



Brimington Manor Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112518
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289309
Inspection date 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Manor Road
School category	Community		Brimington Common, Brimington Common
Age range of pupils	3-7		Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 1NT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01246234078
Number on roll (school)	88	Fax number	01246234078
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Stuart Yates
		Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Smith
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school in a semi-rural area of private and council housing on the outskirts of Chesterfield. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than in most schools. Most pupils are White British and there are no pupils in the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is very low and there are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school has received Bronze, Silver and Green Flag ECO Awards, The Healthy Promoting School Award, The Basic Skills Mark and an ActiveMark for Physical Education (PE).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspector agrees with the school that this is an effective and improving school which gives good value for money. It is a school which places the needs of the pupils firmly at the centre of all its work. Passionate leadership by the headteacher, along with her able and hardworking team, has ensured that high standards have been maintained whilst the drive for further improvement has continued. A particular success of the school is the remarkably caring ethos that the headteacher, with her staff and governors, has established. This values all individuals and creates a nurturing environment in which pupils thrive and become very well rounded individuals. It is no surprise therefore that parents are highly appreciative of the school. One wrote: 'Brimington Manor Infants is a school that is well run and all the staff gel really well as a team. My children enjoy going to school, and I believe that it is because the teachers make it fun to learn.'

The school is happy and harmonious because it ensures that personal development is outstanding. Behaviour and relationships are exemplary so that not a moment is lost maintaining discipline in lessons or around school. Because children are encouraged to express their opinions and to accept responsibilities, many develop confidence beyond their years. Pupils enjoy working together, playing together and helping each other. They are well aware of how to keep safe and make healthy lifestyle choices. The combination of these highly developed personal, social and emotional skills with good basic skills equips pupils well for the next stage of their education and life.

Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully, linking subjects to make learning meaningful and fun. Pupils really value the outstanding curriculum, which offers them lots of practical activities and topic work that they enjoy. As a result, achievement and standards are good. Pupils begin school with average levels of knowledge, skills and understanding and are able to achieve standards that are above those expected for their age, by the time they leave the school. Those who find learning more difficult get effective support from teaching assistants and the learning mentor so that they also make good progress. Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Staff get to know each child so that pastoral needs can be met extremely effectively. Systems for academic guidance are new and not yet as strong. Not all pupils are clear about their next stages of learning and how to achieve them.

The headteacher has worked extremely hard and with great success to address the weaknesses in leadership and management which were found at the last inspection. Improved teamwork and systems for checking on the work of the school have ensured that leadership and management overall are now good. However, governors do not have first hand experience of monitoring school improvement work. More robust systems for gathering assessment information about pupils and keeping an eye on how well they are doing are new and not yet embedded. It is too soon to measure their impact.

The success the school has had in the past and its determination to do even better means that its capacity for sustained and future improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils know and understand the next steps of learning and how to achieve them.
- Ensure the governing body plays a full role in school improvement by checking the school's work at first hand.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Pupils enter the nursery with a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly average overall. As is often the case in a small school, the abilities of each year group vary from year to year. Pupils make a super start to their education in the Foundation Stage, where they progress well, so that by the time they start Year 1, most achieve the levels expected of them and many surpass them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to progress well so that by the time they leave the school they are achieving standards which are higher than those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties make similar progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding. Staff have very high expectations of pupils and establish extremely positive relationships with them. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exemplary and most relate very well to adults and to each other. Pupils' self-confidence and independence are strongly promoted, so that they express their views well. They are proud of their work to achieve the ECO School's Award, which has resulted in very positive attitudes to looking after their environment, both within school and beyond. Work to make sure pupils have active bodies and active minds has been successful. Pupils love their daily active sessions which include brain gym, Tai Chi and yoga. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional because opportunities for learning are planned and promoted well in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils' enjoyment of school is without doubt. They were quick to remind me of their own aims for the school which state, 'We learn together, work together and have fun together.' It is no surprise that attendance is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good. Indeed some outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection but this has yet to impact consistently over time on the progress pupils make. Teachers manage and motivate pupils very well. Parents are encouraged to join the pupils in

class for a time before registration, promoting partnership working. Lessons move at a good pace and are active, fun and appeal to everyone. Improved provision for the more able and gifted and talented pupils is beginning to raise standards. A new system for setting pupils individual targets for their learning has been introduced, but as yet, pupils are not fully aware of what they need to do to improve in reading, writing and mathematics. Some marking offers only praise without advice on how to improve. Pupils with additional learning needs are well supported. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support both teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is truly creative and has been developed to be unique to the school. It has the flexibility to be adapted to meet the changing needs of all of Brimington's pupils. It makes a considerable contribution to their outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils are excited about the many topics in which teachers link subjects together because this really brings learning to life and makes it fun. Lots of practical and problem solving activities are included that develop pupils' thinking skills well. An increased focus on language, particularly speaking and listening, mathematical development and the creative use of ICT is beginning to impact positively on standards and progress. Personal, social and health education is extremely good and is embedded in all of the school's work. Further enrichment is provided by a range of visits and visitors as well as clubs. Pupils work with local businesses, health and education partners and regularly visit museums and galleries.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a highly supportive and effective system of pastoral welfare which contributes very well to pupils' enjoyment of learning and their general well-being. They are proud to receive and are well motivated by rewards such as the 'Smile File' and 'Wow Moments'. Academic guidance for pupils is less effective because pupils are not all clear about the next target for learning or how to achieve it. This slows progress. The school has good links with other professionals and services to promote the care and welfare of pupils. The work of the learning mentor and the promotion of positive play are particularly successful in this regard. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and much improved since the last inspection. Since then, the new headteacher, supported by staff and governors, has worked hard to provide a clear vision and direction for the school, building positive relationships along the way. Together they achieve their aim to 'provide a stimulating, happy and secure environment'. All issues from the previous inspection have been addressed

successfully. Governors and the relatively new leadership team now have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how it can continue to improve. The leadership team is playing an increasing role in school improvement. The governing body is now able to carry out its statutory role and is beginning to hold the school accountable. However, governors do not yet play a full role in monitoring the work of the school through first hand experience.

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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	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	1
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	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	3
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

30 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Brimington Manor Infant School, Manor Road, Brimington Common, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 1NT

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. This letter is to tell you what I found out about it.

I think you are very lucky to go to such a good school. I saw you having so much fun and doing lots of exciting things. You are very well behaved and everyone gets on so well together. I saw you all working and playing hard in classes, having lunch together quietly and sensibly and playing and working outside too. Because all the grown ups work very hard and look after you so well you not only do well with your learning but you become very nice people too!

Everyone here is very keen to make your school as good as it can be. So, to make the school even better I have asked the teachers to make sure that you all know your star targets very well for reading, writing and mathematics. I have also asked the governors to make sure that they come in to school to check for themselves how well the school is doing.

I am sure Mrs Smith and the other staff will continue to work hard to make the school an exciting and interesting place for you. You can do your bit by continuing with your excellent behaviour and hard work.

Joanne Harvey

Lead Inspector