

Broomhill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108983
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	309849
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Ian Hancock

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Francis
Headteacher	Lesley Newman
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2004
School address	Fermaine Avenue Brislington Bristol BS4 4UY
Telephone number	01179 777777
Fax number	01179 777777

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Broomhill Infant School has an attached nursery and is a smaller than average- sized school on the outskirts of the city, in a recognised area of deprivation. In common with a local trend, the numbers of pupils attending the school have fallen. Most pupils come from white British backgrounds with a small percentage from minority ethnic families. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is below average. There have been significant changes in staffing over the last few years but this is now stabilised. The school has Healthy Schools Award, Sports England Action Mark, Eco Schools Award, Investors in People Award, Bristol Standard for Early Years, Bristol Inclusion Award, International Award and Basic Skills Mark.

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 school and it has many good features. Strengths in pastoral care, cultural development and working well in partnership with others contribute much to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Written comments from parents such as 'the children are always put first and staff are always available if you have a problem' show that most parents appreciate the commitment and friendliness of the staff. The outcomes can be seen in happy pupils who enjoy their lessons, behave well, feel safe and get on well together. They enjoy exercise and have an excellent understanding of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Punctuality has improved and attendance matches the national average.

From a low starting point, academic achievement is satisfactory, although standards remain below average by the end of Year 2. Good provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly in the Nursery, is marked by stimulating and purposeful activities so that children settle quickly and progress well. Thereafter, progress is satisfactory, except in the small nurture group, where pupils achieve well. The many changes to staffing over the last few years have hindered the rate of improvement, but staffing is now more stable. The curriculum is satisfactory, although there is insufficient emphasis on the development of pupils' basic writing and number skills. Nevertheless, new approaches have resulted in an integrated and stimulating curriculum that has captured pupils' imagination and increased their enjoyment of learning. These new initiatives have gained some success in improving standards in writing but are in the early stages to have made a real impact on raising standards in reading and mathematics.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with the result that pupils make steady progress. Assessment information, however, is not used consistently well when planning lessons. Consequently, lesson activities do not always support or challenge pupils of different abilities to do their best. The hard work of the headteacher and senior staff are strong features in the school's satisfactory leadership and management. The school is committed to improvement and, through its self-evaluation, the school knows where it needs to go and what areas require improvement. However, systems for checking teaching and the pupils' progress are not sufficiently rigorous to pinpoint exactly where and what action is needed to raise standards. With a more settled staff and the gradual success of its recent actions, the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for further development.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter school with standards well below those expected for their age in all six areas of early learning and particularly in the crucial areas of language, literacy and personal and social development. They get off to a flying start in the stimulating environment of the school's nursery. In this safe and nurturing environment, children are encouraged to become independent and are able to access and tidy away resources themselves. Great emphasis is placed on speaking and listening and the children's personal development, and the children make good progress in these aspects of their learning. A well planned daily outdoor curriculum is accessible all year round within the attractive school grounds and contributes well to the children's personal development. Groups of children are well supported by learning support assistants and nursery nurses, where work is well matched to individual needs. As a result of good teaching, the children achieve well, but standards are still below expectations when they enter Year 1. Although

