

# Brownlow School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313454
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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.

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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 (total)	573
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Pell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kath Deverall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Limes Avenue Melton Mowbray LE13 1QL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01664 562315
<b>Fax number</b>	01664 480492

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' standards and achievement across the school
- the effectiveness of teaching in challenging the more able pupils in English and mathematics
- the impact of middle managers on raising standards and promoting the quality of provision.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, assessment and tracking records, observations of the school at work, and discussions with senior leaders, staff, the chair of governors and pupils. The parental questionnaire responses were analysed. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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 the report.

## Description of the school

Brownlow is much larger than the average primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, although the numbers are much higher in some year groups. A significant minority of these pupils enter the school during Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in three Reception classes. Following the previous headteacher's absence because of ill health from October 2007 and subsequent early retirement in September 2008, the deputy has been acting headteacher. A permanent replacement has been appointed from April 2009. A private provider manages the before- and after-school care provided onsite on a daily basis for children.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Brownlow provides a good education for its pupils. The overwhelming majority of parents recognise its many good and outstanding features. 'The ethos of the school is outstanding and as a parent I trust that every aspect of our children's development is being addressed and developed', was just one of the many positive comments from parents. Pupils, as well as staff, thoroughly enjoy school. Because good management structures are in place, the acting headteacher and senior leaders have ensured the school runs smoothly until the new headteacher is in post. However, the school has not stood still and it is clear that improvements to assessment and tracking procedures and monitoring of pupils' progress have been instigated as a result of its good self-evaluation. The senior leadership team has begun to involve middle managers more effectively in monitoring the quality of teaching and how well all groups of pupils are progressing. Together with governors, who are supportive but also challenging, they make a strong team. The leadership rightly recognises there is room to develop further the responsibilities of its middle managers to ensure they are even more accountable for the progress of their pupils.

Children enter school with skill and ability levels that are similar to those seen nationally, although elements of communication, language and literacy are lower. As a result of the improving provision and teaching, children make good progress so that on entry to Year 1, standards are above average. Good progress throughout the rest of the school results in pupils attaining standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' literacy skills are good and they speak confidently and clearly. Good opportunities to undertake practical activities in both science and mathematics help to ensure pupils' attainment in these subjects is above average. Overall, achievement is good. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, not only because they have good basic skills, but also because their social skills are well developed. However, the school has rightly recognised there is room for improvement. A small number of more able pupils are capable of doing better in their mathematics at Key Stage 1 and there is scope for a similar group of pupils to improve their writing at Key Stage 2.

Features of the pupils' outstanding personal development are seen in their awareness of how to keep healthy and safe, their growing independence and their capacity to work successfully with others. They really enjoy taking part in the wide range of physical activities on offer, and their enthusiasm to eat healthily is seen in the opportunity to eat fruit at break times, extended into Key Stage 2 at the request of pupils. The pupils' outstanding behaviour, enjoyment of school and attitudes towards work are reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils know they will be listened to. In turn, they play their part by being prepared to listen.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. A particular strength is the way in which teachers question pupils, encouraging them to justify and explain their answers and thus developing their reasoning skills effectively. Teachers plan work that is both enjoyable and challenging and, as a result, this really engages the pupils. Worthy of special note is the support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Very effective analysis of the diverse needs of these pupils and good support from well-briefed learning support assistants ensure that their progress is consistently good. For example, some pupils are provided with sessions before school to improve their fine motor skills and there are many different strategies to help those pupils who struggle with their literacy and numeracy skills. Whilst teachers generally match work well to the pupils' ability, the school acknowledges the need to be sharper and more effective in ensuring all of the more able pupils do as well as they should. A small number

of these pupils are sometimes required unnecessarily to listen to explanations rather than getting on with writing activities. The school is very successful at reintegrating those pupils with behavioural difficulties who have had to move schools. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn French, and the very good music and sporting provision throughout the school adds considerably to the good quality of the curriculum. Pupils comment very favourably on the wide range of clubs in which they can participate, both at lunchtime and after school.

Pupils are well looked after and cared for. The good assessment and tracking procedures provide the school with an accurate picture of how well pupils are performing. This information is used well to plan levels of intervention to eradicate any underachievement. However, opportunities are missed to set targets for individual pupils to encourage them to play an active part in gauging their own progress in mathematics, and this is particularly so for the younger pupils.

Senior leaders work hard to ensure the school works closely with its local community. Parents appreciate the very good communication and comment on the strong relationship that exists between home and school. Links with the local high school enhance the learning opportunities and smooth the transition process. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in local charitable activities and numerous occasions when the choirs and music groups perform locally. Pupils have been effectively involved in the school's travel plan and the local council supports the pupils' efforts in recycling. The leadership has also ensured that its curriculum provides pupils with a good awareness of different countries and their cultures. It is now seeking ways to ensure they become more aware of the rich diversity of cultures and faiths in this country. The school has successfully addressed the issues identified in the previous report.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are provided with a good start to their education, ensuring they achieve well. Children settle quickly when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the well-thought-out induction procedures. They are very happy, confident learners, because staff give them the right amount of help as well as good encouragement to become independent. Teachers have high expectations of children and, as a result, their behaviour is excellent and they work industriously. Outstanding relationships and a strong sense of belonging underpin the school's caring ethos. Good teaching ensures children make progress in all areas of learning and attain standards that are above average on entry to Year 1. Thorough assessments ensure activities are well matched to children's ability and maturity. The basic skills are promoted well, with regular sessions focusing on letters and sounds. Staff make effective use of the good facilities, providing a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leader has a secure overview of the provision and how it can improve and is rightly seeking to determine how the outside learning environment can be improved further.

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

- Develop the use of individual targets in mathematics to ensure that all of the more able pupils attain as well as they should at Key Stage 1.
- Ensure teachers make more effective use of time in lessons to accelerate the progress of the most able pupils in writing at Key Stage 2.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	1
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**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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



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

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brownlow School, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1QL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You were very polite and friendly and are right to be proud of your school. It is a good school.

This is what we found out about your school

- Children have a good start in the Reception classes.
- Good teaching means that you make good progress throughout the rest of the school.
- You behave exceptionally well, really enjoy your work and are keen to come to school.
- Adults are kind and caring and they look after you well.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be. You are keen to take advantage of the many clubs and activities.
- The school is very good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe, and we are pleased that you do your best to follow a healthy lifestyle.
- Those in charge of the school are working hard to make it better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Make sure you have individual targets in mathematics, especially in Years 1 and 2, so you have a better understanding of how to improve your work.
- Ensure the older ones of you, who find work a little easy in English, do better by making sure you are able to get on with your work a little more quickly.

We enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We want you to help your teachers by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr Paul Edwards Lead inspector