

# Bruche Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133915
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	331067
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marguerite McCloy HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	294
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>	Mrs Rosemary Panting
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Lynne Mullen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 September 2007
<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>	Seymour Drive Padgate Warrington Cheshire WA1 3TT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 815772

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	331067

**Fax number**

01925 850419

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Bruche Community Primary is a slightly below average-sized primary school, following a reduction in the number of pupils on roll in the last few years. This has resulted from factors including a lower number of primary age children in the local area and the impact of a recent reorganisation of secondary school places in the local authority. The school serves an area covering a range of social and economic circumstances, but with generally below average levels of disadvantage.

Most pupils are of White British heritage, and almost all speak English as their first language. A below average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has Healthy Schools and International School awards. The school has a Nursery, which alongside the Reception class comprises its Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

There is on-site childcare provision, Bruche Wasps Link Club, in a self-contained building managed by a private provider but not visited as part of this inspection.

When Bruche Primary School was inspected in September 2007 it was judged to require special measures due to inadequacies in achievement and standards, leadership, teaching and learning, and assessment. Subsequently, monitoring visits were carried out by HMI in the spring, summer and autumn terms of 2008. This inspection is the result of the fourth monitoring visit.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Bruche Community Primary School provides a satisfactory and improving education for its pupils.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach standards in mathematics, English and science that are in line with national averages. A growing number of pupils are now exceeding this because pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning. Actions taken by the school are leading to an increase in the proportion of the more able pupils who are capable of achieving the higher levels in English and mathematics. Senior leaders are aware that there is more to do to ensure that previous underachievement is eradicated, and there is a clear determination to do so.

The school benefits from strong and effective leadership by the headteacher and newly appointed deputy headteacher, who have the respect of parents, pupils and staff alike. Accurate self-evaluation and monitoring of the school's work by senior leaders ensures that teachers are expected to share accountability for the progress made by pupils in their classes. Assessment information is being used more widely to plan for the range of pupils' abilities so that teachers are able to provide suitable activities to meet most learners' needs. Effective marking in pupils' books gives guidance to help them improve further and reach their targets. These factors, as a result of focused professional development and the support of local authority advisers and consultants, have contributed to improvements in the overall quality of teaching and learning. This is now satisfactory and improving across the school. Parents are increasingly involved in their children's learning and the school ensures that they are well informed. A small group of parents spoke with or wrote to the lead inspector to express positive views about the changes that have taken place since the school's last inspection.

The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils appreciate the wide range of enrichment activities, visits and visitors which enhance their learning. Pupils' personal development and well-being is a strength of the school. Most pupils behave very well and are eager to learn. They show caring attitudes towards each other and all the adults in school, and good relationships are evident.

Governors are well informed and are developing their role in holding the school to account for its performance. However, governors have not produced action plans or reported on the impact of policies such as equalities or on the school's contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. Some key policies have not been reviewed as regularly as they should.

High morale and good teamwork are strong features of the school's ethos and there is a clear commitment to continuous improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good leadership and knowledge of how young children learn results in children's good achievement. Children enter the Nursery with broadly average skills and by the end of the Reception Year the majority are working securely within and sometimes beyond the expected early learning goals for their age. At times during the day, the children in Nursery and Reception learn and play together. This promotes their personal development effectively as the younger ones learn from the older children who enjoy opportunities to take a little bit of responsibility for the younger children's care. Children are well behaved and cooperative with each other.

Teaching and learning are good. The leader gives good quality training to staff and understands that the curriculum planning can be altered to reflect different situations. For example, during the inspection the weather turned wet and windy. The children, all dressed in raincoats and Wellingtons, delightedly ran along holding streamers that caught the wind, and gleefully jumped in puddles. Adults were also dressed for the weather and, throughout the day, they provide good role models for children to follow.

The themes children learn about in the curriculum last for half a term each. During this time, the areas for role-play tend to look a bit 'tired'. The school is aware of this and intends to adjust curriculum plans and make further improvements to the learning environment.

All children have equal opportunities to take part in similar planned learning experiences. They have time to consolidate and practise skills in their own independent activities, when their learning is accurately assessed and recorded by adults. Children's language and communication skills are promoted well by adults who model speech and new vocabulary to them. For example, outdoors the children were discovering what they could find under logs and the teacher was clearly helping them to learn new words such as roots, slugs and beetles. In these practical ways, teachers are focusing on the school's priorities to raise standards in communication, language and literacy.

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

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning so that all lessons are good or better.
- Build on recent improvements to ensure that all pupils make good progress in their learning and reach higher standards.
- Ensure that governors and leaders more regularly review and report on the impact of key policies such as equalities and community cohesion.

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

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement and standards are satisfactory and improving, as a result of effective measures taken by the school since its last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2. All groups of pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, now make at least satisfactory progress in lessons, and sometimes good. This improvement in the pace of pupils' learning is beginning to eradicate the long-term effect of previous underachievement. Standards of writing, in particular, have improved across the school as a result of a clear focus on developing this.

Key Stage 1 assessments in 2008 showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds were above average overall, although the school acknowledges that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing and mathematics could be improved. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made good progress compared with their peers nationally.

Key Stage 2 tests in 2008 indicated that while overall results in English, mathematics and science were close to national averages, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was lower than expected. This reflects the lack of challenge provided for these pupils in the past, when

expectations were too low, and gaps in their learning made it difficult for those pupils to reach their full potential.

Work seen during the inspection, in pupils' books and during lessons, supports the accuracy of the school's assessments. These indicate that Key Stage 2 test results this year will rise, particularly in the number of pupils expected to reach above average levels in English and mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their knowledge of other races, faiths and cultures is satisfactory. The school is developing links with a rural school in Cumbria. Pupils are excited about becoming pen pals and recognise the differences between the two geographical areas. Although this link is at an early stage of development, pupils are clearly interested for this to develop further.

Attendance is average, pupils say that they are happy to come to school and they enjoy their learning. Pupils take pride in their appearance and achievements. They are open, frank and honest and hold the headteacher in high regard, emphatically stating, 'She really knows us'. Older pupils are relishing their responsibilities as prefects, school councillors and as 'school secretaries'. For example, they have a say in the provision for the break time tuck shop. Also, the prefects had to apply for their 'jobs' and be interviewed before being awarded their posts. This is good experience for the world of work. Behaviour around the school is good. The few pupils who find it difficult to behave well respond positively to the school's behaviour policy because staff apply this consistently and fairly. The charitable work pupils do, such as collecting money for Children in Need, increases their understanding of citizenship, justice and fairness satisfactorily. Parents are included well in this growing focus on pupils' personal development. They can nominate children to receive a good citizenship award for showing good personal qualities. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay fit, safe and healthy for their age. Pupils' good attitudes to work, their rising achievement and the standards they are attaining in Year 6, equip them satisfactorily for their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Much of the teaching is now good and is enabling learners to catch up where previous underachievement left gaps in their knowledge and understanding, for example in Key Stage 2. Common features of many lessons are good behaviour and relationships, pupils being well informed about what they are expected to learn and a good emphasis on developing their speaking and listening skills. Resources are generally well deployed to enhance learning, for example interactive whiteboard technology and the use of music playing quietly in the background during some lessons.

In the best lessons tasks engage and challenge pupils to improve. Good questioning techniques by teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do. Pupils work hard and enjoy their learning, especially when they are challenged and guided well. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 5 they were actively involved in applying their skills to solve real-life problems. The teacher ensured that pupils used correct mathematical

vocabulary and provided additional information at their request to challenge groups of pupils to work out the cost of owning a pet.

In some lessons teaching is not as effective because tasks are less well planned to motivate and engage pupils of all abilities. In these lessons the pace of learning slows and pupils' concentration is weaker due to a lack of clear direction and sufficient challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets pupils' needs and promotes academic achievement satisfactorily. The use of the structured 'Letters and Sounds' approach to teaching phonics in all Key Stages is helping to accelerate progress in reading and writing and address areas of weakness correctly identified by the school.

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development through themed days and activities, for example Performing Arts Day when pupils are encouraged to present their learning to each other, and Friendship Day when pupils take part in interesting and enjoyable games to improve communication and relationships. Visits and visitors are used to enrich the curriculum effectively. Recently the Expo Chef attended school to promote healthy eating and successfully encouraged pupils to try new and healthy foods. The school acknowledges that more could be done to ensure that the curriculum promotes community cohesion and pupils' cultural development.

Pupils enjoy the good variety of extra activities available that enhance the curriculum, such as samba club, Spanish club and the pupil-run newspaper club. Some pupils attend activities in mixed-age groups and this further enhances pupils' personal development, as the younger ones are able to learn from the older pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Policies and procedures for health and safety and safeguarding children meet government requirements but some of these are not reviewed regularly enough by the governing body. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that adult help is available if they have any difficulties. Their confidence in this is boosted through 'circle time' activities and lessons devoted to their personal development. Their progress is tracked rigorously, resulting in all pupils having challenging targets to meet. These targets are regularly reviewed. Teachers mark pupils' work very well, assessing progress and informing pupils, explicitly, how to improve further. This is proving effective in raising standards. Older pupils have a good understanding of exactly where they are in their learning and how they can improve further. However, some of the targets for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not specific enough to be measured accurately.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Strong leadership and management have been central to the school's significant improvement since its last inspection. The headteacher shows a determined approach to raising standards and ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential. She is well supported by the recently



appointed deputy headteacher, making an effective partnership which articulates a clear and shared vision for the school's future development. Challenging targets are set for all pupils and staff are accountable for the progress made. Middle leaders are empowered and are developing their confidence in contributing to the school's accurate self-evaluation. This is based on a wide range of evidence from monitoring activities. Senior leaders observe teaching and learning, analyse pupils' work, and gather the views of parents and pupils. Local authority advisers and consultants check the school's progress through regular reviews of its performance. Self-evaluation is well focused on checking the impact of the school's actions on improving outcomes for pupils, making adjustments according to the school's changing needs. The headteacher and deputy headteacher carry significant responsibilities for key subject areas and other aspects of the school's work. They are aware of the need to review and adjust these in the future as new members of staff develop their own skills and are ready to take on more responsibility.

Governors are well informed and have accessed a number of training opportunities to improve their understanding of their role in monitoring the school's performance. However, changes to governing body membership have led to some policies not being reviewed in a timely manner. For example, equalities policies are in place and procedures are followed but governors have not produced an action plan or reported on the impact of these. Although the school is generally aware of ways in which it helps to promote community cohesion, it does not evaluate its contribution, for example in the three strands of faith, ethnicity and culture, and socio-economic dimensions.

The school is appropriately planning to review its development plans, taking into account recent improvements and the outcomes of a review of primary school provision in the area. The local authority has provided significant support to the school since its last inspection, and this will be reduced gradually over the next school year. This is a sensible and appropriate strategy as the school becomes more self-sufficient. Good use is made of the opportunities provided to share best practice within and beyond the school. Newly qualified teachers are well supported by the leadership team and local authority consultants, for example, and appreciate the mentoring and professional development they receive.

The headteacher, governors and local authority have successfully managed a challenging period of significant change, including staffing reorganisation, while balancing the school's budget and ensuring satisfactory value for money.

When taking into account the impact of senior leaders' work to bring about the positive trend now evident in pupils' achievement, teaching and assessment, the school has good capacity to improve.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
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**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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<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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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**

Inspection of Bruche Community Primary School, Warrington, WA1 3TT

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we inspected your school recently. It was very helpful to speak to so many of you in meetings, around the school and during lessons. Everyone we spoke to was very positive about the changes in the school over the last year and a half, and we could tell that you are happy there and enjoy your learning. In fact, one of you made the comment, 'This school is good enough not to be in special measures now.' Well, I am pleased to tell you that the inspection team agree!

This was my fourth visit to Bruche and I have enjoyed seeing the school getting better each time. Your headteacher and all the staff have worked very hard to make sure that Bruche is now providing a satisfactory education for all of you. In fact, there are some things that are already good and many others that are heading that way, because the school now has what we call 'good capacity to improve'.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are getting a good start to their school life because of the good provision, teaching and leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' personal development and well-being is good at all ages: you behave well and many of you are willing to take on responsibilities around school, helping staff and each other.

Standards are rising and all of you are now making at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in your learning. This is because teaching has improved and more lessons are good. Teachers make sure that you know what you're expected to learn in each lesson and they mark your work very well so that you know how well you are doing and what you need to do next to improve.

We have agreed with your headteacher and deputy headteacher three key areas that will help the school to improve further.

- Continue to improve teaching so that it is good or better all of the time.
- Raise standards further by making sure that all of you make good or better progress in your learning.
- Governors and leaders should review and monitor some of the school's important policies more regularly.

Well done to everyone. You have played a part in helping the school to come out of special measures, and I'm sure you will also be keen to help your headteacher and all the staff to make Bruche a great school in the future!