

# Bramley Sunnyside Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106895
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	309257
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Taylor

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>	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	312
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Hart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs K Plant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Flanderwell Lane Bramley Rotherham South Yorkshire S66 3QW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 543061
<b>Fax number</b>	01709 701990

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average infant school takes the majority of its pupils from the local area. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small proportion from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, all pupils speak English at home. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has gained the Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award. During the last two years, there has been considerable disruption due to illness of the headteacher and other staff.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Bramley Sunnyside Infant School provides a good education for its pupils and parents are rightly pleased with the high level of care their children receive. Typical comments from parents include, 'What a lovely school, we are so lucky.' They say that they, as parents, are always welcomed and listened to. As a result of these effective relationships, parents strongly support the work of the school. Attendance is above average and happy enthusiasm underlines pupils' good behaviour. The school gives good value for money.

Pupils achieve well. They respond eagerly to good teaching and reach above average standards in writing and mathematics. Standards in reading are average but pupils still achieve well in reading having entered the school with weak skills in this area of their learning. An outstanding feature of teaching is the excellent match of tasks to pupils' abilities. In some lessons, five different levels of work are provided to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged. As a result, pupils make good progress and the more able reach high standards. This is an improvement on previous years. Teachers have very high expectations that pupils will take responsibility for completing their tasks even when working on their own. On the whole, this works very well. Although some written tasks are not always finished on time, when pupils report back they show they have understood their task and gained new insights.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their work is closely matched to their needs. Parents and pupils value the 'Busy Bee' room where groups and individual pupils work hard with very effective guidance from skillful support staff. Some of this support is first rate in its effect on pupils' achievement.

Pupils' personal development is good and they enjoy their work. They say they love everything about their school. The school council members take their work very seriously and have contributed to several improvements. Currently, they are considering how to improve the appearance of their playground as it 'looks a bit dull'. Behaviour is good and at playtimes it is exceptional. The exciting range of outdoor resources and activities, together with the energetic involvement of lunchtime staff, mean pupils have a 'brilliant time'. Initiatives implemented to enable the school to achieve health and fitness awards have contributed well to pupils' delight in physical education and their good understanding about healthy living. Many pupils show a limited understanding about the lives of people from different cultural groups. This aspect of their personal development is satisfactory.

The curriculum is good with some aspects outstanding. Year 1 classes, where work was focusing on insects, reverberate to the sounds of live crickets. During the inspection some pupils gently handled stick insects. 'You can't feel it as it walks on you,' they commented, 'It's delicate and if you're not careful its legs fall off.' These strongly emotional moments contributed well to pupils' spiritual development. Well integrated play activities in Year 2 ensure that pupils consolidate aspects of their learning in relaxed situations. Subjects link together well. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson pupils used glossaries to link their work in English to work they had done previously in science. Recent work to identify the specific skills pupils need in art and design have led to very effective improvements. However, such work has yet to be undertaken in the other non-core subjects (those other than English, mathematics and science) such as design and technology or geography. In music, for example, teachers' knowledge is less developed and the pupils' curriculum, while satisfactory, is less effective than it could be.

Using good leadership and management strategies, the headteacher is effectively moving the school forward. The school has undertaken a detailed review of its strengths and weaknesses and, following some extended absences, is benefiting from deploying staff to better reflect their skills. Parents, who had become concerned at the number of teachers taking their children's class, now declare themselves very satisfied with the situation. Teachers respond well to initiatives for improvement, such as curriculum changes, and standards have risen as a result. The headteacher's outstanding ability to identify ways of moving forward, and her effective delegation to the deputy headteacher and senior staff, means there is a very strong team broadening the work of the school. The team spirit, welding together recently qualified and more experienced staff, is a significant factor in the school's good capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Most children join the Foundation Stage with lower than average skills, particularly in reading and speaking aspects of communication, language and literacy and in their personal development. After two terms, despite the school's strong focus on promoting children's speaking skills, many still have difficulty speaking clearly and in sentences. The curriculum is stimulating and challenging. For example, children use glass buttons and coloured matchsticks to press into clay to make models of spiders, hedgehogs or birthday cakes. Bringing pieces of the outdoor garden inside provides children with the chance to handle turf and inspect worms in their own habitat. These thoughtful activities and good formal teaching situations ensure that children achieve well and have fun. Numerous parents commented on how much their children enjoyed school and loved their teacher. Learning outdoors is planned well and children experience a good range of challenging, physical activities. Their progress is tracked closely and lessons are planned to support identified areas of weakness. By the time they move into Year 1, overall, children achieve the goals set for them in all areas of their learning.

