



Brisbane Park Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112199
Local Authority Cumbria
Inspection number 289200
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Bradley HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Blake Street
School category	Community		Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria
Age range of pupils	4–7		LA14 1NY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01229 894630
Number on roll (school)	130	Fax number	01229 894631
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Ron Smith
		Headteacher	Mrs Pat Burton
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

Age group 4–7	Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006	Inspection number 289200
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Brisbane Park is located in Hindpool, one of the oldest parts of Barrow-in-Furness. It is an area of considerable social deprivation with significant levels of unemployment. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen slightly following a reduction in admission numbers. Over a third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals – well over twice the national average. Nearly all of the pupils are of White British heritage and about a fifth reside outside the school's catchment area. Attainment on entry is below average, especially in social and language skills. Most children have attended a local nursery school with which Brisbane Park has links. Some pupils from Brisbane Park attend the before and after school care which this nursery provides as part of its extended services as a Sure Start Children's Centre. Most pupils go on to a neighbouring junior school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which has made significant strides in developing the overall education provided for pupils in recent years. From a low baseline, the pupils make good progress and they achieve well. Standards overall are satisfactory. Since the appointment of the current headteacher there have been significant changes in the management and operation of the school, not all of which have had time to bear fruit. These appropriate changes include: revising the curriculum and the amounts of time allocated to subjects; the use of assessments; and the establishment of learning targets to address more accurately the needs of the pupils.

The quality of work in the Foundation Stage is good overall and standards are satisfactory. Provision successfully promotes pupils' personal and social development and builds upon the experiences which the majority have had at the nearby nursery school and pupils' centre. Children settle quickly into school: they enjoy their work, cooperate well with one another and show high levels of involvement in the tasks which they are set.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. The revision of the curriculum in 2005/06 to provide more time for foundation subjects is appropriate. This development is being followed by planned improvements to the procedures for tracking, assessment and target-setting. However, the tracking of pupils' progress remains underdeveloped and the targets set for the pupils in English and mathematics require greater challenge. Liaison with both the nursery school and the junior school is satisfactory overall, but ensuring continuity of the assessment process is underdeveloped. Parents are highly supportive of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that challenging targets are set for all pupils in English and mathematics.
- Develop, implement and monitor the tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school year.
- Liaise with the nursery and junior schools to develop greater continuity of assessments.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

At the end of Key Stage 1 standards have previously been above, and are currently close to, national expectations. This represents good progress, given the pupils' levels of attainment on entry.

Standards in mathematics are at least satisfactory. There is a good range of mathematical topics which enables pupils to make good progress through practical work. Standards in English are good overall, although writing focuses on aspects such as punctuation and structure rather than linking these to the use of language and vocabulary to express more complex ideas in extended pieces of work. The school

works hard to develop speaking and listening skills and the pupils make good progress. They are confident in providing extended answers and explanations.

Provision in the Foundation Stage enhances children's social skills and their attitudes towards their work. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The school intends to develop its links with the nursery school, including making increased use of the nursery's assessments. Parents spoke highly of the pupils' enjoyment of their school work and their positive attitudes towards learning. The broadening of the curriculum in 2005/06, and the resulting timetable changes to provide more time for aspects such as humanities and physical education (PE), has broadened pupils' achievement. These developments have also supported pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). The careful monitoring by the special needs coordinator has enabled identified pupils to make good progress throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school considered that personal development and well-being are good and the inspectors agree. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In assemblies pupils are able to reflect and to consider others' points of view and feelings. Social and academic achievements are celebrated effectively. The pupils' behaviour is good and they are thoughtful towards each other. The school deals effectively with any minor incidents of bullying. Attendance is good and above the national average. As parents noted, the pupils enjoy coming to school and are settled and confident in school. The pupils adopt safe practices and are encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle. Awareness of racial equality is developed well. The school supports a range of charities, notably the NSPCC in recent years, and is associated with local regeneration projects, some of which involve the school grounds and adjoining areas. These projects include some elements of conservation work which, along with the pupils' development of basic skills, provide them with an early awareness linked to their future well-being.

