

Battling Brook Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119971
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313463
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan E Lowry

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	443
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Binns
Headteacher	John Talbot
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	Frederick Avenue Hinckley LE10 0EX
Telephone number	01455 634701
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a much larger than average primary school built on a large site, with plenty of green spaces for pupils. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but there are a number of pupils from a range of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. There is private pre-school provision on the site. The school has been successful in gaining a number of awards, including Eco School Bronze Award, and was one of the first schools in the county to achieve Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Effective teaching, a rich, vibrant and stimulating curriculum, together with the high level of care, lead to very positive outcomes for pupils. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive and they are appreciative of the energy and vision which the headteacher has brought to the school. As one parent said, 'Battling Brook is a fantastic school, offering so many opportunities to learn new activities and skills.'

Achievement overall is good and pupils attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils do better in English and science than they do in mathematics and this reflects the school's drive last year to raise standards in literacy. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. The leaders in the school actively seek new ways of supporting pupils. As a result, there are a great number of initiatives and interventions that have been set up to support pupils and these have had a great effect in raising standards, particularly in literacy.

The overall picture is of good teaching that continues to improve. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is outstanding at times. Senior managers who demonstrate outstanding practice are good role models for their colleagues. Relationships within school are a wonderful feature of the school. Pupils are treated respectfully and, in return, show a huge amount of respect and care for both their peers and the adults who work with them. There are very high expectations placed on pupils in terms of behaviour and presentation and they respond well to this. As a result, the school is a very calm and safe place for them to learn. A small minority of pupils have difficulty managing their behaviour but the strategies used to deal with instances of inappropriate behaviour are very effective.

The curriculum is an excellent feature of the school. Considerable thought, time and effort have contributed to making the day-to-day curriculum relevant and inspiring. Pupils comment positively on these changes. They recognise that writing is more interesting when coupled with drama, information and communication technology,, art and many other curriculum areas.

Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding and pupils play a huge part in the development of the school and, in particular, the environment. The learning environment of the school does much to enhance pupils' great enjoyment and experience. From chickens in the playground to a space room filled with light, Battling Brook is an innovative, exiting and vibrant place to learn. Attendance is now good, and improving because of rigorous intervention.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding with exemplary pastoral care. Tracking of pupils' progress is faultless and enables early identification of pupils who need help.

The leadership and management of the school are exemplary. School self-evaluation is a robust process and very well supported by effective action planning. Teamwork is a major strength and is a key factor in the school moving forward on a number of fronts. The headteacher is both innovative and inspiring, and an equally focused senior management team, which complements his strong leadership style, supports him most effectively. It is clear that the whole school community, including governors, embraces his vision and this has brought about dramatic change within the school. The significant improvements since the last inspection and the pace of change show the school has excellent capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enter Reception with skills that are below that expected for their age. Children make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1, they have attained broadly average standards. The Foundation Stage is a very safe and secure place for children to enjoy their very first educational experiences. They show a confidence that only comes from feeling very safe. There are seamless free-flow activities, using both the inside and outdoor environment. The leader in this area is highly skilled with good subject knowledge and a supportive and skilled team. Teaching and leadership of this stage are consistently good. Transition arrangements are very good, from the on-site pre-school facility into Reception and from Reception into Year 1. At every point, thought is given to the well-being of the child.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress of pupils further through better use of day-to-day assessment, particularly in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's skills on entry to the school are below those expected for their age. Pupils progress well throughout the school and by the end of Year 6, they attain above average standards, apart from mathematics, which remain broadly average. There have been substantial input and resources placed on improving literacy, which have had a significant effect and have raised the standards above national averages. The school now needs to replicate this support within mathematics. Pupils make good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other curriculum areas. All of them make good progress, including both gifted and talented pupils and pupils who have difficulty with their reading, writing and numeracy skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Behaviour throughout the school is good and improving. There are very clear boundaries set by the school community and school leaders apply the behaviour policy rigorously. Pupils know that the sanctions exist for everyone's good and they trust the school leaders to take action where necessary. Pupils behave well around school, are clearly safe and are polite and well-mannered to adults. They clearly enjoy school and this is reflected in their parents' views. One parent said, 'Our daughter loves going to school and her confidence and enthusiasm have grown over the last three years. This is largely due to all the teaching staff involved in bringing out the best in her.' Social, moral and spiritual aspects of the school's life are all outstanding. Pupils understand and share the school's mission statement. The social and moral code of the school is a strong thread running through all activities. They have an outstanding understanding of what a healthy life means, and initiatives such as 'Eat your Greens' have done much to enhance pupils' awareness. The outdoor environment also offers huge opportunities for physical activity and pupils are very keen to make use of the 'Trim Trail'. The pupils' academic skills and excellent social skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and actively support the school's behaviour policy. There is outstanding use of some resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards, which are used skilfully to captivate pupils' interest. There is good use made of targets and learning intentions to enable pupils to see what is needed to improve their learning. This is particularly evident and effective during literacy lessons, where a commercial writing scheme and its associated elements is used to drive up standards, but is less well structured in numeracy lessons. Marking is generally very good, although, where it is less successful, teachers have not identified the things pupils need to do to improve their work, or followed up on comments made. Teaching assistants play a very effective role, supporting pupils from a range of ability groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is exceptionally lively and offers many opportunities for success. The newly developed creative curriculum is already having an impact both on the enjoyment of pupils and on standards attained. Literacy skills, which are developed through other subjects, are good and improving. The curriculum is enriched and enhanced with some very good quality music provision, as well as very good use of ICT to support learning. Theme days offer added interest to the pupils' experience of their topic with some very good outcomes. Links with other providers and agencies are very good. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their skills, for instance the school choir has performed at the Royal Albert Hall.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All safeguarding checks are in place and child protection arrangements are secure and rigorous. Staff take great care to ensure pupils are well looked after and cared for. As a result, pupils feel very safe and secure in school. The pastoral support offered by all the staff is outstanding. There is a real sense that every child matters in this school and everyone within school, including lunchtime supervisors and kitchen staff, demonstrate this. Academic guidance is also outstanding. The school values and makes use of the expertise from many outside agencies to improve the progress and well-being of vulnerable pupils. The outstanding assessment and tracking of pupils enable leaders at all levels to identify pupils who need help and to put effective support in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher and his staff have taken this school a long way, from a difficult starting point. He has shown a strong stance on a number of issues to effect the change that has been necessary. The management team and the governing body have supported the headteacher very well. A clear vision, based on accurate self-evaluation, has been used very effectively to drive school improvement. Parents recognise the positive changes and many families are now

choosing to come to this school from areas other than its catchment area. The views of one parent were reflected by many when commenting, 'Mr Talbot is very passionate about this school and he has earned the respect of teachers, parents and pupils.' High quality data and tracking information are used well by managers at all levels to identify and address school improvement priorities.

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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?	1
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	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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 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	1
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	2
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?	1
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?	1
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	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

4 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Battling Brook Community Primary School, Hinckley, LE10 0EX

My colleagues and I would like to thank you all for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. You were all so polite and helpful and it was a pleasure to come and see all that you have been doing and to find out what it is like to be a pupil in Battling Brook.

We found that you are making good progress and by the end of Year 6 are achieving standards which are above those found in other schools. This is because of the good teaching that you receive. Many of you talk about the changes in the way that you are taught. You know that linking writing to other subjects makes writing more interesting and you think that you are doing better as a result. We think so too and think that your curriculum is outstanding. Your literacy work is going from strength to strength, but we think that you now have to concentrate on your maths work.

It is clear that all adults in school care about your welfare and we can see from your behaviour in school that you know what is expected and you try to keep to the rules. You are also clear that the school will deal fairly with anyone who does not keep to the rules. As a result, your school is a very happy, calm and well-ordered place. The school council has helped a great deal and we can see how the environment has changed because of the pupils' good ideas.

Your headteacher has shown that he knows how to help you progress well and he is working very hard with the staff to make sure that you have a great time in a great place, and that you will have a really great learning experience in the process. You can help the school to get even better by working hard in your mathematics.

Best wishes for the future.

Susan E Lowry Lead inspector