject.

You have many good friends in your school. Don't lose them and try to keep up these friendships, even when you move to the secondary school.

Yours sincerely

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector