

Braunstone Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	128085
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	328515
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	327
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	Helene Sutcliffe
Headteacher	Ian Proud
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cort Cresent Leicester LE3 1QH
Telephone number	0116 2858130

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2009
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Fax number

0116 2547704

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Braunstone Community Primary School has an above average number of pupils and provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school was opened in a new building in August 2007 after an amalgamation of the local Infant and Junior schools. The school is in an area of high socio-economic disadvantage. There is a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much higher than average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. There is a much higher than average turnover of pupils than normally found, but this is now falling.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Braunstone Community Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school opened in a new building in 2007 following the amalgamation of two local schools. This posed a number of difficulties, including some significant changes in staff. However the school now has stable staffing and, with effective support from the local authority and external advisors, is united and positive in continuing its recent improvement. Pupils are well cared for and happy, feel safe and are well supported by all staff. The school has good links and partnerships with many outside agencies, which strongly support the most vulnerable and needy pupils. Parents value the openness and approachability of the staff and headteacher, and comment on the encouragement and helpfulness of teachers. One parent said, 'My children love school, and staff give me good advice on how to help them at home.' Parents of pupils arriving from different countries are especially pleased with the support their children are given.

Standards when pupils left Year 6 in 2008 were very low in English, mathematics and science. The school has taken rapid and sustained action to improve standards since then, and they are now rising, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Achievement is satisfactory in all other year groups, including Year 6, whose standards on entry to the school were particularly low. The school is overcoming a legacy of a high turnover of pupils which has affected standards. More pupils are now remaining in the school, especially in earlier years, where there is currently a waiting list. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. The school is steadily narrowing the gap in standards between boys and girls. Improvements in reading and writing have been the most marked, but leaders realise that this progress must be accelerated and sustained in all classes over a much longer time scale. Pupils enjoy coming to school, cooperate happily together, behave well and enjoy their out-of-school activities, especially in sports clubs. Their personal development and well-being are good.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and are effective class managers. Teachers have made some good progress in improving their skills in teaching, and all share the vision for improving further. The school is committed to providing ongoing professional development for all teachers. However, training needs are not always identified and addressed quickly enough by senior staff in order to bring about rapid improvement. Teachers' assessment of pupil progress has improved greatly and has proved to be invaluable in guiding improvement. Teachers work closely with their teaching assistants, who make an effective contribution to pupils' development, and are benefitting from training opportunities. Although the curriculum is satisfactory, and is being developed in some exciting ways, teachers do not plan opportunities sufficiently to promote multicultural education. They do not use the wide range of cultures already in the school to broaden pupils' learning and community cohesion. The headteacher has delegated more responsibilities to both senior and middle managers, who have eagerly accepted them. This is already having a very positive effect on the management of the school. The governing body, which is under-strength, has had a number of recent changes. The new chair is determined that governors will increase their contribution to the management of the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children come into the Nursery with skills that are below or well below the levels typically expected for their age. Effective teaching means that children make good progress towards

the Early Learning Goals and by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage their levels of attainment are as expected. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is very enthusiastic and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. She has assembled a good team who work effectively together and have a good understanding of the new requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, children feel safe and well supported and this enables them to learn effectively. There is a good range of exciting learning experiences indoors. However, the school recognises the need to develop the outdoor provision to better meet children's learning and development needs. Children do not have total freedom to use the outdoor area and this restricts their independence and the choices that they are able to make. Children make particularly good gains in their personal, social and emotional development. They quickly develop good work habits in the Nursery and are keen to learn, and sustain their concentration well. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes work hard and want to get things right. For example, a boy making a tower struggled because it kept falling down but he persevered not once, but three times and eventually built the tower he had planned. He was thrilled at this well earned success and told everyone around him, 'I have done it. Look what I have done!'

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the recent improvement in standards and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics are consistent and accelerated in all classes.
- Build robustly on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, so that teachers' ongoing training needs are quickly identified and addressed, in order to improve their practice.
- Give pupils more learning opportunities to discover and celebrate the diverse cultures within the school.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas for underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in the school are below average, and progress is satisfactory and improving. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2008, the first year following amalgamation, were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In that year group, nine new pupils entered the school during the year, most of whom were either recent arrivals to the country or had learning difficulties. This continual movement of pupils into and out of the school has presented substantial problems that have hindered the school's efforts to raise low standards. There is now strong evidence that the introduction of new learning strategies and external support has led to improving standards, so that achievement is now satisfactory in the main school, and good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. New initiatives have also narrowed the differences in standards between boys and girls. Girls did much better than boys in Years 1 and 2, but this was reversed in Years 3 to 6. Widespread and regular use of rigorous assessment indicates that progress is accelerating across the school. Standards in Years 1 and 2, which were also low in 2008, are now clearly higher. This is especially so in reading and writing, where improved teaching is making a considerable difference. More pupils are making better progress although the school accepts that this improvement has to be sustained and consistent in all years, in order to be good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory because pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is limited. Almost all pupils like school, want to come to school and do their best. Attendance is satisfactory overall, but a small number of pupils are persistently absent, in spite of the school's best efforts. Pupils are increasingly leading a much more active and healthy lifestyle. They especially like the very many sporting activities and clubs that are available at lunchtimes and after school. They do particularly well in sporting competitions, having been City Netball champions for the past two years, and Tag Rugby champions. Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community. They are sensible and take their responsibilities in school very seriously. Recently, the school council has become more involved in what is happening in school, and older pupils are proud to wear the yellow bands which indicate they have special responsibilities. Pupils feel that they are listened to and that what they say is important. The suggestion box helps, with many taken up by the school council, such as the friendship stop in the playground. Pupils behave well and get on well with each other, although they sometimes worry about bullying. They accept that the school deals well with issues such as this, which helps them to feel safe. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing the skills that they will need for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well managed and pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning. There are positive relationships in all classes between pupils, and between pupils and adults. Teachers set clear guidelines for behaviour, and as a result pupils behave well both in and out of lessons. Teachers are generally confident in their subject knowledge and set clear lesson objectives. The school has made good strides in improving teachers' skills, particularly in the teaching of reading and writing. Teachers work and plan well with teaching assistants, who make a significant contribution to the learning of many pupils. Pupils are being given more responsibility for their own learning, such as those in Year 5 seen designing their own mosaics. The tracking and assessment of pupil progress is now rigorous and mostly acted upon quickly. However, in some classes, assessment information is not used sufficiently in planning for the needs of pupils with different abilities. The provision of learning targets for pupils is satisfactory and improving. Marking of work is also satisfactory, but is inconsistent across the school. Some questioning is not directed specifically enough at individuals to test different learning levels.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Recently introduced initiatives in literacy, particularly a more structured writing scheme, are helping to improve both reading and writing across the curriculum. This is exemplified by some adventurous and colourful writing by pupils in Year 6, based on the theme of evacuation. The school introduced a new 'rolling' two-year programme in September which is encouraging the development of a more vibrant and exciting curriculum for pupils. More opportunities are also being provided for learning through wider use of plentiful, high quality information and communication technology resources. The school

