

Brockhurst Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116177
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312202
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Grove

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stuart Spicer
Headteacher	Mrs Sandra Eyres
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Avery Lane Gosport PO12 4SR
Telephone number	02392 580471
Fax number	02392 523857

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves an urban area, and is smaller than most primary schools. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, principally moderate learning difficulties, is above average. The school has Investor in People status, and holds the Healthy Schools (Enhanced) award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brockhurst Infant is a good school. It has some outstanding features. Parents warmly acknowledge the school's positive and supportive ethos. One parent wrote that 'the school has such a happy atmosphere', and this is certainly the case. The long-standing headteacher provides strong and principled leadership, which results in an outstanding sense of direction for the school. She enjoys the confidence and wholehearted support of parents, staff and governors. This is shown in other responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, where the overwhelming majority of parents agreed or strongly agreed with every statement.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils really enjoy school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school, and their attentiveness, is excellent. The relationships between adults and pupils are also excellent. Pupils say that they like everything about the school, and that their teachers make learning fun. One parent referred to the 'lovely teachers who are very caring'. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their moral and social development is outstanding, which shows in their behaviour and in the mature ways in which pupils co-operate and collaborate with each other in classrooms.

Pupils' achievement is also good. When they first enter the school, their attainment is below levels expected for their age. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage. When they move into Year 1, their attainment remains below expectations, especially in language, reading and writing. The progress that pupils make across Years 1 and 2 is good. Therefore, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' overall standards are average. Standards in reading and mathematics are slightly higher than those in writing. In reading, the proportion of more able pupils who reach the higher Level 3 standard is about the same as the national figure. However, in mathematics, and more especially in writing, a lower percentage of more able pupils reach this standard than is the case nationally, although there has been recent improvement in each subject.

The main reason for pupils' good progress lies in the consistently good quality of the teaching. Teachers plan lessons well, so that the tasks set cater well for most of the groups of pupils in classes. The learning assistants provide good support, which makes an important contribution to the participation and the good progress of lower-attaining pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties.

The curriculum has a good emphasis on pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, and also supports pupils' personal development particularly well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pastoral care and support for pupils are excellent, and this exemplifies the values of the school very well. Recent improvements in the use of assessment information are having a good impact on the quality of the school's academic guidance for pupils. The school has developed a good system across Key Stage 1 for setting targets for pupils. Teachers are good at assessing pupils' progress towards their targets. In addition, the way in which targets are set for pupils ensures that they make good use of them in their work. This is having a beneficial effect on their achievement.

The leadership and management, and the governance of the school, are good. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and by the team of middle managers. The school has developed an outstanding partnership with parents, and has good links with others, including other primary schools in the cluster, the local secondary school, the nearby Baptist Church and local authority support services. The school's good self-evaluation and the effective

steps taken to introduce improvements demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The teachers and learning assistants form a close-knit team and have developed a warm and happy climate for learning. The adults create very good rapport with the children so that relationships of trust develop. Teachers and assistants provide children with a good model of the use of language, which supports their learning well. A good balance is struck between activities that the adults lead and those the children explore for themselves. Staff take good care of the children. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is good on entry, and develops very well as a result of good teaching. More structured learning, for instance in phonics (letter sounds in words), is also undertaken. The indoor spaces are appropriately stimulating, and good use is made of the outside area, for example to provide activities which develop children's observation and reasoning skills, such as which objects float and which sink in water. The learning assistants provide teaching staff and the children with good support. They are well briefed and are closely involved in all aspects of the work, including the assessment of the children's learning and progress. Assessment information is well used to check children's progress. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards in Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and especially in writing.
- Improve provision for more able pupils in order to increase the proportion who attain above average standards, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Unconfirmed results for 2008 show that standards have risen in all three subjects, and are now average. This is principally because boys had markedly better results than in 2007, especially in writing and in mathematics. In the previous two years, too few pupils had reached the higher levels in these two subjects. In spite of the improvement in 2008, not enough pupils are yet reaching the higher standards in writing and in mathematics, although they do in reading. The 2008 results reflect much better progress by all pupils, and especially by boys. This is because of the improvements that the school has made to teaching and the curriculum, which are leading to better achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are also achieving well in their speaking and listening work because of the good opportunities in subjects such as religious education to practise and extend these skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have a good understanding of what is involved in a healthy lifestyle. This results from the school's healthy lunchtime meal provision, and from efforts to improve the quality of lunchboxes. Morning snacktime, when pupils eat fruit provided free for them, is much enjoyed. Twice-weekly sessions of physical education, and the physical activities available at playtimes, provide good opportunities for developing a healthy lifestyle. The emotional health of any vulnerable children is well supported, notably through the work of the emotional literacy support assistant. Parents confirm that their children feel safe at school. Members of the school council

