

Bramingham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109594
Local Authority	LUTON
Inspection number	288442
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Mardle
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Flowers
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Freeman Avenue Luton Bedfordshire LU3 4BL
Telephone number	01582 617500
Fax number	01582 617501

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average for its type. It is situated on the northern side of Luton but takes pupils from across the town. A below average proportion of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school has an above average number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of the pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has an above average number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. This is because there are twelve places allocated for pupils with physical and medical difficulties, as well as an above average number of pupils with learning or behavioural needs. There are twenty-two pupils with statements of special need entitling them to extra support. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies widely from year to year and within cohorts. However, the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities means that overall it is often below that typically found.

The school has achieved an Activemark award, an Artsmark award and a Healthy School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education with exceptionally high levels of care which are especially appropriate given the nature of many of the pupils. It is a very inclusive school and enables pupils with varied and differing needs to make equally outstanding progress in learning and in their personal development. It meets its aims in full, especially that referring to 'a positive learning environment where there will be mutual respect between all members of the school'.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the time pupils leave the school. This represents outstanding progress for the vast majority. The school is very self-critical and recognises that standards in writing could be further improved. Children make good progress in the Reception classes and many are on track to meet the levels expected at that age.

Outstanding progress is made throughout the rest of the school. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make exceptional progress due to the excellent provision made for them. One parent wrote about her child, saying 'Not only has his challenging behaviour significantly decreased, his learning has significantly increased.' The school also works hard to ensure more able pupils and those who are gifted and talented are not forgotten and they too make excellent progress.

The success of the school is the result of the outstanding leadership demonstrated by the headteacher and her senior leadership team. All working in the school have a clear direction and focus on achieving and maintaining high standards. In addition, the school is not complacent and is continually looking to improve further. This has led to a recognised need to revisit the curriculum planning as, currently, there are insufficient cross-curricular links and the curriculum does not have sufficient focus on encouraging creativity. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate and leads to improvement.