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

- Improve pupils' opportunities to develop their understanding of different cultures.
- Ensure that pupils are equipped with the necessary skills that will enable them to achieve well in all non-core subjects, not just some.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are higher than in the past and pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Across the school, new assessment strategies ensure that teachers know exactly what pupils need to learn next and this enables them to provide challenging tasks to stretch pupils. The most able pupils work at advanced tasks and more are attaining above expected levels than in previous years. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are strongly promoted and pupils recognise and use letters and sounds confidently. Their writing, in for example science, religious education and history, shows effective use of their literacy skills. Standards in speaking and listening are low when pupils arrive in the Nursery. Many good opportunities to use new vocabulary and structure sentences are provided and pupils become articulate and confident speakers by the time they leave Year 2. Rigorous counting and calculating sessions precede mathematics lessons and ensure good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are valued and respected and are at the heart of the school's work. They have an excellent understanding of how to get on well together. They are beginning to develop their citizenship skills although, other than for school council members, there are not very many opportunities for them to influence the daily life of the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with outstanding aspects of spiritual and social development. Currently, while pupils have satisfactory cultural awareness, this area is weaker than others and pupils have limited understanding of different cultural groups. Typical comments from parents confirm pupils thoroughly enjoy school, for example, 'My child wants to come to school at the weekends he loves it so much.' Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite activities and this comment, 'Climbing on the big apparatus is good, but you can't talk or you might fall off,' illustrates an important aspect of their excellent understanding of how to keep safe.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers are very effective at helping pupils take responsibility for their own work. In lessons, teachers lead discussions well and set challenging tasks that require pupils to work independently. There is also a good balance between direct teaching and pupils working in teams. This strategy works extremely well and, although sometimes enthusiasm leads to loud voices, pupils understand the ideas behind their tasks and explain what they have learned in discussion sessions. Good use of assessment data contributes very effectively to pupils' accelerating progress as staff and pupils check constantly to see if targets have been reached. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some of this support is outstanding especially when close attention is paid to pupils' needs and their understanding is closely questioned.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are promoted well. Effective links between different subjects help pupils to understand the purpose of their learning. Very stimulating and enormously enjoyable activities are provided and the school is beginning to achieve its aim of 'making learning irresistible'. For example, Year 1 pupils, wearing safari hats, engage in jungle role play as an 'insect research team' investigating live insects. Their learning was further extended when they visited a butterfly and insect park to view an even wider range of insects than those in their classrooms.

Effective developments in art and design have identified specific subject-related skills for pupils to acquire and use. This approach has raised standards and flagged up the need to strengthen other subjects that are not so well developed. The school makes good use of links with the local high school for sport and art-related activities. A wide range of visitors and number of extra-curricular opportunities significantly support learning.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The school knows its pupils very well and provides them with a very caring environment. Vulnerable pupils are tracked and supported sensitively so that they can cope with difficulties and make the most of their learning. Parents particularly value the school's concern for individuals and feel their children are cared for extremely well. Very effective use is made of outside agencies to support pupils. Tracking of academic progress is extremely thorough and enables staff to provide pupils with challenging tasks that have raised standards. However, work is not always marked, so pupils may find it difficult to remember what they are good at and what they need to improve. Staff are trained in aspects of health and safety and child protection procedures are robust.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has a very accurate view of how well the school is doing and sets clear direction for improvement. Although the pace of improvement slowed slightly during her extended absence, her recent outstanding work has increased pupils' achievement and extended their personal development. Senior staff skillfully evaluate the impact of their actions and identify what needs to be done next. Their work is very effective and has had an excellent impact on some school initiatives. For example, they have developed strong links between subjects and improved the quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good use is made of partnerships with the local authority and nearby schools to promote learning and well-being. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are becoming more challenging. As a result, they are beginning to have a clearer view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The overall impact of this effective provision is that pupils' progress has improved on several fronts and the school has a deservedly good local reputation.

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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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	2
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	1
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	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

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

Thank you on behalf of the other inspectors and myself for your help when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed watching you work and talking with you in your classes and around school. Special thanks should go to the members of the school council, who gave up some of their lunch break to talk with us. They told us that your school is good and we agree.

One of the good things about your school is the way your lessons are organised to make sure you learn well but also have fun. We especially liked the singing crickets in Year 1 and the garden activities in Nursery, Reception and Year 2. With your target stickers, you know exactly how well you are doing and know what you need to learn next in order to get even better. You try hard in lessons and concentrate extremely well even though your work is difficult. Your teachers and classroom assistants work really hard to try new ideas to make your learning more interesting.

Your parents say they are pleased you come to this school because everyone is so friendly and you have such a good time. Your headteacher knows how well the school is doing and she knows what to do to improve things. We have suggested some areas to make things even better. You don't know enough about people from different cultures in our country and overseas. Your teachers know exactly what you need to learn next in several subjects, but are less sure in others such as music or geography. We have asked your school to improve these things.

You are enthusiastic about your school and I hope you carry on making Bramley Sunnyside Infant School a happy place to learn.