

Bramley Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106906
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	324485
Inspection date	8 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Joan McKenna

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	295
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Thomas
Headteacher	Mr A Wood
Date of previous school inspection	24 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Howard Road Bramley Rotherham South Yorkshire S66 2SY
Telephone number	01709 543 664
Fax number	01709 543 664

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and achievement in writing, especially for boys and higher attaining pupils; arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress; and the effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Evidence was gathered from: the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessments of pupils' standards and progress; documentation provided by the school; discussions with the headteacher, other school leaders and pupils; observations of the school at work; and questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but evidence was gathered to check the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, and this is referred to where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Almost all of the pupils attending this larger than average size school are of White British heritage. Fewer than usual are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. The school provides specialist provision for pupils with a hearing impairment. The EYFS unit caters for 20 younger children part-time and 40 older children full-time. The school has gained the healthy school, Activemark, excellence in enterprise education and assessment for learning leading aspect awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding aspects. Central to its philosophy is the concept that all adults and pupils who work and learn within it have responsibility for ensuring it is a harmonious, inclusive and continually improving community. This is achieved by giving everyone, even the youngest children, purposeful opportunities for making decisions and becoming actively involved. This takes place within a supportive environment and it engenders a strong, collective sense of commitment to the school.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well. From standards that are broadly in line with expectations on entry they leave school with standards that are consistently above the national average. They are highest in mathematics and science, where the results of tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 have been significantly above the national results every year since the last inspection. Pupils have achieved very well in these subjects, and, despite a slight dip in provisional results in 2008, pupils continue to achieve well. Standards and achievement in English have been less good, mainly because of weaker progress in writing. Improving writing was an area for improvement identified at the last inspection. The school has worked hard to tackle this, through developing the curriculum and introducing new approaches to teaching and learning, with some success. Standards in writing at Key Stage 1 are now consistently above average. The action taken has been slower to show impact at Key Stage 2, but, in 2008, provisional Key Stage 2 results in writing, and in English overall, rose considerably and were above the most recently published national results. While this is positive, there is still work to be done to improve further standards in writing. Boys attain lower standards than girls throughout the school. Although boys enter with lower levels, the school nevertheless recognises the need to reduce the gender gap. The standards attained by higher attaining pupils, while improved, are still not as high as they should be.

The school has recently taken action to strengthen its arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress. The system has now been computerised, which enables easier identification of how individual pupils are achieving. Data is now also analysed more easily and thoroughly, for example, by gender or ability to see how different groups compare.

Target-setting is more systematic than previously. Pupils now have end of key stage, end of year and end of term targets. These help teachers meet pupils' different needs more precisely. Because pupils know their shorter term targets and what they have to do to reach them, they can take on some personal responsibility for improving their work. However, aspects of these arrangements are new and have not yet had time to be fully implemented or demonstrate their effectiveness through more consistent achievement. The guidance given to pupils through the marking of their work is variable. Some is very helpful, but not all gives clear enough guidance as to how pupils might improve their work.

From the moment children start school, they are warmly welcomed into the nurturing environment provided. As well as ensuring that pupils are successful academically, there is a strong commitment to ensuring they develop well as confident, caring and responsible young people. Excellent action is taken to promote this and, as a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding. The opportunities they are given for active involvement, such as designing and creating the science garden and outside sculptures, giving presentations to national conferences and designing and operating a gym during enterprise week, help them become aware, informed and mature. Their behaviour is excellent. An outstanding, rich and creative curriculum that is well taught are just two of the reasons that pupils enjoy school so much. While giving good

attention to promoting their basic skills, the curriculum promotes pupils' broader interests and talents very well, such as the accomplished school orchestra, for example. Classrooms are very attractive and stimulating environments for learning. Systematic development of the playground areas, with pupils' involvement, has resulted in a good range of large equipment to promote active and healthy play. An outside theatre is the latest addition. Extremely good relationships are evident and pupils are caring towards each other. Pupils with hearing impairments are fully integrated and valued members of the school community. Pupils feel secure and able to approach adults with any concerns. The school takes pupils' well-being seriously and arrangements for checking the suitability of adults working in the school meet requirements.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides clear direction and demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring the school is constantly improving. Other leaders and staff follow his lead and there is a strong and effective team approach to developing provision. The school takes its community responsibilities seriously and promotes pupils' understanding of their place in the locality and wider world well. There are excellent partnerships with other agencies to promote pupils' well-being and achievement. Parents are very supportive of the school, as typified by the many endorsements given by them such as, 'My children have had a very happy, positive and challenging education at Bramley Grange.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision in the EYFS ensures that children experience an excellent start to school life. Children settle in quickly, helped by the very warm welcome, attractive environment and wide range of exciting activities and resources both inside and outdoors. Their independence and confidence is promoted from the outset and, as a result, children develop very well personally, socially and emotionally. Through role-play and games children develop varied life skills, including an understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and some awareness of financial matters. The rich and practical curriculum is well planned and organised, and provides many opportunities for children to make choices for themselves. Adults interact sensitively and carefully with children to promote their knowledge and skills. A robust and manageable system of assessment has been introduced which enables staff to identify how children are progressing and to take effective action to promote further progress. In 2008, children left the EYFS having attained standards above national expectations in all areas of the curriculum. Given that on entry their standards were in line with expectations, this represents extremely good progress. The EYFS leader has established a highly effective team commitment and approach providing the best for children. As a result children develop into well-rounded, confident and independent learners. This is recognised and valued by parents as the following comment indicates: 'My child is having a fantastic start to school life.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement, especially in writing, with a particular emphasis on raising the standards attained by boys and higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure that the new systems for tracking pupils' progress are used to take targeted action to promote improvement and that pupils receive effective guidance on how to improve their work.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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 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**

Thank you very much for being so friendly and welcoming when my colleague and I visited your school earlier this week. I enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and hearing the orchestra perform. I would like to let you know my findings about your school.

Your school is a good school and has some outstanding features. These include the excellent start that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They also include how well you develop personally. Your behaviour and relationships with each other are excellent. We think the way you are involved in making decisions and taking action to improve the school, such as when you created the science garden and large sculpture, is very good indeed and this helps to develop your confidence and skills very well. You enjoy school very much. We think you are well taught and that the curriculum provides you with many opportunities to be creative and to develop your interests and talents, as well as improving your learning in subjects. Staff care for you well and you feel able to approach them with any worries.

You achieve well, especially in mathematics and science, and the standards you reach by the time you leave school are above average. Your standards in English have not been as good, but, because of the action taken by the school, these are improving. We think you could reach higher standards still, especially in writing, and we have asked the school to take more action to help you make even better progress. We have asked it to make sure that boys and girls do equally well and that those of you capable of doing harder work are given more opportunities to reach really high standards. The school has introduced some new arrangements for checking on your progress. We have asked it to use the information gained to help you make even more progress and to make sure that teachers give you enough guidance on how to improve your work when they mark it.

Your headteacher and other staff are working hard and successfully to improve the school for you. You can help them by continuing to do what you are doing now - working hard, being kind to each other and doing all you can to make your school even better.