the children make good progress across the Foundation Stage, particular strengths are seen in the nursery.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop effective and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning so that the action required to raise standards is more precisely identified.
- Use assessment information with more precision when planning lesson activities so that all pupils are consistently supported or challenged to do their best.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and in Years 1 and 2 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average as a whole, reflecting the national test results of the past two years. Nevertheless, the most recent results in 2007 illustrate the increased effectiveness of the school's work to improve writing. Recent initiatives have been introduced to improve reading, including a much wider range of reading materials, and there is a more focused approach to teaching mathematics, but these are only just beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards and achievements. Pupils with LDD and those with emotional and behaviour problems achieve well in the nurture group because their needs have been identified early and targets in their individual education plans are relevant to specific needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is in line with national expectations. Their happiness is evident in the way they show respect to each other and to the adults who work with them. Behaviour and attitudes to their learning are good both in lessons and in the playground, where they are seen playing actively with adults and the attractive resources provided. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall with cultural development a particular strength. There are outstanding links with a school in Kenya, enabling pupils to closely explore the differences of childhood in another country. Pupils feel safe and know they can go to an adult with any worries. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and the importance of healthy food. They know the importance of exercise to 'pump blood around your body' and 'stop you having heart disease'. The 'Garden for Life' project involved the pupils in the growing, cooking and subsequent selling of produce to their own families, showing enterprise and community involvement. The school council worked hard last year to involve the whole school in the Blue Peter project 'Shoebiz', where pupils used their word-processing skills to provide information for parents and organised the collection of shoes. Pupils' positive approach to learning bodes well for their future education, although their academic progress has room for further acceleration.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the Foundation Stage, children are taught well and they make good progress. In Years 1 and 2, lessons are generally interesting and there is always a calm, purposeful atmosphere with constructive relationships. Most pupils are keen to take part, and especially so when lessons have a practical, dramatic or topical content that makes learning more 'real' and exciting. The school's drive to improve pupils' speaking skills is evident in many lessons, although some teachers are more confident than others in the use of discussion among pupils to generate ideas and, sometimes, there are limited opportunities for pupils to make comments. Learning assistants are fully involved in teaching activities and provide effective support to small groups of pupils, including those with LDD. The key weakness in teaching is that lessons do not consistently meet the needs of all pupils. The level of teaching is not always well matched to what pupils already know and understand. Activities are too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. This hinders the progress of different pupils at different times – they either coast or get left behind. Pupils with emotional and behaviour problems receive good support in the nurture group and progress well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and is satisfactory overall but has many good and commendable features. A creative and innovative curriculum put into place since the last inspection matches the needs of pupils far more closely, capturing the imagination of many. As one pupil acknowledged, 'I enjoy this school because I can be creative and do lots of writing.' A range of new initiatives for reading and mathematics is beginning to improve standards, but these have not yet had time to really impact. The focus on writing has already improved standards but the curriculum for some groups of pupils within classes is not well matched to their needs, with insufficient emphasis and planning for teaching basic skills of number, letter formation and sentence construction. Pupils in the small nurture group have a relevant curriculum well matched to their specific needs. Extra-curricular provision is good. The wide range of well attended clubs, many visits and visitors enriches and supports the curriculum very well. Good quality curriculum initiatives include a 'One world term', 'Gardens for Life' and the 'Black Bristolian project', a dance project involving other schools in the area. Such initiatives significantly improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care and support of pupils are strengths. The pastoral care and the nurturing, supportive ethos pervade throughout the school and contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning and their well-being. All procedures involving child protection, health and safety and the vetting of adults who work in the school are rigorously applied. There are good links with outside agencies who give valued advice to support pupils' learning. Good support is given to pupils in the nurture group and other groups are well supported within the class by a well trained team of learning support assistants. This ensures that they make at least satisfactory progress.

Improvements to assessment have secured accurate information about pupils' attainment. Where assessment is used effectively and efficiently, pupils are able to make expected progress. However, the strategies the teachers use to assess pupils' progress vary and are not used consistently to inform teaching. As a result, work is not well matched to individual needs in order that they all do their best. The use of marking is inconsistent and, as yet, does not support pupils adequately in knowing about the next stages of their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The changes in staffing during the last few years have now largely settled down and enabled the school to get a firmer grip on improvement. The headteacher, ably supported by the her deputy and the assistant headteacher, leads a hard-working and enthusiastic team well. While maintaining strengths in pastoral support and pupils' personal development, the school has also secured improved punctuality since the last inspection. The headteacher and governors are aware that standards and achievement are not good enough and have begun to reconsider the school's self-evaluation and how curriculum leaders can take a more proactive part in school improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous to pinpoint precisely where and how improvements are to be made. A more creative curriculum is capturing pupils' interest and enjoyment of learning, and parents particularly value good enrichment opportunities, but not enough attention is given to improving pupils' basic skills. Assessment procedures have significantly improved and are beginning to bear fruit. However, information is not used effectively enough across the school and consequently targets and work are not always well matched to the needs of all pupils. The chair of governors is knowledgeable about the school's effectiveness and is encouraging new and less experienced governors to participate in training so that they can provide as much support and challenge as possible in the coming year.

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Annex A

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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	1
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?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

7 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Broomhill Infant School, Brislington, Bristol. BS4 4UY

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to your school. We enjoyed talking with you very much and thought you were very friendly.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education and these are some things which we thought were good. These are:

- *You enjoy school and behave well. At lunchtimes, you show good manners and are most polite.
- *You have an outstanding idea of how important it is to eat healthy foods and keep fit and healthy.
- *You like the clubs that you attend after school.
- *Teachers and other adults look after you well.
- *Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make your school better.

There are a few things we think the school should do to make it better. These are:

- *Make sure that the teaching and your progress are thoroughly checked to ensure that action can be taken where necessary to improve the standards you reach.
- *Help plan your work more carefully so that it is not too hard or too easy to help you learn more quickly.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hancock Lead Inspector