

# Brampton Cortonwood Infant School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106862
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	309249
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Diane Stoner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Aston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 June 1999
<b>School address</b>	Brampton Bierlow Wombwell Barnsley South Yorkshire S73 0XH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 340044
<b>Fax number</b>	01226 757977

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 May 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	309249

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Brampton Cortonwood is a much smaller than average infant school serving the former mining village of Brampton Bierlow close to Rotherham. While housing patterns and provision are changing, there is much social and economic disadvantage in the village. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is three times the average. Nearly all pupils are White British with a small, though increasing, number of pupils who are learning English for the first time. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

The school holds national Healthy School Status. A recently completed Children's Centre is established on site and gives the school greater scope for work with families.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and steadily improving school. Good leadership and management and effective care, guidance and support mean that pupils' progress is improving. Parents appreciate that the school cares for their children very well. The comment, 'In my eyes this school's care and guidance for children is excellent', is typical of parents' views.

The achievement of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English for the first time, is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those normally expected for their age, especially in language and communication. By the end of Year 2, overall standards are below average, with standards of speaking and listening and boys' writing being particularly weak aspects. The quality of teaching has improved recently and is satisfactory. This improvement is helping to speed up the rate of achievement and raise standards. Teachers' increasingly high expectations of progress promote a positive climate for learning. This is enhanced with high quality displays and teachers' thoughtful use of space. Where teaching is less effective, not enough emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' listening skills, which limits their ability to concentrate and slows progress. Pupils' access to the outdoor learning environment is restricted due to poor maintenance. This means that opportunities for learning are lost, particularly for children in the Foundation Stage.

Pupils' personal development is good. They have a strong sense of belonging to their school community and understand the importance of helping and supporting each other. Most pupils thrive in the happy, friendly atmosphere and, as a result, behave well. They know the difference between right and wrong and display good attitudes in lessons, although a small minority of pupils sometimes find routines difficult to follow. Pupils enjoy school life and being with their friends. The rate of attendance is satisfactory but, despite concerted efforts by the school and the local authority welfare officer, is adversely affected by the poor attendance of a minority of pupils. Pupils develop respect and tolerance of cultures and beliefs different to their own, for example, by celebrating Divali and the Chinese New Year. This prepares them well for life in a diverse society.

Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher, ably supported by staff, has put in place effective strategies to boost achievement and enhance personal development. Senior leaders carefully check the impact of these new strategies and assess how well the school is doing. This has successfully created an atmosphere where all staff feel a part of the school's quickening improvement. Parents also value the fact that they are listened to and encouraged to make a contribution. A reinvigorated governing body are dedicated to school improvement, display a good first-hand grasp of strengths and areas for improvement and are passionate for the school to do well. This year, the school has worked very hard to improve pupils' academic and personal development and the impact is becoming evident. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve further on its current satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory due to good leadership and management bringing about improvements in all areas of learning. This reflects the school's determination to ensure that all children receive the best possible start to their learning. The recently completed

Children's Centre reinforces this vision. Indoor areas have been imaginatively expanded to ensure space for both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. On arrival, many children are not well prepared for school routines. Due to the school's careful induction practice of maintaining close links with parents, the majority of children quickly settle, although a small number take a little longer to adapt. When they begin Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery), children's standards are well below those expected for their age. Staff work hard to build confidence and independence, although some provision does not emphasise strongly enough children developing self-control. Assessment and recording is thorough and accurately identifies any slips in progress. As a result, learning activities are well matched to individuals' needs and children make at least satisfactory progress. An example of this is the way in which the school has used intensive phonic sessions to boost early reading skills. Vital listening and speaking skills are weak, but improving. However, the pattern of progress is sometimes uneven with girls making much faster progress than boys, especially in developing early writing skills. Overall, most children are still working towards the levels expected for their age by the end of Foundation Stage 2 (Reception).

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

- Improve standards in speaking and listening, and boys' writing, including the consistency with which teachers promote pupils' listening skills.
- Ensure that the outdoor area is properly maintained so that pupils, especially children in the Foundation Stage, have appropriate opportunities to extend their learning outdoors.
- Improve the attendance, especially of the minority of pupils who do not attend frequently enough.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. From a low starting point they reach below average standards by the end of Year 2. Although the overall 2007 assessments of Year 2 pupils reflected well below average standards, assessments in reading, writing and mathematics all showed improvement from the previous year. In relation to current standards, actions to improve girls' mathematical skills have led to them exceeding the targets set for them to reach similar standards to boys. Enlivened teaching, with a sharp focus on achievement, has raised expectations, for example, direct intervention has boosted girls' reading performance and begun to raise the standard of boys' writing. As a consequence, by using more challenging targets, more pupils are making better progress. However, listening and speaking skills, though improving, remain weak and this slows the rate of progress in reading and for boys in their writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English for the first time make similar progress to other pupils as a result of effective learning support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are given the chance to think about their learning, explore their feelings and mood, and to respect the feelings of others. As a consequence, the behaviour of most pupils is good. Even so, a small number of pupils, often the youngest in the group, show immature behaviour and find staying on task difficult. New