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Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching in the lessons seen ranged from satisfactory to outstanding: overall it was good. The pupils show good attitudes towards their work. Teachers have a good subject knowledge which enables them to provide a suitable range of learning experiences for the pupils. The support given to pupils

with LDD is good. It enables them to make good progress. Teaching assistants are used well in most activities and in the best lessons are able to use their initiative to promote the pupils' concentration and learning. This was particularly evident in a Reception class PE lesson where the assistant not only provided support for one child, but also ensured that others continued to concentrate. Reading books and learning journals support the good relationships between home and school.

The recently introduced procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress provide subject specific targets for individual pupils. Currently however, teachers do not consistently provide a sufficiently high level of challenge for all pupils either in the work they provide or the targets they set.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The inspectors agree with the school's view that the curriculum is good. The school has made several major changes to its curriculum since 2004. Developments in the Foundation Stage have had a major impact on expectations and on the work in Years 1 and 2. Staff recognise that the children's personal, social and physical development, for example their ability to handle tools and other small items of equipment, has improved significantly as a result of these changes. Teachers have taken the opportunity to extend their teaching of core subjects by applying the pupils' knowledge across the curriculum. In English the range of writing has been extended effectively. Other subjects, such as humanities and PE, receive increased consideration. Whilst parallel classes plan together effectively, within each year group there are occasional variations in the amount of time given to subjects. Education for safety and health is good. There is a good range of outside visitors. Clubs are mainly organised in the spring and summer terms and include story sacks with librarian support, music and gardening activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good quality care and support for its pupils. The school works effectively to provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which pupils can make good progress. The staff provide a good quality of care for the pupils and are highly committed to promoting their health and safety. Risk assessments are carefully attended to and regularly updated. Any pupils with particular needs are quickly identified and arrangements put into place to support them. The school works well with parents and other agencies.

The school provides satisfactory guidance for its pupils. Staff pay careful attention to supporting the pupils through detailed lesson planning, good marking of their work and useful comments to individual pupils on their progress. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are being developed and staff are now able to identify gaps in pupils' attainment. Target-setting for pupils remains at an early stage of development and has yet to become fully evident in whole class and individual work.

The local authority's suggestions for developing clearer guidelines for assessment judgements are being adopted, but have yet to be embedded in classroom work. Assessments are beginning to take greater account of the sub-levels within the National Curriculum levels, and the school intends to give pupils subject-specific targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in 2003 the school has made major strides in developing its management structures. Staff now play a significant part in writing policies and making decisions and policies have been established in line with current national requirements. The governors have been given a more significant role in supporting the school as a critical friend. The Foundation Stage has a clearly identified curriculum and resources distinct from Key Stage 1. Other developments, particularly in the areas of self-evaluation, target-setting and assessment are being established and here the school recognises that it still has much to do to ensure that the pupils' achievement is sustained across all subjects of the National Curriculum. The school has rightly identified these as requiring improvement.

The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate. It is, however, descriptive rather than evaluative and analytic. It does not take account of the most up-to-date information about the school's performance.

The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Resources are well used and the school has culled out-of-date materials. The school works effectively with community groups, notably as part of area regeneration activities. Good links exist with parents and welfare agencies. The effect of these is seen in the good progress made by the pupils on most fronts, notably in their good relationships with one another, their sense of security and well-being.

The leadership and management provide the school with a good capacity to improve further.

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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?	2
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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
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?	2
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?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Brisbane Park Infant School

Blake Street

Barrow-in-Furness

Cumbria

LA14 1NY

7 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome you gave to Mrs Elton and myself when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and really appreciated the help you gave us, especially in sharing your work and ideas about the school. It was good to see how much you enjoy school.

We think that Brisbane Park is a good school. We saw that you work hard and get on well with each other. We were impressed by your politeness and your good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Your teachers and the other staff work very hard to help you with your work and the other activities in school.

We have asked the school to give each of you targets for your work, especially in English and mathematics, and to continue to make regular checks on your progress. We have also asked them to develop closer links with the nursery and junior schools by sharing information on your work and what you can do.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Bradley

Her Majesty's Inspector