

Broomgrove Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114756
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	326062
Inspection date	12 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	179
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 David Tucker
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Wiltshire
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Broome Grove Wivenhoe Colchester Essex CO7 9QB
Telephone number	01206 822141
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

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

- the precision with which the school identifies precisely what needs to be done to raise standards further in key subjects such as English and mathematics
- the use made of the outdoor learning area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the extent of activities initiated by children
- the effectiveness of academic guidance and support for pupils so that they are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Evidence was gathered by: observing lessons; talking to pupils, governors and staff; checking the school's self-evaluation records and pupil-progress records; looking at pupils' books and analysing the results of questionnaires returned by parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection 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 this report.

Description of the school

The school, situated in Wivenhoe on the outskirts of Colchester, draws its pupils from the local village. It also attracts the children of staff and students at nearby Essex University, many of whom are from countries across the world and who stay for a relatively short period of time. Though the majority of pupils are White British, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than in most schools, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. A below-average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties, mostly literacy needs. A very small number have a disability. The school has the Healthy Schools, Investors in People and Activemark awards.

The governing body runs extended provision which includes a breakfast, after-school and holiday club. These were under private ownership until the start of this academic year when the school took them over. The clubs cater for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, from the age of four to 11.

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. It provides good quality, enjoyable education for its pupils so that they are enthusiastic about school and learning. Within the strong, community-focused atmosphere, pupils' personal development is good. They develop effective social skills through working together in groups and pairs, and the good strides they make in their learning ensure that they are ready for junior school.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have been rising since the last inspection and are now above average, especially so in reading and mathematics. While pupils make good progress in writing, their standards in this area tend to fluctuate and are not as high as in mathematics. The school has been successful in getting pupils to enjoy writing and they write at length using interesting vocabulary. However, spelling, punctuation and handwriting remain relatively weaker aspects of their written work. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds reach as high standards as others. Those at the earlier stages of learning English, including new arrivals, are well supported so that they too make good progress.

Pupils' success is largely due to good teaching. Teachers have high expectations and often provide work that is very challenging, especially in mathematics. Occasionally, work is not tailored precisely enough to the needs of some individuals. Overall, though, the school has made good progress in developing teachers' use of assessment to set work at the right level for the needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils participate well in lessons often concentrating hard on their work, although occasionally some can become restless when not actively involved. Learning support assistants are used well to help learners. They are particularly effective in helping those who find learning difficult. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.

The good curriculum is well focused on the interests and needs of pupils. A vibrant and creative curriculum, which helps to link different subjects together, is being successfully developed. Pupils and parents talk enthusiastically about a cross-curricular project on Egypt. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide good additional provision that meets pupils' needs effectively. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and a wide range of after-school activities complement what is on offer during the day. These opportunities, together with a well-developed programme for personal, social and health education, contribute effectively to pupils' personal development. Consequently, they have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and to stay safe. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community through the school council and by participating in events in the local village. They raise funds for good causes, both at home and abroad, and show a growing awareness of the difficulties others might face. Staff, pupils and parents appreciate the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school. Pupils from different ethnic and religious backgrounds get on very well with one another. The school makes good use of pupils and parents who come from countries as diverse as Germany, Holland, Mexico, Pakistan and the Middle East to promote understanding of the global community. This also contributes to pupils' understanding of the diversity of the United Kingdom community, for example, when Jewish or Arabic parents come in to talk about their faiths.

The school cares for and looks after pupils outstandingly well and this, together with pupils' good behaviour, enhances their sense of safety. Safeguarding and health and safety requirements are met and these extend to the breakfast and after-school clubs. A strong partnership with parents and excellent links with external agencies and professionals ensures the well-being of individual pupils. Good relationships with the university also help to promote the partnership

with parents who study or work there. This is especially in relation to attendance, as the shorter university terms cause some difficulties for parents who come from other parts of the country or abroad and wish to return home for holidays. Although this has some negative impact on attendance, the school has worked very hard to achieve attendance levels that are above the national average for pupils of this age group. The school also works hard to support individual pupils with additional needs. Many parents comment glowingly about the quality of support their children receive. Pupils' progress is assessed and tracked carefully and those requiring additional support are identified quickly. Tailored programmes are put in place to ensure that they make good progress. Personal targets for pupils are set for literacy and numeracy. However, marking, while regular, does not consistently provide guidance to pupils on what they need to do to achieve their targets. Hence, many are not sure about how to improve their work. Nor do they always remember their targets.

