

Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110722
Local Authority	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LA
Inspection number	310399
Inspection date	24 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Glynn Storer

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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Cliff Mills
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Goodwin
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2004
School address	Brewster Avenue Woodston Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE2 9PN
Telephone number	01733 565092
Fax number	01733 565092

Age group	3-7
Inspection date	24 January 2008
Inspection number	310399

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils and how the school's efforts to re-build the teaching and management teams affect pupils' learning and achievement and the school's capacity to improve further. Evidence was gathered from classroom visits and from discussions with staff, pupils and governors. The inspector also examined pupils' work and school documents, especially assessment and safeguarding information. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This fairly large nursery and infant school serves a residential area close to the centre of Peterborough. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion from minority ethnic groups is similar to that in schools nationally. The proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English is rising, but remains below the national average. Children's attainments on entry to the Nursery are often below those normally expected for three-year-olds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average, although the number with a statement of special educational need is relatively high for a school of this size. The school has Health Promoting School status and holds the Clean Air Gold Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School is a satisfactory, but improving, school. The recently appointed headteacher has successfully halted a decline in standards. Pupils' progress and the school's results in the national assessments for seven-year-olds are getting better. The school has risen in parents' estimation, because communication between home and school has improved. Most parents give their full support. A typical comment is, 'The teachers and helpers do an excellent job....It is a happy and enjoyable place for children to play and learn.'

When children enter the Nursery, the attainments of many are below those normally expected of three-year-olds. They get a flying start in Nursery and build successfully on this during their Reception year. By the time that they transfer to Year 1, most have made good overall progress and attained standards that are typical of five-year-olds nationally. Pupils' achievements in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily over the last two years and were close to the national average in 2007. This improvement has been most evident in the growing numbers of pupils who reach the expected standard for their age. There has also been a rise in the number of above average scores, but this remains below that in schools nationally. The school's tracking of pupils' progress indicates that this gradual improvement is set to continue, particularly in reading and writing, where improvements to the curriculum and to teaching resources and methods are taking effect.

Teaching and learning are currently satisfactory overall because they result in satisfactory standards and achievement on the part of most pupils. However, evidence from the inspection indicates that the incidence of good teaching is rising. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response in lessons. They work hard to instil positive attitudes and dispositions and these improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers' planning has improved, with the result that most lessons are carefully planned and make good provision for pupils with different abilities. When teaching is less successful, this matching of tasks to pupils' needs and abilities is not so sharp and so some pupils, often the more able, do not make the progress that they should. There is good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, which is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils who find learning difficult or who have specific disabilities take a full part in lessons and make similar progress to others in the class. Teaching and learning are improving because the school provides a good curriculum and recent developments in the teaching of reading and writing are already improving standards. The use of information and communication technology aids pupils' learning in most subjects. The school extends the curriculum by providing Italian lessons in Years 1 and 2. This is particularly appropriate in relation to the local community - and pupils love it! There is also a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that bring learning to life and promote high levels of enjoyment.

Staff provide good levels of care, guidance and support for all pupils, but especially to those who are in any way vulnerable. Measures for safeguarding pupils fully meet current requirements and staff and governors are conscientious in checking matters of health and safety. Pupils like their 'big pencil' target cards and are beginning to use them to improve their writing. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and the school is now seeking ways to improve its assessment of and provision for pupils who may be gifted or talented and for the growing number of pupils from Eastern Europe, who often come to school speaking little or no English. This quality of care results in good levels of personal development and well-being for most pupils. They know how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles and pupils' good

behaviour and relationships, along with the care they show for others, help the school to function as a caring community. Satisfactory standards of literacy and numeracy and positive attitudes give pupils a sound preparation for later life.

The headteacher has done a good job in promoting school improvement during a period when staff turnover, including senior leaders, has been high. The school has continued to improve because she has systematically rebuilt the leadership and teaching teams. Her vision and tenacity in the face of difficulties has pulled the team together and raised staff morale. She has also set in place rigorous procedures for checking on standards and for improving quality and consistency in the classroom. School self-evaluation is generally accurate and forms a sound basis for forward planning. These foundations have quickly enabled newly appointed leaders to begin to make a difference, for example in embedding the teaching of letters and sounds and in the use of the new reading scheme. Currently, leadership and management are satisfactory overall, because it will still be some time before leaders at all levels are fully active in monitoring the work of the school and have a full impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Effective governance has also been central to maintaining stability and improvement during this time of rapid change. Governors have collected a wealth of first-hand information and have been instrumental in restructuring staffing, improving the premises and fostering good relations with parents. Their contribution, along with thorough management systems, the headteacher's drive and the commitment of staff, gives the school a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. One parent described the Nursery as 'a wonderful and special place'. This reflects the high quality provision and care, which ensures that children settle quickly and engage happily in their learning. Nursery staff give particular emphasis to developing personal, social and communication skills and children's progress is excellent in these areas. Throughout Foundation Stage, learning is based on practical, 'hands on' activities, with lots of opportunities for imaginative and investigative play. Consequently, children's overall achievement is good and most children reach or are close to the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the school's drive to raise standards further by enabling leaders and managers at all levels to carry out the monitoring and evaluation activities planned for them.
- Improve the performance of potentially higher attaining pupils by ensuring that all staff regularly plan activities that match their abilities closely.
- Develop systems for assessing the learning needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and of pupils who may be gifted or talented.

A small proportion of 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.

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.

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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 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	1
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	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

25 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Brewster Avenue Infant and Nursery School, Peterborough PE2 9PN

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I came to visit your school. I really enjoyed talking to you when I visited your lessons, and looking at worms and spiders with children in the Nursery.

This is what I found out about your school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start in school.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 thoroughly enjoy school. You work hard and as a result, you are getting better at reading, writing and mathematics.
- Your teachers plan lots of exciting things for you to do. One of you told me 'this makes learning interesting and fun'.
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you, keep you safe and help you to improve your work.
- Mrs Goodwin, the staff, governors and pupils are working hard to make your school even better.

In order to help, I have suggested three things that the school should do.

- Give staff who are trying to make things better all the time they need check exactly what needs to be done and how to do it properly.
- Make sure that the work your teachers plan for you is just right and makes even those who usually find it easy think a little bit harder.
- Find ways of checking how best to help children who are just learning to speak English or children who may be able to do things that are very special.

Thanks again and best wishes to everyone at Brewster Avenue.

Glynn Storer Lead inspector