



Breadsall Hill Top Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112747
Local Authority City of Derby
Inspection number 289393
Inspection dates 9–10 November 2006
Reporting inspector David Speakman

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Type of school | Junior | School address | St Andrew's View |
| School category | Community | | Derby |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 | | Derbyshire DE21 4ET |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01332 341451 |
| Number on roll (school) | 207 | Fax number | 01332 341451 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mrs S Murray |
| | | Headteacher | Mr J Pierce |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 February 2001 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Breadsall Hill Top Junior School is an average sized school. It draws its pupils from the local area, which is socially mixed in character. Part of the catchment has been identified as an urban regeneration district under the New Deals for Community initiative. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need or with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. Fewer pupils than average come from minority ethnic groups and there are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. There has been a high turnover of staff recently. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The school has been awarded the Active Mark and the Health Promoting Schools standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection team agrees with the school's own evaluation that its effectiveness is satisfactory. It provides satisfactory value for money. Following a period of considerable instability and disruption to teaching and learning for many pupils, there are now real signs that this is an improving school. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but the headteacher provides purposeful leadership. The school has recruited staff wisely and the headteacher has established a strong team of enthusiastic teachers and teaching assistants who share his commitment to improving provision and raising standards. There are strong indications of recent improvements: in teaching, the curriculum, the tracking of pupils' progress and the care shown for pupils' welfare. In the light of these positive developments, the school shows a good capacity for further improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is sound with good features. The impact on achievement and standards is satisfactory because the stability in staffing has only recently been achieved and the effects of the good teaching are not yet reflected in better standards. However, there are clear signs that this is beginning to happen. The 2006 test results show that standards at Year 6 have returned to a broadly average position after dropping to below average in 2005. This improvement in test results reflects inspection findings which indicate that pupils in each year group achieve satisfactorily and attainment is broadly average. Nevertheless, there is a weakness in writing across the school, particularly amongst boys. The school has recognised this weakness and is working hard to improve it.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say the school is a much happier place now. They feel valued and safe in the school and on the playground. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils admit their behaviour is getting better because they know adults expect them to behave. Pupils contribute well to school life, especially through the school council. They adopt healthy lifestyles through eating healthily and taking part in a range of physical activities. The good curriculum is imaginative and promotes interest and enjoyment in learning. It is organised creatively to meet the learning needs of all pupils and due regard is made to their age and ability. There is a good range of well attended extra-curricular activities.

Throughout the unsettled period, the headteacher provided strong leadership. He continued to monitor provision and standards and more recently has been supported by the newly appointed deputy and assistant headteachers. Consequently, school self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, because many subject leaders are new to the role, they are not yet fully accountable for teaching, learning and standards in their subject.

What the school should do to improve further

- Urgently develop the monitoring and evaluation roles of staff with new responsibilities to support the headteacher and senior leadership team in leading further improvement.

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school.
- Improve pupils' achievement and raise standards, particularly in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in English, mathematics and science have been broadly average at the end of Year 6 for some years. Achievement was traditionally good but it dropped in 2005, following a period of high staff turnover. In 2006, test results were once again broadly average and there was an improvement in pupils' achievement over the key stage, which returned to a satisfactory level. This is pleasing as some of these pupils had experienced significant disruption to their teaching and learning. Although pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to other pupils, those in need of emotional and personal support make particularly good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. The school has rightly identified the need to raise standards in writing across the school, particularly for boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good overall. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. They have a growing understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and although they cannot always live up to the school's expectations the pupils recognise that their behaviour, which is now satisfactory, is improving. Although the acquisition of basic skills is satisfactory, important life skills are promoted effectively so that pupils are developing skills which will contribute effectively to their future economic well-being. Pupils' attendance is good; the school operates a careful and thorough approach to recording absences and gives good support to those who still need to be encouraged to attend school regularly and on time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The impact of teaching on learning and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Inspection findings indicate that teaching is improving and although there is some variation in its quality much of the teaching is good. Teachers use assessment data well to plan activities to match appropriately individual learning needs. They often assess the speed at which pupils are learning and adjust the pace of lessons to meet pupils' responses, sometimes accelerating the pace and at other times revisiting work when necessary. They mostly provide a good level of challenge, although at times work is undemanding and the pace is too slow with not enough achieved in the time available. The management of behaviour is good and is consistent throughout the school. Pupils are