The school is well led and managed. The good leadership of the headteacher has successfully established a clear direction for development and a good sense of teamwork amongst staff. Effective self-evaluation has enabled the school to improve well since the last inspection. This is because the school makes good use of the resulting information to inform its future planning. Developing good opportunities for speaking and listening has had a positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm for writing and the better quality of ideas in their written work. A wide range of initiatives and projects is in place to improve the quality of the school's work and hence the standards achieved by pupils. Subject leaders have well-developed roles in monitoring planning and supporting their colleagues. Their roles in checking lessons are being developed further. Governors are well informed and provide good oversight of the work of the school and the extended provision. Community cohesion is well promoted and is especially strong in relation to the school and local community. The school has clearly identified pupils' needs and a working plan to forge, in particular, links with other communities across Britain that are not, or are less well, represented in the school. Overall, given the school's track record of improvement, it has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter with skills and knowledge that are generally a little below those expected. They make good progress through the year because teaching is good. Progress in writing and numeracy, while satisfactory, is slower than in other areas of learning. However, with improved opportunities for writing and a focus on numeracy, the school is well on the way to addressing these issues. Overall, standards at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are in line with national averages.

Children settle quickly because of the excellent care they receive. Weekly pre-school visits are seen as particularly beneficial, one parent described it as, 'excellent, ensuring a seamless settling in period'. Relationships between children and staff are excellent and lessons flow because children do as they are asked and help by putting equipment back after they have finished. Children look after their classes because the quality of the learning environment is so good. The outdoor area provides a good space to support all areas of learning and it is used reasonably well to support learning across all areas. Pupils' personal development is good so that they play and work very happily with one another. Children learn to do the right thing because they are rewarded with responsibilities. Children know how to behave because class rules are clear with photographs to show what is expected. The care and welfare of children is outstanding and

they consequently feel safe and well cared for, so they thrive. The few who come for the breakfast club or stay for the after-school club are equally well looked after.

Imaginative tasks interest children who focus, concentrate and persevere to do well. Teachers show children how to develop important skills, such as handwriting. They confidently choose from the good range of activities provided because staff effectively encourage them to make their own choices. Staff are now working to support children to be more adventurous and exploratory when working on activities they have chosen so that they can get more out of these.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff are very reflective and keen to improve and develop the provision. Short, focused sessions on mathematics were introduced recently to raise standards. This has been particularly beneficial in helping children to understand shape and space. Staff have clear and appropriate plans for future developments, such as making even more flexible and spontaneous use of the outdoor area. Parents are seen by staff as real partners and they work well together to the benefit of children's learning and development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting in order to raise standards further in writing.
- Make sure that pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work and that this practice is consistent across the school.

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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?	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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 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?	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**

13 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Broomgrove Infant School, Wivenhoe, Colchester, CO7 9QB

We enjoyed visiting your school, and in particular we enjoyed talking to you. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. The school gives you a good education. As a result, you make good progress and reach above average standards and you are ready for junior school by the time you get to the end of Year 2.

These are some of the best things about the school.

- Children in Reception get an enjoyable start to their education and learn a lot.
- You do particularly well in reading, speaking and listening, and numeracy.
- Teaching is good and you enjoy getting actively involved in lessons. You especially enjoy projects such as the one on Egypt.
- The school takes exceptionally good care of you and makes you feel part of the school community. New children settle in very quickly.
- You get on very well with one another and with the adults in the school.
- Your headteacher works with the staff to make the school as good as it can be

There are a few things that need to be improved and we have asked the teachers to:

- help you to make your writing better, particularly spelling, punctuation and handwriting
- make sure that you know what to do to make your work better

It was very nice to meet you and we wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector