



# Brampton Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112405  
**Local Authority** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 289274  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Stafford Evans

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Sawmill Lane
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Brampton, Cumbria
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		CA8 1BZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01697 72653
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	201	<b>Fax number</b>	01697 742157
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Martyn Watson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Geof Walker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Brampton is an average sized junior school situated near the town centre in an area with a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The school has an above average rate of pupil mobility, with a number of children attending from the local RAF base. All pupils are from White British backgrounds and no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average and below average for those who have a statement of special educational need. Attainment on entry to the school is usually broadly average, although this year's intake attained above average standards in the Year 2 national assessments.

There is an acting headteacher and leadership team, which has been in place since September 2006. The school has started consulting on the possibility of an amalgamation with the neighbouring Infant 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 with outstanding features that gives good value for money. The good leadership of the acting headteacher is pivotal in the school's drive to build on the good foundation established in recent years. He is ably supported by the acting assistant headteachers, good governance and a highly motivated and capable staff. The school has a good capacity to sustain the good improvements made since the last inspection.

The work of the staff is closely monitored, evaluated and supported. This ensures that weaknesses in provision are quickly identified and rectified. For example, the dip in writing standards in 2006 is being successfully addressed. Also, weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work in some lessons are being tackled effectively through well-targeted advice and support.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know their pupils well. Work is generally planned carefully to match their varying needs. Teachers plan and prepare interesting lessons. Teaching assistants provide skilled support in lessons. As a result of this positive teaching, pupils make good progress in lessons and attain above average standards. Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. However, some more able pupils are capable of attaining even higher standards. Although they are given harder work than other pupils, it is not always hard enough to ensure that they attain as highly as they should.

Pupils' personal development and relationships are outstanding. Their moral and social development is excellent and their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are confident and treat each other with mutual respect. They show a capacity for reflection and curiosity. The very caring and supportive ethos created in the school fosters these positive characteristics. Pupils enjoy going to school and this is reflected in the above average attendance. Behaviour is excellent. There is a relaxed atmosphere in which pupils thrive. They feel safe. They are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles; eat healthy meals and take regular exercise. Their good learning along with the school's strong emphasis on pupils' personal development ensures that they are very well prepared for the next stage of education and working life.

The excellent curriculum is extremely relevant to pupils' needs and creates a real sense of enjoyment of learning amongst pupils. Pupils are given a rich range of first-hand learning experiences, which motivate pupils very well and help them achieve well. Pupils report that learning is interesting and fun. The outstandingly wide range of extra-curricular activities helps towards the pupils' excellent contribution to the community. For example, their annual performance of a Shakespeare play at the local secondary school attracts audiences of around 1,000.

There are good arrangements for the periodic review of the work of the school. Lessons learned are fed back to staff and incorporated into the school's planning for improvement process. The school community is clear about its strengths and areas that need development. The school effectively matches training needs to areas for

development. For example, detailed training on the teaching of writing has helped increase the rate at which pupils make progress and has raised the overall standards in writing across the school. All policies are in place, including procedures for safeguarding pupils. There is a timetable for the review of policies and procedures, but there is not a regular monitoring of them in order to determine their effectiveness.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all more able pupils attain as highly as they possibly can by the time they leave the school.
- Carry out the planned review of statutory policies; monitor and assess their effectiveness.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards from an average starting point. In lessons, most pupils make good progress, but progress slows in some lessons. Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection, and the upward trend is better than the national trend. There has been good improvement in standards achieved since the last inspection.

The results of the most recent national tests were well above average in science, slightly above in mathematics and slightly below average in English. Results in English were lower than in 2005 because pupils did not do as well as they should in writing. Standards in writing are improving significantly because pupils are making consistently good progress in writing lessons. Statutory targets have been met and more challenging ones set for this year.

There is a significant number of pupils who leave or start the school during Years 3 to 6. This movement of pupils adversely affects results in the national tests. For example, in 2006, most pupils who left were attaining more highly than the incomers. Although there is some variation in the attainment of boys and girls, there is no discernible pattern. More able pupils achieve particularly well in science, and satisfactorily in English and mathematics. They are capable of making better than satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and is a key strength in the school. Their spiritual and cultural development is good. Outstanding social and moral development is rooted in the school's positive ethos and in the daily assemblies that unite the school community. The school celebrates cultural diversity with educational visits and a very good programme of visitors to school; for instance, to teach pupils Asian dance routines or talk to them about Fair Trade food production. Attendance is above average, which reflects great enjoyment pupils have of school.

Staff hold high expectations for their pupils' personal development. They show great respect for one another, enjoying warm and trusting relationships. This is reflected in the maturity and excellent attitudes they show to learning. They are eager to learn and enjoy school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils work, play, and collaborate in a mature, sensible, and safe way. They are enthusiastic, courteous, respect one another, and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils know right from wrong. They are keen to take on responsibility and play a full part in the life of the school and community. They have good opportunities to make their views known; for instance, through the school council and pupils comment they are proud to be in a school that 'values our opinions'.

Pupils say that any differences in their background and culture are respected. They are adamant that there are no racist incidents in school and that any isolated incidents of bullying are resolved promptly and very effectively. Most pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and are successfully encouraged to keep fit, by taking part in regular physical activities and eating healthy foods.

Surveys of both parents and pupils show overwhelming support and satisfaction with the school. Parents value the high level of support and guidance given to their children, many commenting that this means their children 'grow and develop extremely well' during their time in school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are typically well-planned and show clearly what is to be taught and learnt. This means that teachers and pupils are focused on what has to be achieved by the end of the lesson. This helps pupils make good progress. There is a brisk pace to lessons so pupils do a lot of work in the time available. Outstanding relationships are the cornerstone of the behaviour management and result in often exemplary behaviour in lessons. Therefore, learning is not disrupted and pupils concentrate hard on the work in hand. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught well. Teaching assistants provide good skilled support that helps pupils learn effectively.