aware of teachers' expectations and the consequences if they should not meet the expected standards. Teachers use a good range of strategies to make learning interesting and involve pupils, but occasionally, lessons are directed too much by the teacher and pupils are not actively involved in learning. More opportunities are needed to develop writing skills so that pupils can express ideas more effectively and present thoughts logically.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. Careful planning ensures that all statutory elements are properly covered and that the learning needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in the mixed-age classes are met. A thoughtful approach to designing interesting and meaningful activities makes sure that pupils are motivated and engaged by the work they are given. Information and communication Technology (ICT) is well developed but the school recognises that it does not always make best use of it to support pupils learning in all subjects. There are strong links in the curriculum plan to the Every Child Matters agenda with a clear emphasis on pupils enjoying their learning and achieving success. Curriculum enrichment is good, with a substantial number of extra-curricular activities. The family learning group, craft clubs and other arts programmes compliment this very effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils value the support they get from all staff who they say 'listen to what we have to say,' and when appropriate, respond to it. The learning support mentor and the teaching assistants play a very valuable role in guiding pupils who have difficulties and the former provides an effective link between home and school. The school pays careful attention to pupils' welfare. Procedures are in place to ensure that they are safe. Child protection procedures are well established and rigorously implemented. Strong links with the nearby high school help to give pupils a good basis for becoming successful in their future lives.

Teachers make good use of the information they gain from assessments. The headteacher has developed a sophisticated system to analyse the outcomes of pupils' work and teachers use this information to provide clear feedback to pupils on what they have done well and guidance on how to improve it. Pupils are involved in the assessment of their own and other's work and this reinforces their understanding of the work they do. Nevertheless, not enough attention is given to supporting pupils so that they can improve their skills in writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Following a period during which many new appointments have been made, the school has only recently achieved a settled state. The headteacher and the senior leadership team do a thorough job in monitoring pupils' achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher carefully monitor teaching and the assistant headteacher liaises closely with the upper and lower school teams. Some teachers are new to their leadership roles. They have not yet had time to develop fully their responsibilities for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and standards in their subject. Pupils and governors' views are carefully noted when establishing the school's needs and priorities for the good quality school improvement plan. It is clear in its direction for further improvement. Governance is satisfactory. There are a number of vacancies on the governing body which places a heavy burden on the small number of governors who are in post but this is not adversely affecting the ability of the governing body to fulfil roles and responsibilities to a satisfactory standard.

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Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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| 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 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

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|--|---|
| 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 | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| 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 | 3 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |

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? | 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

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| 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 | 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 | 3 |
| 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

13 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Breadsall Hill Top Junior School, St Andrew's View, Derby, DE21 4ET

We were delighted to meet you when we visited your school recently. We were made to feel very welcome and we appreciated the kindness and courtesy you showed us during those two days. We were impressed by your honesty and how you recognise for yourselves that the school is improving. We are pleased that you now enjoy being at school. You have played an important part in making things well again by behaving better. We were pleased that you appreciate your own achievements and those of other pupils. This was shown clearly in the Friday assembly, when many of you proudly received 'bricks' for doing well and placed them on 'the wall'. This showed how the whole school works together as one big team.

Your headteacher and other teachers work hard to make life in school enjoyable and pleasant for you. There is a settled feel about your school and improvement is obvious. We feel the school is moving towards an important stage when all the good work that has gone on recently will result in even greater improvement. You can play your part by continuing to enjoy school and improving your own behaviour further.

We have asked your headteacher, the staff and governors to look at making a few improvements to your school. They are to:

- Give teachers who are responsible for looking after subjects the opportunity to check on how well you are learning.
- Make sure that all lessons are as good as the very best.
- Help you to do even better in your work, particularly in writing.

We wish you all well in the future

David Speakman

Lead inspector