

New Bradwell School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110245
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	310235
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Daniel Kilborn

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	319
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I Franklin
Headteacher	Mr P Webster
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bounty Street New Bradwell Milton Keynes MK13 0BQ
Telephone number	01908 312244
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a community that is long established in Milton Keynes. However, in recent years the proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the normal times has increased and is now well above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school provides Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education and children start the Nursery in the September of the year in which they become four years old and transfer to the two Reception classes in the September of the year they become five years of age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), including those with special educational needs (SEN), is above average. Most of these have moderate learning difficulties. There is additional provision for ten pupils with statements of special educational need, which relate to communication and language needs. The school has achieved the Investors in People status, the Silver Healthy Schools Award and the Level 2 Sustainability Award. A new headteacher took up post in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education and has made adequate progress since the previous inspection. Within this satisfactory picture there are a number of good aspects. Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They enjoy learning and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are mostly exemplary. Pupils develop a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy life style and know how to keep safe. Care, guidance and support are good. The school is at the heart of its community and makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Almost all parents are supportive of the school in all aspects of its work. One parent wrote, 'I have always been happy my child attends New Bradwell School. There have been a range of educational and social activities that have contributed to my child's development in a very positive way.'

From a typically low starting point on entry for many children, pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, and those who enter at different times, achieve satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6 standards have risen steadily since the previous inspection and show a marked improvement over the past year. They are now broadly average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Across the school, standards in writing and mathematics are not as strong as those in other subjects, since fewer pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels.

Pupils' satisfactory achievement reflects the impact of satisfactory teaching over time. The mostly good teaching seen during the inspection paints an improving picture. Excellent relationships and high expectations of behaviour are particularly strong features in all of the teaching. There are, however, inconsistencies in the use of day to day assessment that leads to a lack of challenge in some lessons for more able pupils. There is a good curriculum that has an excellent range of enrichment activities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The new headteacher and well established deputy headteacher are forming a strong partnership and share a common vision and high aspirations for the pupils. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school is aware that more needs to be done to improve achievement, standards and the quality of teaching and to embed new initiatives securely across the school. Systems to assess the progress of individuals and groups across the school are not yet fully developed. Good teamwork is established and staff morale is high. The capacity for improvement is satisfactory. However, the new headteacher has quickly identified important areas for development. He has the support of parents, staff, governors and pupils and communicates a clear vision for the future. This indicates a strengthening of the capacity to move the school forward at a more rapid pace.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are typically below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy (CLL) and knowledge and understanding of the world (KUW). With good teaching in the EYFS, children make good progress in all areas of their learning, although a significant minority does not reach all the goals expected for their age in CLL and KUW on entry to Year 1. Relationships are excellent and engender confidence in the children and a love of learning. There is a good curriculum that stimulates and encourages children to want to learn. This includes effective planning and the

free flow use of the indoor and outdoor accommodation. There is a strong and successful emphasis on the development of independence in selecting and carrying out activities and many opportunities for children to play and learn individually and in groups. Assessment systems are good and provide a clear indication of children's individual progress. There is a greater and a more consistent focus on letters and sounds work. This is accelerating children's progress in this aspect of their learning. There are plans to organise home visits in the Nursery to forge closer links with parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics and use day-to-day assessment more effectively to provide greater challenge for the more able pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure pupils make more consistently good progress.
- Develop a whole school tracking and assessment system that provides a more cohesive view of pupils' progress.

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' achievement, including that of pupils who have LDD, is satisfactory overall. Those pupils who have statements of special educational need make good progress when they are supported in the communication unit. Although progress is satisfactory overall, it is better in reading and science than in writing and mathematics because teaching is stronger in these subjects. The school is beginning to address, with some success, low standards over the last four years. High mobility of pupils and high numbers of pupils with LDD has presented continual and additional challenge for senior leaders and teachers. Current standards are below average by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen steadily for the past four years and are now broadly average. This is largely the result of more focused additional support, smaller classes and consistently good teaching in Year 6. Pupils' writing, and their ability to apply their basic skills in mathematics to investigative work, are weaker aspects of their learning. There has been good improvement in pupils' skills in ICT and standards are broadly in line with levels expected for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils work and play well together, value friendships and show a very good understanding of each other's needs. They enjoy school. Pupils speak favourably about all aspects of school life but particularly enjoy the clubs, visits and the opportunity to learn musical instruments. As a result, their confidence and self-esteem grow. Pupils take pride in developing skills and talents and sharing information with others. For example, in the weekly Forum assembly pupils speak confidently in front of others and applaud each other's achievements. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils get on well together and know who to speak to if they have a problem. They have a clear understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle and how to remain safe. Visits to ' Hazard Alley,' for example, help pupils to develop a good understanding of safety. The level of contribution made by pupils to the school community is good, although their view of global