Learning in literacy is at least good in most lessons and this has increased the rate of pupils' progress compared with last year. A typical feature of the learning is the use of drama, role-play and talk-partners that increase pupils' vocabulary and their ability to express themselves articulately. This has a great influence on the quality of pupils' written work. Another very strong feature of the teaching is the high quality marking. This helps pupils to understand what they have to do to improve their work. With pupils closely involved in the marking of work, they implement the areas for improvement quickly and successfully. As a consequence, the pace of learning accelerates and pupils attain ever increasing high standards. Unfortunately, this is not the case in a small number of lessons and progress for these pupils slows down.

Teachers' good planning ensures that work is pitched to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. The work designed for more able pupils, although harder than that planned for other pupils, is not always hard enough to really stretch some who are very capable.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum meets the needs of all pupils very well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is strong focus on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers work in year groups to plan lessons, which help them to provide relevant and interesting activities that catch pupils' interest. National guidance is used to structure the content, but this is enriched, for example, by teachers making meaningful links between different subjects enabling pupils to use narrative and descriptive writing skills in history or first-hand observation drawing in science. Pupils' experience in the classroom is enriched by visits locally and abroad, and by experts, such as a 'Roman soldier' and a banana farmer coming into school to share their knowledge. This makes the curriculum come alive for pupils. It helps them make good progress and enjoy their learning.

A particular strength is the very impressive range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils say how much they enjoy them. A very high number of pupils take part regularly in cultural, sporting, adventurous and recreational activities in the school, locality and abroad. The school has an Active Sports Mark award resulting from the excellent range of competitive and personally challenging sporting and outdoor adventurous activities it provides.

An outstanding and well-established feature is the annual Shakespeare play performed by Year 6 pupils. Teachers, pupils, and parents collaborate in an exceptionally high quality production appreciated by over 1,000 members of the local community. Participation in this performance enriches pupils' self-confidence, their understanding of teamwork and of the play itself. The impact extends beyond the classroom; as one pupil wrote in their performance diary, '...an amazing experience. I'll never forget it! It'll always be in my heart'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Good quality care and guidance is firmly rooted in the school's strong commitment to promote pupils' safety, welfare and learning. Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive clear guidance and numerous opportunities to develop their individual abilities and interests. Pupils receive very good day-to-day personal support from their teachers and teaching assistants, which helps them to become a secure part of the very cohesive school community.

Thorough arrangements assess and track pupils' progress, support them in their learning and give them challenging short-term targets in lessons. Pupils' good overall progress confirms the effectiveness of these systems.

Systems for the safeguarding, racial equality and inclusion of all pupils are in place, as are checks to ensure the suitability of adults to work with children and thorough risk assessments for the numerous educational visits. However, some of these systems are planned for review this year and there is insufficient monitoring by governors or staff to assess regularly their impact on provision.

The school provides a safe environment for pupils, which has been enhanced by recent improvement to the buildings.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher, ably supported by the acting assistant headteachers and subject leaders, ensures that the transition from the previous leadership is seamless and continues the drive for school improvement. There is no sense of marking time until the appointment of a new leadership team. The many good features of the school are being built on very effectively. New priorities are being tackled with skill and speed. For example, the school's response to the significant drop in writing standards in 2006 has been swift and extremely well focused. The right actions have been taken to remedy the situation. An analysis of what went wrong and what needed to be improved has been the catalyst for improved teaching and better progress. This is in turn leading to higher standards. The very good in-service training has been central to the leaders' strategy for bringing about improvements.

Teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated very effectively and help is provided when required. For example, in lessons where progress slows, advice and support is provided by senior staff to help bring about improvements. This is particularly the case in the steps being taken to improve the quality of marking pupils' work. Also, the good leadership provided by the coordinator for the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is helping to improve the quality of support available in lessons. The school's leaders have thorough systems for monitoring pupils' progress. They use this information well to help the school meet challenging targets. In many aspects of the life of the school, expectations of pupils are extremely high. These high expectations are not fully extended to the academic targets set for the more able pupils.

Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good support to bring about improvements. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school is well placed to bring about further improvements. There is a sense within the school that it is ready to 'really take off'.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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

Brampton Junior School

Sawmill Lane

Brampton

Cumbria

CA8 1BZ

6 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for helping us to find out what your school is like. Special thanks to the groups of pupils who met with us. You go to a good school in which there are some things that are far better than we usually see in other schools. The way teachers bring learning to life for you through first-hand experiences is excellent. The very wide range of out-of-school activities help to make your learning very interesting. Your trips abroad and the magnificent Shakespeare production are just two.

You are taught well and make good progress in lessons. Your work helps you learn new skills and knowledge at a fast rate. However, some of you are capable of doing even harder work and reaching even higher standards.

The school provides a high level of care for you and work skilfully to develop your personal well-being. This results in your excellent behaviour; knowing how to lead healthy lives and how to stay safe. You are well prepared for the next stage of your education.

Your school is well led and the headteacher and staff have been able to pinpoint why you did not do as well in writing in the 2006 tests as you should have. They have taken the right steps to improve matters and now your writing is of a high standard. Well done to everyone. The teachers in school work very closely with the governors. They are going to look at the systems they have in place to help the school run smoothly. We have asked them to check these systems to make sure that they work well or need some improvements to them. Through your school council, you can play a part in this job by making your views known.

You already play a very important part in your school; to make an even bigger difference you should all aim to attain that little bit higher. The school has very high expectations of you, match their expectations and try to do your very best at all times.

Yours sincerely

Stafford Evans

Lead Inspector