

# Brook Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118373
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	326815
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Canham

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)	83
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>	Teresa Redfern
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Hewitt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2006
<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>	Brook Ashford TN25 5PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01233 812614
<b>Fax number</b>	01233 812614

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most of the pupils at this small school come from families of White British heritage. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is just above average. Most of these pupils have social or emotional needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age are taught in a single Reception class.

The headteacher joined the school in September 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school's overall effectiveness is good. Since joining the school, the headteacher has introduced a number of initiatives that have led to a rapid rate of improvement. The collective leadership of the school has been strengthened with staff who have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The leadership team, along with other members of staff, have benefited from a programme of professional development which has helped them to carry out their duties with confidence. As a consequence, staff have successfully raised expectations and given the school clarity about what it can achieve. Information from assessment plays a key part in planning and in knowing the progress made by pupils from Years 1 to 6. The reorganisation of classes and the introduction of new guidance in mathematics are examples of key strategies that have helped the school to raise achievement and standards.

Pupils have positive attitudes to school and speak proudly of their achievements. They say that they enjoy coming to school because of the supportive environment and interesting activities. These qualities make an important contribution to their progress in lessons. Parents also report that their children are happy at school. Achievement is good and standards are above average right through the school. Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with a range of knowledge and skills that is broadly typical for their age, although there are wide variations from year to year. Children make good progress and reach above average standards by the end of Reception. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has been more successful in promoting achievement in reading, and to a lesser extent in writing, than it has in mathematics and science. However, pupils are currently on track to meet higher targets for all subjects. Their good progress reflects the positive picture of teaching that successfully accommodates the wide range of ability in classes. However, on occasion, not enough is asked of more able pupils at the beginning of lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the well-focused support they receive.

The small size of the school helps staff to know pupils well. Good care, support and guidance underpin the school's caring ethos. This strength is seen in pupils' mature and helpful approach and good behaviour. Pupils benefit significantly from working in small groups and from a collaborative staff who are very supportive and sensitive to their needs. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of keeping healthy and safe and willingly participate in sporting activities.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that children's needs are identified early. Children are cherished and nurtured from the very start. As a result, they settle quickly and are eager to learn. Parents are delighted with their children's introduction to school and the school's communication with home. The Reception provides a supportive learning environment. From starting points that are broadly in line with those expected for children of the same age, children make good progress in all areas of learning, reaching above average standards by the end of the year. Lively teaching successfully captures the children's imagination. They have fun learning and playing. Children concentrate hard, and enjoy making their own writing books about the lifecycle of butterflies or building a 'junk model' dragon. Children are right to be proud of their efforts. Support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for those who are more vulnerable, is good. Behaviour and relationships are real strengths. Most children listen attentively and chatter happily about their work. Well-planned, themed topics ensure all

areas of learning are covered with a strong focus on reading, writing and number skills. More able children are given activities that are closely matched to their needs, with some learning to count in French. Good attention is paid to children's welfare. Daily assessment is used to carefully record children's short-term progress and ensure that activities build positively on what they know and can do. However, information from assessment has yet to be used to gain a clear overview of longer-term progress from the children's differing starting points, so that planning can be further fine-tuned.

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

- Ensure that teaching challenges pupils at all times in lessons, and particularly the more able pupils.
- Make better use of assessment to gain a clear view of progress and achievement in Reception.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The above average standards and test results of 2008 point to good achievement. Pupils are making increasingly rapid progress and are on track to meet the expected targets. These reflect a lifting of expectations for all pupils, and particularly for the more able pupils in numeracy. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. During lessons, progress is often good and underpins the rise in achievement throughout the school. The school recognised the need to ensure that all pupils reached at least their expected levels in mathematics. While progress in this subject is good, it has not improved to the same level as in English, and particularly reading. The school is now tackling achievement in mathematics through a new approach to teaching the subject and by giving greater attention to the progress of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say that they like coming to school because they feel well cared for and safe. Their enjoyment of school life is clearly seen in their friendly, caring and supportive approach towards each other, which helps to make the school a safe and welcoming place. Attendance is good. Pupils embrace opportunities for practical activities in, for example, design and technology and music. They also enjoy participating in additional activities, including residential trips. One parent expressed a typical view in the comment, 'My children enjoy coming to school. They are both doing well academically.'

Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils' good behaviour ensures that lessons are orderly and productive, although some younger pupils take time to settle when changing from one activity to another. Pupils work very well by themselves and when in groups, and help each other when they are stuck. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school through the school council, which provides good opportunities to represent the views of others. Pupils also contribute willingly to the wider community through raising funds for local and national charities. Pupils are aware of the benefits of being active and eating healthily. Pupils' strong personal skills are beneficial qualities for the future, and above average skills in literacy and numeracy provide a solid platform for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching is promoted by the effective use of precise learning targets, which successfully extend pupils' knowledge and skills. In lessons, pupils confidently explain what they are learning and how they are going to improve. Good teamwork amongst staff enhances learning by giving well-focused support for small groups. Detailed planning ensures that pupils are given activities that closely match their stages of learning, although more able pupils are not stretched enough early in lessons. Marking is supportive and shows pupils where individual targets have been achieved and what they need to do to improve. Information and communication technology (ICT), including interactive whiteboards, is used regularly and very effectively to engage pupils and give them a good range of interesting learning materials. Consequently, pupils enjoy the activities and move on quickly.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum takes good account of the wide ability range and mixed-age classes. The school was aware of the need to raise achievement and lift standards and, consequently, reorganised the class structure into separate key stages. Curricular planning was also reviewed and ICT now features strongly. The full impact of the revised guidance for mathematics has yet to take hold. Cross-curricular planning shows how different subjects relate to each other. Close attention is given to literacy, numeracy and science skills, and to the development of pupils' physical and creative skills in subjects such as swimming, music and design and technology. The teaching of French adds a further dimension. The flexible curriculum allows staff to teach subjects in which they have particular strengths across the school. The school makes good use of a number of visits and visitors to enrich the pupils' experiences and extend their learning. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because staff make very effective use of detailed planning.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

One parent's comments illustrate a particular strength of the school: 'I have also had two older children attend this school. My views have not changed. It is an excellent small school.' The small size helps staff to know pupils well and provide good personal support. This strong pastoral care underpins the school's work and gives rise to good relationships between pupils and staff, and amongst the pupils. Arrangements to safeguard and protect pupils are comprehensive and firmly established. Comprehensive assessment procedures provide the school with detailed information on each pupil's stage of learning. This information is used to guide planning, and pupils' targets are often referred to in lessons.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

Determined leadership and management have been instrumental in raising achievement and lifting standards. The recently formed senior management team have developed a clear and

accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. A strong focus on professional development, closely linked to the school's priorities, has led to greater confidence among staff in taking on new roles and responsibilities. The school's accurate self-evaluation is based firmly on observations of teaching and learning and a review of school procedures. As a consequence, the school is securely placed to bring about improvement and the capacity for moving the school forward is good. Community cohesion is satisfactory and improving. The school already seeks the views of parents, develops productive links with local schools and has become involved with an international school. The school has a good understanding of its own community and learners' needs, and was in the process of formalising its strategy and evaluating its success at the time of the inspection. The chair of governors is supportive and determined that the school builds on its growing reputation. Governors bring a good range of knowledge and expertise to their role in holding the school to account for the standards achieved by pupils.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

<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>	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

<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?	3
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**

1 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brook Community Primary School, Ashford TN25 5PB

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school, and thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Importantly, yours is a good school, where staff and governors are working hard to make it even better. We were pleased to hear that you like your school. The large majority of your parents are happy with the school, too. You behave well and get on with each other. Here are some important things about your school:

- You make good progress in lessons.
- You talk proudly about your achievements.
- You feel safe and secure in school and enjoy your lessons.
- Those in charge of the school have already made improvements that are helping you to make faster progress.
- All staff take good care of you, and make sure that you know what to do to keep safe.
- You have a good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better:

- Make sure that teaching challenges all of you at all times in lessons, and especially those of you who are capable of learning faster.
- Make better use of information about those of you in the Reception so that the school has a clearer picture of how well you are doing.

You can help your school to improve by continuing to participate actively in your lessons. We wish each one of you every success in your future education.

Yours faithfully

Paul Canham Lead inspector