The pupils' personal development is outstanding and this has a major impact on their learning and is evident in the high levels of behaviour and maturity many pupils demonstrate. They love being at school. They have an exceptional knowledge and understanding of health, safety and environmental issues, and the school promotes a very high level of community cohesion. The school works hard to ensure pupils understand issues affecting the wider world as well as taking on local community responsibilities. The school is exceptionally good at preparing pupils for their future lives. There are high levels of care and support for pupils, ensuring excellent inclusion. The teaching is outstanding, promoting effective learning and excellent progress. The school has recently begun to develop an improved computerised system for tracking pupils' progress. The school has planned further training and opportunities to use this information to ensure their planning is even more closely matched to pupils' needs. The success of the school, the high quality leadership and the improvements made since the last inspection show that the school provides outstanding value for money and has exceptional capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by developing more meaningful opportunities and making more use of speaking and drama to inspire.
- Develop the curriculum to ensure better cross curricular links and more opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school. This represents outstanding progress measured against their attainment on entry to the school. A high focus on literacy and numeracy skills, together with science, ensures that achievement of pupils is outstanding. Progress varies between classes due to some inconsistencies in the teaching but the overall picture is very positive, and the school is very effective in recognising and addressing underachievement. In the Reception classes, the good quality of the provision ensures children make good progress and by the end of the year they have good communication and language skills and have developed into effective learners. Throughout the school there are above average standards evident in art and design, and in pupils' personal, health and social education. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make outstanding progress, and the progress of those who are recognised as gifted and talented, or who have English as an additional language is also excellent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because the school places such a high priority on helping pupils become mature and effective learners. Even with a significant minority of pupils who have found it difficult fitting in at other schools, behaviour is excellent, and this is due to the very effective relationships all adults have with pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In particular, pupils have a real understanding of the needs of others through the very good links the school has with a school in Ghana. They demonstrate real care for each other as well, and a pupil who only recently joined the school praised the level of care he had found, as well as the high quality support offered by the peer mentor system. Attendance is good. The medical needs of some pupils have an impact on the figures but the school clearly works hard to encourage full attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils. Some of the teaching remains satisfactory but the headteacher and senior staff provide very effective support to help improve the consistency of provision throughout the school. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils. This is particularly effective with those who have social or emotional problems and who find school life difficult. These pupils are very well cared for and encouraged to achieve levels that their parents often find surprising. The teachers are supported by excellent teaching assistants. Their work supports the overall excellent achievement, especially for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, and enables them to access the full curriculum. Pupils are managed effectively, the best lessons have a very good pace and resources used are appropriate for all pupils. In particular good efforts are made to provide excellent resources for those with learning difficulties or disabilities to help them access the full curriculum, demonstrating the school's very inclusive nature. Teachers are making good use of information and communication technology as a resource and a tool for their teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides pupils with an appropriate range of learning activities, covering all subjects required plus some lessons in French. The school has begun work to develop a more thematic and creative curriculum to enable teachers to make appropriate links between subjects so that pupils can see more relevance in the work they are asked to do. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including residential visits. The school makes excellent use of many visits and visitors to help bring learning to life. In addition, older pupils have good opportunities to develop their wider economic understanding through mini-enterprise work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding because the school offers such high levels of care for all of the pupils regardless of their need or background. This has a very positive impact on their learning and supports the excellent progress made even by the pupils who have had the most challenging backgrounds. The family workers provide extra support alongside the high quality medical care provided as required. This all supports outstanding inclusion so that, for example, all pupils are able to access activities such as residential visits. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is outstanding and supports the excellent progress they make. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and they use this information when planning lessons. High quality marking of pupils' work helps them understand what they need to do to improve. There is equal emphasis on the achievement of the most as well as the least able. The recently improved systems for tracking progress over time are clearly aimed at providing even more powerful information for staff. This has yet to become embedded or training provided to help teachers make best use of the available data. Pupils say they feel safe in school and they are talk of the trust they have in all staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is expertly led by a dynamic, knowledgeable and caring headteacher. She receives excellent support from her deputy headteacher and senior leadership team. The school promotes leadership by all staff members and this is evident in the ethos of teamwork and care for all the pupils. The school's self evaluation is excellent and provides a firm basis for improvement through the development planning. There is a clear focus on providing the best possible for pupils. Continuous improvement is ensured by effectively monitoring the teaching and learning. In addition, areas for improvement such as that recognised in the curriculum are addressed rapidly and as a whole school. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and offer good support for its work. Many of them are regular visitors to the school and report back to the governors on the provision observed. The senior staff have excellent systems for monitoring the work of the school. Where areas for improvement are recognised, they are quickly and effectively acted upon. The school's effectiveness is recognised by the parents and most of them are happy with the links between home and school. There are excellent links with a wide range of outside agencies and these are of clear and lasting benefit to the pupils. The school runs smoothly and is very well-managed.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

29 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bramingham Primary School, Luton, LU3 4BL

I want to thank those of you who I met and talked to during my recent visit. You were very helpful and also obviously very keen to talk about how good you feel the school is. I agree with you. I think your school is outstanding and you are very lucky to be pupils there. Your parents are also very happy with the school.

There are a lot of very good things about the school but I especially like the way adults work so hard to help all of you, whether you find learning difficult or easy.

The school is a very caring place and I think from talking to you that it is helping you to become very caring people too.

You all work very hard and the school is very successful at helping you learn new things. The teachers work outstandingly well to help you learn and their marking is very helpful to you. Your behaviour is excellent and this helps the teachers teach you, and you all seem to get on together well. You told me there is very little bullying or name calling.

Even the best schools have things they want to improve. Mrs Flowers and the teachers will make the school even more successful when they have helped you get even better at writing, and planned more work that makes links between subjects and gives you the chance to be even more creative. The school has got a new system for recording how well you are doing and teachers need some training in how to make the best use of this.

Once again, thank you for your help. Enjoy your time at Bramingham and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector