

# Bradfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114735
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	311685
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	95
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Samantha Winney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Debbie Griggs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Heath Road Bradfield Manningtree Essex CO11 2UZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01255 870241
<b>Fax number</b>	01255 870958

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school serves a local village community though some pupils come from further afield. Attainment on entry varies from year to year between average and below. With small cohorts, an additional one or two pupils with learning difficulties or generally low attainment in any one year group impacts on standards on entry. However, the overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of need, is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is low. Currently, all pupils are White British. The small number of pupils who regularly join the school in Years 3 to 6 from other schools has a proportionally bigger impact due to its small size. The school has undergone considerable change in staffing over the last year. The majority of teachers are relatively new to the school and some new to teaching. There has also been a high turnover amongst governors.

## 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 for its pupils. There is a strong sense of community, which parents appreciate. This successfully supports pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy school and form positive relationships with adults and one another. They make satisfactory progress overall in their learning, and in Years 3 to 6. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their education and settle in well to new routines. Whilst standards are broadly in line with national averages by Year 6, weaknesses in pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting mean that standards in writing are below average. This is because of the slow progress that pupils, particularly boys, in Years 3 to 6 have made in writing in the past. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are broadly average by Year 6.

Teaching is satisfactory and showing good signs of improvement. Lesson planning is thorough but tasks do not always match well enough to individual pupils' needs. A few pupils do not have regular opportunities to discuss their learning in lessons. A good curriculum enables pupils to enjoy learning and develop good understanding of how to keep safe and lead a healthy life. A wide range of visitors and visits contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils behave well and make a strong contribution to the school and wider community. Attendance is satisfactory. It is not better, because too many parents take their children on holiday during term time despite the school's efforts to deter them.

Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and feel well looked after. As one pupil noted, 'If you're lonely, there is always someone you can go to.' The school has put in place a new system for providing pupils with guidance, partly through individual targets, on how to improve their performance. However, this is at an early stage of implementation and currently teachers' written comments do not provide enough information to help pupils improve their work.

Leadership and management are sound. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has successfully created a strong sense of common purpose amongst staff and governors. This, along with accurate self-evaluation and clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, places the school in a sound position to improve the school further. Governors provide satisfactory oversight of the school. The new chair and vice chair have established good working relationships with the headteacher. Whilst the school sets challenging targets, these have not always been met in the past, especially in English across Years 3 to 6. The school is now taking effective action to address past underperformance in writing.

A small proportion of schools where 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.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils benefit from a stimulating environment and learn quickly to become independent. They are taught well and, as a result, they grasp new ideas and learning at a good pace. Standards are broadly in line with expectations for current pupils in Reception. Those who completed their Reception year, last year, began with below

average standards and made good progress so that by the end of the year, they met, and some exceeded, age-related expectations.

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

- Raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 by improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- Improve teaching by ensuring tasks for pupils match their individual needs and that there are regular opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss their work.
- Enable pupils to meet their individual targets by making sure they understand the strengths and weaknesses in their work and what they need to do to improve it.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are currently average by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, but lower in writing because of insufficient progress in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. The comprehension skills of some older pupils are rather limited especially in relation to written answers. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress from their starting points especially in reading, mathematics and science. Hence, standards are a little above those expected by the start of Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress as others. In teacher assessments in 2007, results for pupils in Year 2 were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics signalling good progress given the significant proportion of pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties in this group. Pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 often arrive with lower prior attainment but they achieve satisfactorily. For pupils in Year 6, the 2007 results in mathematics were a little above average and broadly average in English and science. Results in reading were much better than in writing. There is a trend of steady improvement over the last few years in the results for Year 6 pupils, especially in mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to participate in lessons and activities after school. They willingly take on responsibilities such as looking after younger pupils and helping to set up the hall for assembly. Strong links with the village church enables them to become involved with the local community and contribute to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' social development is exceptionally good and they get on very well with one another showing sensitivity to the needs of others. As a result, they contribute well to the creation of a safe and secure environment. Though pupils enjoy meeting people from different places, they know little about different cultures because of limited first hand experiences. Pupils enjoy sporting activities and make good efforts to eat healthily. Their understanding of healthy lifestyles is good. Given the progress made with basic skills, pupils' are satisfactorily prepared for the next step in education and future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching develops pupils' basic skills satisfactorily. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils encouraging them to behave well and work hard. Planning is detailed and focuses well

on key skills. Introductions to lessons are usually good and make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. However, tasks do not always match well to the individual needs of pupils, being too easy for some and too hard for others. Support staff provide effective help and encouragement especially to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Where teaching is good, pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas enabling them to clarify their thinking. This has the added advantage of preparing them well for subsequent writing activities. However, in some lessons, such opportunities are missed. Pupils' books are marked regularly but not enough use is made of comments to guide pupils on how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has worked hard to produce a well-organised and innovative curriculum, which links different subjects through themes. Planning also identifies progressive development of learning skills such as research, enquiry and evaluation. In its first year of implementation, this curriculum has already led to increased motivation and interest amongst pupils though it has yet to impact on their writing. The good range of activities outside lessons attracts strong levels of attendance and, together with the wide range of visits and visitors, contributes well to the personal development of pupils. There is particularly strong provision for sporting activities and learning about healthy lifestyles and personal safety. Vibrant and high quality displays reflect good emphasis on subjects such as art, humanities and information and communication technology.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for and looked after. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good. Clear procedures and good use of external agencies ensure the needs of vulnerable pupils, or those who might be at risk, are met well. Appropriate background checks are made on those working in the school. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school. The school has put in place a new system for setting targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics. Though this development is at the early stages of implementation, pupils are now beginning to receive guidance on how to improve their work via these individual targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher provides a clear direction for improvement. Good systems are in place to ensure the school is managed well on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher's monitoring is good and she has accurately pin-pointed the areas for development. Tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and has identified where progress in the past has been inadequate. The school is now addressing this. Because of the changes in staff, the headteacher is currently carrying the bulk of subject responsibilities and there is rather limited involvement of other staff in checking the quality of the school's work. However, the headteacher has good plans in place to address this. The minority of parents who expressed concerns about the recent, high turnover amongst staff and governors can be reassured that these changes have been managed well and that standards have not slipped as a result. Both the headteacher and chair of governors are aware of the need for further communication to parents on these matters. Governors provide enthusiastic support and training for new governors is underway. The finances are managed effectively so that the school is well resourced. The school gives sound value for money.

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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 <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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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>	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 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bradfield Primary School, Bradfield, Manningtree CO11 2UZ

I enjoyed visiting your school very much and particularly enjoyed talking to you. I would like to thank you for making me feel welcome. The school is providing you with a satisfactory education and you are making sound progress. I saw a number of things that were good, including ways in which you help to make the school a better place.

- You get on well with one another and behave well.
- The school provides you with a good curriculum and you join in activities on offer with great enthusiasm.
- Children in the Reception class get off to a good start.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress.
- All the staff care for you and look after you well and, as a result, you feel safe and happy at school.
- Your headteacher leads the school well and staff work well as a team.

There are a few things that could be better. These include:

- helping you to improve the quality of your writing;
- making sure that you get work that is pitched at the right level for you in lessons;
- making sure that you have time to talk about your work so that you can put your ideas down in writing more easily;
- giving you enough advice on how to improve your work so that you achieve your individual targets.

You can certainly help by making sure you find out what you need to do to improve your work as well as by continuing to work hard and enjoying school.

I wish you all well in the future.

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector