

Brompton-Westbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118561
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	312992
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fred Chapman
Headteacher	Jane Heyes
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2004
School address	Kings Bastion Brompton Gillingham ME7 5DQ
Telephone number	01634 844152
Fax number	01634 831762

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Inspection number	312992

© 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children enter this average sized school with levels of abilities that are well below those typical for three-year-olds, particularly in their social, emotional, language and mathematical skills. Nearly half of the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is higher than in most schools; in some year groups the proportion is greater. A high number of pupils often leave or arrive at short notice during the school year, partly because their parents are personnel at the military base nearby. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The school is a base for local 'Sure Start' activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brompton-Westbrook Primary School is a good school and has some outstanding aspects to its work. The headteacher, staff and governors work successfully together to create a school where pupils and parents alike are proud to attend and support. One parent reflected the views of many by saying, 'It's a wonderful school'.

What are the main factors for this success? Firstly, the staff work hard to make the children's start to school as smooth as possible in the Nursery. Home visits, open mornings and invitations to lunch to see the school in action eases their concerns. The Nursery children often share the same activity areas with Reception children which aides their move into their next class. As a result of well-planned activities and good teaching, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they make good progress. When they start Year 1, many come close to reaching the expected goals for their age, particularly in their social and emotional development. Second comes typically good teaching and learning. This ensures that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), make good progress and achieve well. A small amount of teaching across the school lacks pace and is not as successful at motivating quieter pupils to contribute to lessons or allow others enough time to complete their work. This reduces their rate of learning. Despite these small variations in teaching, by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Pupils have a good awareness, for example, of how to punctuate their work accurately but do not always use a wide enough range of exciting words to make their writing more lively. In mathematics, pupils' calculation skills are often accurate, but they lack confidence in using these skills to solve problems. Those who are at the early stages of learning English achieve well because of high levels of teaching support and guidance. Pupils achieve particularly well in science and their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the last inspection to the expected levels.

Helping to accelerate pupils' learning are outstanding welfare arrangements that cater especially well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are vulnerable. These help the children feel very safe and they are confident adults will help them. This helps their personal development to be outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well as they know right from wrong. They appreciate other cultures and they contribute enthusiastically to the life of the school. They adopt very positive approaches to eating and exercise, and they really like helping in the local community. A good curriculum, including activities beyond school, broadens the pupils' experiences successfully.

Underpinning the pace of recent improvement is good leadership and management. The headteacher and staff work very well as a team and accurately identify areas that need improvement. As a result, effective action has raised pupils' attainment, while extending their personal development and care significantly. New facilities due to open soon reflect their passion to improve provision further. Pupils' and parents' views are highly valued and help shape school life.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children experience a warm welcome and a good start to school life when they enter the Nursery. Very good links with parents enable pupils to settle in quickly. Well thought out activities in both the Nursery and Reception classes

foster a variety of rich experiences to broaden children's outlook and foster their learning. This stage of the school is managed well and promotes effective teaching in most areas of learning. In some activities, quieter children in the Reception classes are not always involved enough in discussions. Teaching is especially good at promoting children's personal development and well-being. As a result, children achieve quickly. Most come close to reaching the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1, particularly in their social and personal development. Despite making good progress, their language and number skills lag behind the other areas. An exciting outside play area develops children's physical skills, creativity and ability to play together well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils in Years 1 to 6 improve the range of exciting words they use in their writing.
- Help pupils in Years 1 to 6 to use their number skills and knowledge to solve mathematical problems more confidently.
- Ensure that teaching gives pupils enough time to apply their skills in their work and encourages those who are quieter to contribute more in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. They make up ground well and their progress is good in the Nursery and Reception classes. This good start is built upon steadily in Years 1 to 6. By the time they leave, pupils reach broadly average standards. This good progress for pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is aided by pupils' excellent personal development. In addition, pupils who join the school at short notice, benefit from small group tuition in the 'personalised learning centre'. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve well because of effective support, often in small groups. While pupils' attainment is now at the levels expected in ICT and science, there are still weaknesses in pupils' written work caused by their narrow vocabulary and in their problem solving skills in mathematics. The school's own checks on current work indicate that the pupils' progress is good and improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are brilliantly behaved, friendly and courteous. This stems from their strong sense of what is right and wrong. As pupils feel very safe and secure, they are crystal clear about how to deal with any bullying that occurs. Pupils say they value the help of peer mentors or mediators. As one said, 'they really make a difference'. This helps them make friends easily, despite their differing backgrounds or beliefs. In lessons, pupils work together really well. As a result, they enjoy attending. The school's efforts to improve attendance has worked. Newcomers report they settle in quickly. Pupils understand and adopt healthy living principles and many take part and enjoy games activities to increase their fitness levels. Pupils make an excellent contribution to both the school and the wider community. There is a very active and 'vocal' school council. Children regularly contribute their views on issues ranging from the appointments of school staff to what makes a good lesson. Beyond school, pupils surveyed local traffic hazards to propose changes and visited the local army barracks and town centre to sing. Local and national charities also benefit from the pupils' desire to help others. As a result of their high levels of

self-esteem, better skills in ICT and acute sense of responsibility for others, pupils are prepared well for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are fun, well planned and develop a broad range of pupils' skills. Good relationships fostered by staff mean that the vast majority of pupils are keen to learn. The 'personalised learning centre' effectively meets the needs of the many new arrivals that need help to settle in or catch up. The allocation of specific teaching time to help those pupils learning to speak English is enabling them to keep pace with classmates. The use of interactive whiteboards in class, and computers in the ICT suite, has helped remedy past weaknesses in pupils' computer based skills and experience. The flexible use of small group teaching is effective in lessons and pupils with LDD are given regular specialised help. Teaching sets a good pace in many lessons and excites pupils' 'learning juices', but this is not a consistent feature in all classes. In some, explanations by the teacher are too long. This means some pupils become too passive or do not have enough time to practise their skills and complete their work. Teachers keep a close check on the progress of pupils' work by helpful marking and individual discussions to discuss progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has improved its curriculum. It now provides a broad range of activities, including a modern foreign language, and is related strongly to pupils' needs. Activities in the Foundation Stage classes promote pupils' social and physical skills particularly well. Topic planning in all classes takes into account what pupils already know and what they want to find out. As a result, pupils say they find lessons enjoyable. Specific activities for pupils with LDD are well thought out, often taught in very small groups, and enable them to make good progress. This helps boost their confidence. In some class lessons, activities which foster pupils' writing skills or problem solving in mathematics are often too brief for them to extend or practise their skills. Good planning in ICT and science has improved the pupils' skills and confidence levels. Regular opportunities to go on visits or residential trips broaden pupils' experiences and many visitors come to the school to talk about their work. There are stimulating themed days, storytellers who visit and a 'Dragon's Den' competition for highlighting children's inventions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils readily tell you how safe and secure they feel as the school provides excellent levels of care. Excellent arrangements ensure a smooth start to school and special mentors help aid transfer to other schools. The extra help provided in the therapeutic room or 'my space' quiet room is of high quality. Pupils with LDD benefit from an extensive range of effective support, often led by well-briefed teaching assistants or leading teachers. Child protection procedures are excellent and, despite an extremely small number of parents having some concern, arrangements for securing pupils' health and safety are rigorous and of high quality. Children surveyed local road hazards to highlight potential dangers, received advice about staying safe during the holidays and were involved in organising a 'healthy living fair'. The school works

extremely effectively with many outside agencies, such as school nurses, paediatricians and social services, as well as parents. Pupils have an excellent range of personal and class targets to which they often refer and help set. This focuses their efforts to improve very effectively, and helped ensure that pupils met their challenging targets in English and mathematics last year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, supported by senior staff, has successfully created a strong team approach to developing pupils' all-round development. This has resulted in the high levels of their personal development and care. Senior leaders set a clear focus on boosting pupils' achievement, often by increasing the number of highly qualified and specialist staff available. This is helping pupils increase their rate of progress while ensuring all pupils achieve well regardless of their background. The school takes the views of parents and pupils very seriously, often gained by searching questionnaires. Suggested changes to improve lunchtimes and facilities at parent consultation evenings were adopted. The school's accurate self-evaluation, including the views of parents and pupils, means the school is effective in setting, and acting upon, its clear priorities for improvement. The governors give satisfactory support. They have several vacancies caused by posting of military personnel at short notice. This makes it difficult for remaining governors to oversee some aspects of the school's work. However, based on the school's track record of success, the school has good capacity to improve still further.

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?	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?	1
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?	1
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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 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?	1

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	2
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	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**

18 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brompton-Westbrook Primary School, Gillingham, ME7 5DQ I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection that our team carried out recently. We really enjoyed looking around. We think that yours is a good school. Nearly all of your parents and carers agree with us that your school looks after you brilliantly. Many said it was 'really good' and they are right.

- Here are some of the things I found out:
- You make good progress in your work and you reach the levels expected by Year 6.
- The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good start to school.
- All of you work hard, behave brilliantly and get on with each other really well.
- You said the staff make sure that you feel very safe and really look after you.
- Your help in the local community is excellent; well done with the traffic survey!
- The school helps new pupils who arrive at short notice to settle in well.
- Outside helpers such as health visitors and nurses give the school excellent support.
- You really like your work, especially in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Your computer suite is great by the way!
- The teachers make most lessons interesting and keep a close eye on your progress.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to make the school a super place to be and for it to get even better.
- I have asked the school to look at three things to improve:
- To help you use even better and more interesting words in your stories and accounts.
- To help you develop better skills to work out mathematical problems quickly and confidently.
- To work on making some of your lessons more interesting and give some of you more time to complete your work.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard and by helping the staff spot where even more improvements are needed.

Kevin Hodge Lead inspector

Annex B



18 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brompton-Westbrook Primary School, Gillingham, ME7 5DQ

I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection that our team carried out recently. We really enjoyed looking around. We think that yours is a good school. Nearly all of your parents and carers agree with us that your school looks after you brilliantly. Many said it was 'really good' and they are right.

Here are some of the things I found out:

- You make good progress in your work and you reach the levels expected by Year 6.
- The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good start to school.
- All of you work hard, behave brilliantly and get on with each other really well.
- You said the staff make sure that you feel very safe and really look after you.
- Your help in the local community is excellent; well done with the traffic survey!
- The school helps new pupils who arrive at short notice to settle in well.
- Outside helpers such as health visitors and nurses give the school excellent support.
- You really like your work, especially in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Your computer suite is great by the way!
- The teachers make most lessons interesting and keep a close eye on your progress.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to make the school a super place to be and for it to get even better.

I have asked the school to look at three things to improve:

- To help you use even better and more interesting words in your stories and accounts.
- To help you develop better skills to work out mathematical problems quickly and confidently.
- To work on making some of your lessons more interesting and give some of you more time to complete your work.

You can help the school by continuing to work hard and by helping the staff spot where even more improvements are needed.

Kevin Hodge
Lead inspector