make a positive contribution, for instance through agreeing rules for the playground and through involvement in fundraising, and helping to campaign for disadvantaged children elsewhere in the world. Pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory in view of their currently average standards in literacy and numeracy. However, pupils are developing good social and collaborative skills in the course of their work in school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers set high expectations for their pupils, and use praise well to motivate them. Teachers are observant and quick to respond to their pupils' needs. Tasks provide good levels of challenge for most groups of pupils and lessons are well paced which holds pupils' interest and attention well. A good range of teaching and assessment strategies are employed, including talk partners, where pairs of pupils formulate their thinking through brief discussion with one another. Teachers also invite pupils on occasions to indicate their level of understanding, for example of the instructions to complete a task. This allows focused support to be given, where necessary. Classroom organisation is imaginative and frequently includes activities such as work in pairs or in groups. Pupils' work is regularly marked by reference to the objectives of the task or to pupils' current targets for improvement. The marking is of good quality.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are well supported by the quality of the curriculum. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills in literacy, but also in subjects such as religious education. Work on reading is effectively supplemented by adult volunteers. Attention to phonics is a prominent and regular feature of literacy work. In mathematics, there is good attention to applying arithmetical knowledge in problem-solving situations. Lessons in personal, social and health education provide good support for pupils' understanding of issues of safety and health. The lessons called 'plan, do and review' enable pupils to show initiative through opportunities to take some responsibility for their own learning in independent work. The curriculum is enhanced by a satisfactory range of visits and visitors. A limited number of extra-curricular activities is available for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The teachers and learning assistants know the pupils very well, and provide very good support by building on their excellent relationships with them. The school makes very good provision for any vulnerable pupils. The role of the home-school link worker makes an important contribution to the good liaison between parents and the school. Pupils accordingly feel secure, and thrive in the school's supportive atmosphere. Procedures to safeguard their welfare are rigorous. Risk assessment arrangements are robust. There are local breakfast and after-school clubs in which the school participates. This year, the school has extended the use of its good record keeping and assessment data into target setting for pupils. The approach to target setting has been well devised, and is making a good contribution to raising standards and improving pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and subject managers rigorously undertake a range of activities to check the quality of the curriculum and teaching and learning. These activities lead to thorough self-evaluation, which is an important aspect of the culture of the school. Recent improvements to teaching and the curriculum in mathematics are a good example of the school's effective action following self-review. The improvement in target-setting arrangements also attests to good self-evaluation. The whole-school targets are realistic, but challenging. In 2008, the targets were largely met, and in some cases exceeded. The commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities is shared by all leaders, and this supports pupils' achievement well. Governors support the school well and fulfil their legal responsibilities. They show a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

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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?	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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
How well 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	3

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

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?	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	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

03 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brockhurst Infant School, Gosport, PO12 4SR

I would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. I enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Brockhurst Infant is a good school, and has some outstanding features. It is a happy place for children to be, as many of your parents say. There are lots of really good things about your school. These are the most important ones.

- Your school has a really lovely atmosphere about it.
- The headteacher and the other school leaders do a good job. They know what is good about your school and they want to make it even better.
- You enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent.
- You have excellent relationships with the teachers and other adults. They take very good care of you.
- Your personal development is good. Your moral and social development is excellent.
- You are making good progress in your learning, and your standards are about average.
- All the teaching in your school is good.
- The teachers have planned a good curriculum, which you find interesting and enjoyable.
- Your Mums and Dads are very pleased with the school.
- Your school has excellent relationships with your parents.

The headteacher and the other leaders have worked hard to make the school such a good place. I have asked the school to make things even better by:

- raising your standards in reading and mathematics, and especially in writing
- doing more to help those of you who learn fast so that you do even better, especially in writing and mathematics.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. I really enjoyed my time in your school. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector