



# The Brook School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131602  
**Local Authority** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 293793  
**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Steffi Penny HMI

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>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Salterns Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Maidenbower
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Crawley RH10 7JE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 886521
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	196	<b>Fax number</b>	01293 889328
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rashne Everington
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Marjorie Fritz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 February 2001		

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<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 29–30 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 293793
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The school is purpose built and opened in 1999. The school changed from first school status to infant school in September 2004. It serves an area that has little economic deprivation. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below the national average. A small minority of pupils have language and communication difficulties. Most pupils are of White British heritage.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

'My eldest child looks back on his time at the Brook with great fondness. I feel privileged that my children have had such a good start to their education with staff who clearly love their job, care about children and strive for excellence in all they do!' This comment, from a parent, sums up the majority view held by the community of staff, governors, pupils and their parents. This is a well led and successful school.

Inspection evidence supports the school's self-evaluation that the overall effectiveness of The Brook School is good, with some outstanding features. The main reason for the school's effectiveness is the good quality of leadership and management, including the exceptional clear direction provided by the headteacher. As a consequence of this, the school knows itself well and staff act promptly as a team to improve what they do.

'Together Everyone Achieves More' is the school mission statement and it can be seen and heard in all that goes on. The clear focus on fulfilling this mission has created a shared way of working. The result is that the school provides a caring and respectful environment with exceptional high standards of pupils' behaviour and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. A distinctive feature of this school is the equal importance placed on the academic and personal development of all pupils.

The personal development and well-being of the pupils are outstanding. They are nurtured by the family atmosphere which is promoted by the headteacher and reflected in the outstanding welfare provided by all staff. Staff are excellent role models and help pupils enjoy their education. This support begins with seamless moves for children from the Nursery class into the Reception year and then from Reception into Year 1. This means that children make good progress when they start school and have good standards by the end of the Reception year. Those who need additional support are quickly identified and very effectively supported. This leads to outstanding progress for the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Excellent relationships are at the 'heart' of this school, supporting teaching and the carefully planned curriculum. Thus, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils' achievement is good and they reach above average standards. They have good literacy and numeracy skills by the end of Year 2. The school celebrates pupils' learning through many beautiful displays, for example vibrant writing, pirate maps and a range of cultural displays such as Aboriginal art. A Reception pupil remarked, 'I walked into the class on my first day, looked around and went Wow!'

Learning is mostly engaging because it is challenging, although this is not always the case. 'My learning is getting harder and harder and I like that' commented a pupil. However, the teaching does not always ensure the most able pupils achieve as well as they are capable of doing. The targets set, particularly for the most able, do not ensure that they are consistently challenged and not all pupils know and understand their targets. Pupils say that some of their work is too easy. Inspection evidence agrees with them. Therefore, the best practice in teaching now needs to be consistently offered

every day for all pupils, so that they all reach the highest standards of which they are capable all the time.

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

- Develop teaching to ensure that it is all as effective as the best in challenging the most able pupils.
- Ensure the targets set, particularly for the most able, are known and understood by pupils and are consistently challenging enough.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are just above the national average. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Children join the school with a range of abilities, skills and understanding but they are broadly average overall. They get off to a cracking start in the Reception classes because all of the children make steady progress. At the end of Year 2 standards are above the national average. This represents good progress for most pupils because of the challenging targets that they reach. Most pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of the extensive range of additional support such as the Jump Ahead Programme to help improve motor skills, which helps pupils to improve their writing. The most able pupils do not consistently do as well as they should. The school is well aware of this and has already activated plans to address the issue.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This reflects the ethos and practices in the school which also lead to pupils developing excellent behaviour and attitudes to their work, to each other and to other people. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and develop into confident young people. The pupils are fully aware of the different aspects of healthy lifestyles and demonstrate good regard to safety and the well-being of others. Attendance is outstanding.

Pupils make a good contribution to school life through the school council and their views are acted upon by the school. Pupils also help to make a difference for others outside of the school through raising funds for charities and also as one pupil said 'It is one of the best things in our school because if things are going wrong on the playground and in the classes we can stop them'. There is also a pupils' 'Green Gang' as part of the 'eco committee' and these pupils have contributed well to improvements in the environment, for instance by saving energy and recycling.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The school rightly judges the quality of teaching and learning to be good with some outstanding features. The school takes pride in its fantastic displays that are testimony to the quality of learning.