initiatives to modify this type of behaviour and reduce time wasted as a result of it are being effectively put into action. Pupils value the rewards these new approaches can bring, for example, pupils enjoy the competition to be 'star of the week'. Pupils are conscious of the benefits to their health of adopting a balanced diet and exercise. The school council value the active role they have in helping to improve the school. The attendance of most pupils is satisfactory and rates have improved this year. Pupils say they feel safe and know how to stay safe. Their growing confidence in what they can achieve, the skills gained from working together and their improving basic skills give them a satisfactory preparation for the next stage in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons seen during the inspection were good and all lessons placed great emphasis on giving pupils the confidence and skills to succeed. As a result, increasing numbers of pupils are making good progress as opposed to satisfactory progress. Teachers set clear learning targets and work is really well differentiated to meet pupils' needs. Highly effective support is provided for individual pupils with both learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those at the early stages of learning English. Staff enjoy good relationships with pupils. Work is regularly marked and positive encouragement given. Teachers give helpful advice as to how to improve, and older pupils are acquiring the skills to assess their own work. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and place strong emphasis on concentrating, listening carefully and developing self-control. Consequently, pupils are clear about what is expected of them and concentrate for long periods with few interruptions. In other lessons, however, the emphasis on developing listening skills to ensure pupils sit still and think carefully is not as strong and this means that pupils do not make as much progress. This reduces the overall quality of teaching to satisfactory rather than good.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The developing curriculum provides a satisfactory match of work to the needs of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English for the first time. Teachers make increasing use of first-hand learning experiences and 'themes' to add variety and interest. As a result, motivation is better which is helping to boost achievement. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to join in a range of out-of-school activities, listening to and talking to visitors and making local visits. This all helps develop their interests and talents. Personal, social and health education programmes, with an increased emphasis on the social and emotional aspects of learning, support pupils' personal development well. While satisfactory provision is made for literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology, the curriculum does not place sufficient emphasis on extending pupils' listening and speaking skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

This is a school where the pupils, their families and the local community benefit and really appreciate the good quality of care and support. The newly opened Children's Centre has extended the school's ability to reach its families and raise their aspirations and confidence to

do well. Parents of vulnerable children appreciate the efforts made by staff to fully include their children in all school life. Procedures to safeguard children, with established routines for child protection and health and safety, are in place. The good work of the staff is complemented by effective collaboration with a range of agencies that provide specialist support. Transition arrangements to the junior school are good. The school regularly and thoroughly checks pupils' progress and promptly provides intervention if any fall behind. Overall, pupils are given good help to improve and have targets which most work hard to achieve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher has established a crystal clear vision and direction for the school. Staff are valued and managers really well supported. Accurate self-evaluation has enabled the headteacher to identify the key priorities to bring about improvement. She has demonstrated to the staff the importance of raising expectations and how to do this. Development planning is concise and sharply fixed on raising achievement and standards. Each member of staff is making a telling contribution to school improvement. Effective action is being taken to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and as a result, pupils' achievement is beginning to rise. The checking of performance is disciplined and is now more focused on the impact of new strategies and initiatives for improvement. The new chair and vice-chair of governors fulfil their role of challenge and support. Governors have a clear view of school strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in school improvement. As one remarked, 'the engine is cranked ready to go'.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Brampton Cortonwood Infant School, Barnsley, S73 0XH

I really enjoyed my visit and appreciated your friendly and lively welcome. I was impressed by your enthusiasm for learning and your willingness to work hard in lessons. I really enjoyed talking to the members of the school council, joining you in assembly and at playtime when you were with your friends. You go to a satisfactory and improving school, which has a number of strengths.

- Most of you are making progress because your school makes learning interesting and gives you help and support when you need it.
- You get on well with the staff and with each other when playing at break or lunchtime or working in your lessons.
- Your headteacher and the other staff and governors who lead the school are determined to make it better to make sure that you are all happy, enjoy your work and make good progress.
- Your good behaviour in lessons and the increasing pride you take in your work and what you have done well.

To help your school improve at faster rate and improve the quality of your work, I have asked your school to do three things.

- I have asked that you are given more help to improve your listening and speaking skills and for boys to be helped to improve their writing.
- I have asked that the school makes certain that the outdoor learning area, particularly for Foundation Stage 1 (Nursery) and Foundation Stage 2 (Reception) children, is better maintained to create more opportunities for learning.
- I have asked the school to work even harder to improve your attendance particularly those who are often absent for long periods.

You all have an important part to play in continuing to raise the quality of your work. You can help by continuing to listen very carefully to the advice and guidance of your teachers, concentrating for longer and by working as hard as you can to produce even better work.

Thank you for helping me with this inspection. I hope the school will continue to build on its improvements.