communities is only satisfactory. They willingly and keenly take on responsibility. These skills, together with their improving basic skills, prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are clear signs that teaching is improving and, during the inspection, the majority of lessons observed were good. This is beginning to ensure greater consistency in learning. Teaching is consistently good in Year 6 and helps pupils make good progress. There are common strengths across all year groups. Relationships, classroom management and high expectations of behaviour are particularly strong. This ensures that behaviour is often outstanding and lessons proceed in a calm and orderly manner. Teaching assistants and the inclusion manager in the communication unit provide good support for pupils with LDD. This support enables these pupils to be fully included and make similar progress to their classmates. Interactive whiteboards are used well in most lessons, although classroom computers are underused. Across the school, the teaching of literacy is stronger than the teaching of mathematics. In mathematics, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop investigative approaches to learning. The school recognises that assessment information is not yet used consistently to support and challenge the more able pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and places appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills. Curriculum enrichment through music, the arts, sport and residential and day visits across all year groups, makes an excellent contribution to pupils' love of school and their personal and social development. There is good provision for pupils with LDD and this ensures that the curriculum is accessible to all. The curriculum has a strong community dimension and includes many activities that involve pupils in the local community. Regular enrichment days, most recently on history, involve pupils using skills across a range of subjects and give them insights into the wider community. The school recognises the need to strengthen curricular links between subjects to make learning more meaningful and to provide more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills across the curriculum. The curriculum for the youngest pupils in Year 1 has been revised to take account of the children who are not yet ready for work on the National Curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A community atmosphere of harmony and tolerance encourages pupils to develop good personal qualities. Strong emphasis is placed on pastoral care and good use is made of outside expertise to support the most vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils develop individual talents in art and music with a positive effect on personal development. Pupils with LDD are supported well and encouraged to fully participate in all class activities. Pupils have their own personal targets for literacy and numeracy that help them judge how well they are doing. Marking overall is good and contains helpful comments on how pupils might improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has quickly established good relationships with parents, staff and pupils. He communicates a clear vision and has high aspirations for all pupils. Although there has been monitoring and evaluating of teaching, this has lacked sufficient consistency and rigour, and has had limited impact on smoothing out inconsistencies in pupils' progress. The new headteacher receives very good support from the experienced deputy headteacher, who is a good role model in her own teaching. They have restructured and strengthened the senior leadership team and have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where improvement is needed. Governors are led by an experienced and hardworking chairperson. They support the school well, are now more effectively monitoring its work, and increasingly holding it to account for its performance. Office staff help the school run efficiently on a day to day basis.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

08 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Bradwell School, Milton Keynes, MK13 0BQ

Thank you for the friendly welcome the inspectors received during the recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. We were very impressed with your good attitudes to school, your excellent behaviour, and how well you all get on together. The weekly 'forum' assemblies give you good opportunity to express and share your opinions. The many new pupils to the school tell us how quickly they made friends. We think your school is improving and is providing you with a satisfactory education. With your help, we are sure that the headteacher and all the staff in the school will continue to make your school even better.

Pupils on the school council were very helpful when sharing their views with us. We were pleased to see how many of you take responsibility as class and school monitors. We were also impressed with your involvement with the local community, and the yearly carnival sounds a really exciting and colourful event.

It is clear that you appreciate your teachers and you try hard in your lessons. The teachers make most of these interesting and enjoyable. They try to give you work that is just right for you, but sometimes work is too easy or too hard. We have asked your headteacher to make sure you always get work at the right level. You are doing well in art, music, sport and ICT. We think the school provides you with an exceptional range of out of school activities, and you say how much you enjoy the many residential visits. You have a good understanding of what makes a healthy diet and know that it is important to take regular exercise. You tell us you feel safe in school and that adults take good care of you.

We think that you could improve still further in your writing and mathematics work and have asked the teachers to help you by making sure you have even more opportunities to write and to solve challenging mathematical problems.

We really enjoyed our visit to your school and we wish all of you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Kilborn

Lead Inspector