

Brightside Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106987
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	324502
Inspection dates	26–27 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	228
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 Stuart Trickey
Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Jenkin Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S9 1AS

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	26–27 February 2009
Inspection number	324502

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage through its Nursery and Reception classes. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the proportion who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is also above average and rising, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. An above average and increasing number of pupils are joining and leaving the school at different times in the school year. The school has recently experienced some staff absence. The school has gained the Basic Skills Award, a Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and Artsmark Silver.

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 where pupils make outstanding progress in their academic studies and their personal development. It provides excellent value for money. Pupils have a terrific time at school because of lively teaching combined with an outstanding curriculum that provides many interesting things to do. Parents are full of praise for the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. They say that staff are 'welcoming and approachable'.

Many children have a very low level of skills, including poorly developed speech and language, when they join the Nursery class but by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 2 their academic standards are above the national average, particularly in reading and writing. Outstanding teaching and learning make a strong contribution to outstanding achievement. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils who rise magnificently to the challenge. Pupils are encouraged to be active and independent learners. Skilled support staff also make a significant contribution to securing pupils' excellent progress. The school has focused very effectively on dismantling barriers to achievement and, as a result, all groups of pupils make exceptional progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress because they are extremely well supported. The excellent curriculum is very well planned with the needs of these particular pupils always in mind. It is continually refined and improved and ensures that pupils learn very effectively including about how to keep healthy and safe. The quality of care, guidance and support is another outstanding element of the school's work. Procedures for safeguarding meet government requirements. The school caters for some children with high levels of need but ensures they are carefully nurtured so that they gradually start to overcome their difficulties and begin to blossom. Very effective work with external agencies helps to make sure that these vulnerable pupils are very well supported. Those who join the school late are warmly welcomed and settle in quickly.

Although the headteacher's tremendous dedication and determination underpins the outstanding leadership and management, the hard work and enthusiasm of the whole staff makes a huge contribution to the very positive atmosphere in school. Extremely rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, including the checking of teaching and learning and analysis of data, has allowed the school to pinpoint exactly where it needs to improve and to take extremely effective action to bring this about. The school's commitment to promoting community cohesion is of the very highest quality. Parents speak enthusiastically about how courses run by the school have developed their own skills and ensured that they can support their children's learning at home. Pupils have extensive opportunities to learn about each others' faiths and cultures. As a result there is a very harmonious atmosphere of warmth, consideration and compassion where each and every pupil feels equally valued and safe.

The relentless focus on improvement, combined with very effective day-to-day management, that involves very well established routines and procedures has ensured that standards continued to rise and achievement improved even when developments were at risk of slowing because of changes to staffing. This demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that children enjoy school, grow in confidence and make good progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents say their children are very happy and that the teachers are 'wonderful'. A significant number of children have skills that are very low in relation to the levels expected for their age when they start Nursery. These include speech and language difficulties and other barriers to achievement. Although they make good progress they still enter Year 1 with skills that are below the age-related expectations, particularly in language and communication. Achievement has improved in the Early Years Foundation Stage over recent years. Good teaching of the links between sounds and letters has improved this aspect of children's learning, but their writing has not improved as rapidly.

Relationships between adults and children are very positive and all children benefit from good quality care and support. Children enjoy school and each other's company. All areas of learning are addressed well and there is an appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and those children choose for themselves. Generally children's progress is carefully checked and the information obtained is used to plan activities that both interest children and move their learning on. However, teachers do not always actively encourage children to try all the activities on offer and this can result in children, particularly but not exclusively boys, spending too long involved in physical activities or playing on computers. Consequently, they miss out on opportunities to practise their writing skills. The use of the outdoors has improved since the previous inspection and it is now much easier for children to move between indoor and outdoor activities. Good support from adults is helping children develop their thinking skills and their speech. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other factors that make learning difficult are identified quickly and offered effective support. Good leadership and management have ensured that new members of staff are developing a good understanding of how young children learn.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are involved in the full range of activities available, particularly those that encourage writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching and a curriculum that is carefully designed to meet pupils' needs ensures that all pupils, whatever their level of ability, make exceptional progress in Key Stage 1. As a result they reach above average standards, particularly in reading and writing. A strong emphasis on speaking and listening is helping pupils to improve their speech and vocabulary. Well considered strategies for teaching the mechanics of writing underpins pupils' rapid progress in the subject. Consequently, by the end of Year 2 pupils are enthusiastic about writing and they produce lengthy, interesting pieces of neat work using a good range of vocabulary and accurate punctuation. An emphasis on developing pupils' calculation skills alongside their ability to solve problems has contributed to raising standards in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Many pupils join the school with poorly developed social skills but they are taught to be independent and responsible. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and this is reflected in their strong moral values and their ability to empathise with others. From the Nursery class onwards there is a strong emphasis on developing good behaviour and manners. Pupils respond very well and are increasingly able to manage their own conduct and, as a result, their behaviour is good. Similarly, pupils' attendance has improved and it is now satisfactory, with most attending regularly. They really like their teachers and want to please them. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They fully embrace the shared values of the school community that include tolerance and the acceptance of differences. Many firm friendships develop between pupils from diverse backgrounds. Pupils are very proud of their school and are determined to make an important contribution to school life, for example, through their involvement with the school council and Playground Buddies. Pupils' very good commitment to the local community is demonstrated through their involvement in Sheffield in Bloom and extensive fundraising. Outstanding academic progress combined with very positive attitudes to learning means that pupils are extremely well placed for future success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding, particularly in Year 2. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils' progress. Lessons are very well prepared and teachers constantly take the needs of individual pupils into account. Consequently, work is very well matched to pupils' different abilities. The most able are challenged and the least able very well supported and all are able to make outstanding progress. Teaching assistants are very accomplished and make a very important contribution to pupils' learning and their well-being by providing very good assistance at the start of lessons and by working with small groups who need targeted support. Resources, including information and communication technology, are used well to help learning and to make lessons more interesting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is constantly evolving as the school strives to ensure that topics enthuse pupils and help them to understand their place in the world. Much of the learning is based on first-hand experiences, such as exciting and pertinent visits that make very good use of the immediate locality and there is an extensive range of visitors. This brings learning alive and provides a very good stimulus for writing. Not only are there excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills, but they are also able to develop their creativity well through music, art and drama.

A good range of carefully targeted support mechanisms ensure that pupils at risk of underachieving and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities can access the curriculum and make excellent progress. The curriculum also provides extremely well for pupils' personal development by promoting opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community. As a result, pupils are learning to value their neighbourhood and are keen to think of ways of

how it can be improved. Many topics such as 'Lets Stay Healthy and Strong' encourage pupils to keep safe and healthy. A very good range of well attended extra-curricular opportunities such as dance club, computer club, art sessions and games closely reflect pupils' interests and add even more to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The very high quality of care, guidance and support makes a very important contribution to securing pupils' outstanding achievement and personal development. Staff, including the headteacher, know the pupils extremely well. Vulnerable pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are exceptionally well supported. This is enhanced by very good links with external agencies. The school has worked very hard to improve pupils' attendance by consistently pursuing pupil absence. The analysis of data, including tracking of pupils' progress, is exceptionally thorough. Teachers take their responsibilities extremely seriously and on the rare occasions when a pupil's progress appears to be slipping they work effectively alongside the headteacher to ensure that every pupil is very effectively supported. Pupils receive very clear advice about how to improve their work. The marking of pupils' writing is particularly child-friendly and, combined with the very good use of targets, makes a significant contribution to the rapid development of writing skills in Key Stage 1. A wide range of opportunities for family learning that extend to extra trips and after-school clubs as well as the provision of a good range of courses for parents and carers helps parents to support their children's learning

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has developed an outstanding team of senior leaders who all fully contribute to the school's success and continuous improvement. Very effective planning has ensured that the school stayed firmly on track during a period of staffing instability. High quality support has enabled relatively inexperienced staff to settle quickly and to rapidly develop their practice. The school's focus on continuously improving the skills of teachers and learning support assistants has been extremely successful because training activities have closely focused on meeting the different needs of pupils. This has been central to ensuring that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve exceptionally well. Occasionally, the school's self-evaluation is too reticent, reflecting the school's very high expectations and relentless quest for perfection. Governors are very committed and are able to provide very effective challenge.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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?	2
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

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

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	3
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

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

Inspection of Brightside Nursery and Infant School, Sheffield, S9 1AS

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. We really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to an outstanding school where you have a brilliant time because of all the exciting things you have to do.

It was good to hear that you know lots about keeping healthy and safe. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and the way that you all get on so well together. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. We liked looking at all the super photographs of the many trips you go on. You were having great fun. We also enjoyed the photographs of the lovely flowers you grew during last summer. It is no wonder you won the Silver Gilt and Silver medals in the Sheffield in Bloom contest.

You told us that your teachers look after you well and that they always try to help you. We know that children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes but we have asked teachers to make sure that all the children get involved in a full range of activities including those that help them to practise their writing.

Your teachers work very hard indeed to make sure your school just gets better and better. Your lessons are interesting and lots of fun but your teachers also make sure you work hard too. That is why the quality of teaching and your learning is outstanding and you make such super progress. In fact by the end of Year 2 you are reaching standards that are above those reached by many other children. We really enjoyed reading the writing produced by Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. They are using interesting words and good punctuation and their writing is very neat. Managers at your school are doing a very good job. They have made your school an excellent one for you.

I wish you well for the future.