offers a variety of enrichment opportunities, such as poetry days, and many sporting activities led by a full-time sports coach. There is a range of after-school clubs, including dance, archery and a club specifically for girls. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. However, at present the school does not provide sufficient learning opportunities to celebrate the diversity of cultures within the school and beyond.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is satisfactory, with some strengths. For example, pupils who have special emotional and behavioural problems are well supported and this enables them to make progress in their personal development. Pupils say they feel secure in school and this is because they believe that adults are there for them, and that if there is a problem they are confident that the school will sort it out. Procedures to safeguard children are satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met, but there is scope to provide additional training to ensure that all staff are clear about what to do if they are faced with a child protection concern. The provision for the growing numbers of children who have English as an additional language is developing appropriately, and children are happy with the support that they have. One girl said, 'I was helped a lot when I first came and so I quickly learned English and made friends too.'

There is a wealth of additional support for pupils who are falling behind and for those who find learning difficult. This enables these children to make satisfactory progress in their learning. The school has introduced pupils' learning targets, but as yet not all pupils are clear on what they need to do to improve. Also current arrangements mean that some pupils who are withdrawn from classrooms for special support are missing the same lessons every week.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Leaders have responded well to the considerable challenges posed by the recent amalgamation. After a number of early problems, the school, led enthusiastically and very visibly by the headteacher, is developing into an effective and stable team, sharing the same strong vision for improvement. The local authority and independent advisors have given significant and continuing support to the management of the school during these changes. As a result, the new management teams in the school are showing a satisfactory and increasing capacity to improve. Achievement is improving, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the school's academic targets are challenging but realistic, and constantly updated by regular use of changing progress data. The management load is now more evenly spread, and new leaders are relishing their increased responsibilities. Although teachers' practice is monitored regularly, developmental points for improvement are not always followed up quickly enough to ensure consistently effective teaching. Inclusion and equal opportunities are promoted well, but are not fully effective because some pupils are not always given learning tasks which match the range of their abilities. Although the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory, the school judges itself too much on provision, and not enough on the impact of its actions. Community cohesion is strong in many respects within the school and local community, but there is limited emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of each other's cultural backgrounds, and in turn this restricts their understanding of diversity in relation to the wider world. The governing body has had a number

of changes recently, including the appointment of a new chair and vice-chair, and there remain vacancies. However, governance overall is satisfactory, and the new chair is determined to improve the quality of input from the governing body.

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	3
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	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

27 February 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Braunstone Community Primary School, Leicester LE3 1QH

Thank you so much for giving us such a warm welcome to your school this week. We are pleased that you think you are so lucky to be going to such an amazing brand new school, especially that wonderful library and the computer suite. We are glad that you are determined to look after it really well.

We think you are well cared for in school, you care for each other, and you act safely in and out of school. Both you and your parents think that the teachers are kind and helpful to you in your work, and when you have any problems. We agree with that, and also agree with parents that your headteacher and all the staff are very easy to meet and talk to about you and school. You enjoy your clubs, and do especially well in sports. We congratulate you on having the top netball and tag rugby teams in the city.

Although most of you love coming to school, we are disappointed that a small number of you are absent quite often. Please ask your parents to make sure you come to school as often as possible.

You work hard and behave well, and we have seen a lot of improvement in your standards in reading, writing and maths this year. We think this is because your teachers, and their helpful teaching assistants, have found new and better ways to help you improve. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are doing very well in their learning now.

We would like you to do even better, and reach higher standards, which you can if you keep trying as hard as you do now. In order to help you, we have asked that your teachers carry on learning new ways to teach you which they can use quickly so that your learning improves even faster. Also we know that some of you come from several different countries. We think your learning would be even more exciting if you found out more about where all of you come from, and about other parts of the world as well. You can certainly help your teachers do this. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education at present, but we are sure that it is improving. Please make certain, together with your enthusiastic teachers, that you climb higher and higher.

Yours sincerely,

Rod Braithwaite

Lead inspector