Extremely effective use is made of teaching assistants to give extra support to pupils who need it. One parent said of this support, 'I cannot thank the school enough for what they have done'. There is a strong sense of everyone working together as a tightly knit team to make sure that what goes on in the classrooms is what pupils need.

The teaching is usually carefully and sensitively matched to the needs of all pupils so lessons stimulate and engage pupils' interest. This in turn leads to good progress. Pupils follow orderly routines so they can maximise their learning time. On occasions there are missed opportunities for the most able pupils to make even better progress. The school has recognised this and, in their search to continually improve, staff are now rightly focusing on devising ways of putting challenge into lessons for more able pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with some outstanding features. It has been much improved since the last inspection. It covers the requirements of the National Curriculum thoroughly. It is also tailored to ensure that there is a smooth start in the Reception classes building on children's Nursery experiences. A good range of activities outside lessons is available which many pupils participate in and enjoy, such as French, art, Karate and recorders. Visitors and visits productively extend pupils' understanding and contribute to their positive attitudes to learning.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education has been carefully crafted and effectively supports the ethos of the school. Because attention is given to the acquisition of skills as well as knowledge to be gained, the personal development of pupils of all abilities is taken forward exceptionally well.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good, with many outstanding features. Pastoral care is outstanding.

Vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quickly identified and very effectively supported. As one parent noted 'If it was not for the teachers and staff helping my child, I don't think his learning difficulties would have been picked up so early. They have helped him so much with his confidence.' The use of play therapy helps develop pupils' self-esteem. Robust child protection is in place

as are other arrangements for safeguarding pupils, and are updated regularly. Pupils say their opinions are valued, they feel safe and know that adults will help them. Health safety and risk assessment procedures meet required standards.

Adults carefully monitor the pupils' personal development and academic progress closely. Parents are regularly informed of the progress that their children are making but the pupils do not always know their targets and sometimes do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, are good. There is a shared ethos that permeates the life of the school. Everyone is constantly striving to improve standards, expectations and levels of care. There is a sharp focus on wanting to give pupils the very best start in life and preparation for the next stage of their education. Some staff are new to their posts of responsibility and recognise the need to develop their roles further. However, the headteacher, through her dynamic leadership, has created a very strong senior team.

The school knows itself well and it has accurately identified where it could improve further. Significant action has already been undertaken and further plans are in place to continue to develop these areas. Although a few of the initiatives are in the early stages of implementation there is strong inspection evidence that they too are having an impact on improving standards. Rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation are leading to the raising of achievement. Consequently, the school has excellent capacity to improve further and it has fully addressed the issues raised in the last inspection report.

Financial resources are managed shrewdly and the distribution of funds has a major impact on the raising of standards and making learning easier for pupils. This is demonstrated through the highly effective deployment of support staff in classrooms and the purchase of new laptops so pupils now have better opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills.

Parents are actively involved in the work of the school by taking assemblies and raising funds. One parent summed up the views of many when she said, 'The school has a lovely atmosphere and its open door policy means parents can always speak to staff if they need to.'

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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?	1
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	1
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	1

### 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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

<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>	2
<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	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**

We very much enjoyed inspecting your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. Please thank all the adults for us too. We thought your school looked beautiful and you showed us that you really enjoy coming every day.

We found out that your school is a really good school. Here are some of the special things we found out:

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- Your school looks after you ever so well and all the grown-ups want to do their best for you by trying all the time to do better.
- Your behaviour is fantastic and you really care for, and about, each other in an extra special way.
- You told us you enjoy your learning and you do!
- You are good learners and many of you are talented artists.
- You told us that the teachers make your lessons fun and exciting.
- Those of you who find learning 'tricky' do exceptionally well.
- The displays of your work are superb.
- Your headteacher and all the staff work brilliantly as a team.

We agree with the areas your school has identified that need to improve to help you to do even better. You all need to be helped to do as well as possible all of the time. Some of you could cope with even harder work. You told us this yourselves. We have asked the school to help you with this. The way you can help is by letting your teachers know that your targets are just right for you and the work is challenging enough. We have also asked your school to make sure the very best teaching happens every day in every class.

Thank you for being so polite during our visit. We hope you continue to enjoy your learning and to do your best. Please thank your parents for the many very helpful comments they made.