

Brockmoor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103777
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	336153
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Declan McCauley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Kendall
Headteacher	Gary Mander
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons, observed 14 teachers and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils and spoke informally with parents and carers at the end of the school day. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's documentation relating to safeguarding, school improvement plans, reports on the school's work, minutes of meetings of the governing body and records of pupils' progress. They considered the responses in questionnaires from staff, pupils and 49 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following aspects:

- the impact of the quality of teaching on the attainment and progress of boys
- how well teachers use assessment to support all pupils in their learning
- how effectively the school is working to improve attendance
- how well prepared school leaders are to sustain improvement throughout school.

Information about the school

The school is a larger-than-average primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. Most pupils are White British. A small but increasing minority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) mark, the Bronze Eco Award and the Financial Management Standard.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to progress made in learning by children while in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This is a school where pupils feel happy and have the opportunity to learn in a caring and supportive environment. The vast majority of parents are pleased with their children's experiences of school. The school's leaders have worked successfully to bring about improvement since the last inspection. Initiatives have had a positive impact on raising attainment although, overall, it remains below average. Pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress in their learning. This is because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching throughout the school and in some teachers' use of assessment to support learning. As a result, progress is slower in some classes because teachers do not always extend pupils' learning sufficiently. Senior leaders are working decisively to ensure that all teaching is consistently of the high quality evident in a few classes so that all pupils attain at the level of which they are capable.

When starting school, children's skills are below the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is just below the national average in English and science but equal to it in mathematics because of the robust focus on improving attainment in this area. Data presented by the school for this academic year show some improvement but senior leaders recognise that progress is inconsistent and are taking decisive steps to bring about further rapid improvement.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage progress made by children is inadequate because learning opportunities are not always focused on fully developing language and writing skills and assessment is not always accurate enough to plan the next steps in learning. A new leader in the Early Years Foundation Stage is taking radical steps to bring about improvement. Leaders have begun to tackle issues related to the weaker features of teaching in order to move a larger proportion of satisfactory teaching to good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in their learning by a caring and highly skilled team of teaching assistants who make a positive contribution to their learning. The school's self-evaluation procedures provide senior leaders with a broadly accurate picture of where improvements are needed so that they can bring about further improvement. Attendance is low but improving due to the high priority given to raising attendance and the introduction of a wide range of initiatives by the school. The governing body is very supportive of the school and provides challenge for

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school leaders. Given the improvements which have already taken place, plus the emphasis placed on raising attainment, there is a satisfactory capacity to make sustained improvement in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by children in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing learning opportunities which are more tightly focused on developing skills in writing and language acquisition
 - ensuring there is more challenge for children in all areas of learning
 - creating opportunities for adults to monitor and initiate development activities
 - using accurate assessment to fully inform planning.
- Raise attainment and accelerate the progress made by all pupils, especially in English and science by:
 - improving the quality of teaching to consistently good or better
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of pupils' capabilities
 - planning to meet the needs of all learners at a level appropriate to their development
 - marking to identify, clearly and consistently, the next steps in learning for all pupils.
- Formalise a systematic and rigorous process so that school leaders have a clear overview of current practice within school by:
 - thoroughly checking how well plans relating to the quality of teaching and learning are implemented.
- Improve pupils' attendance by reducing the rate of unauthorised absence.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are, on the whole, positive about their school and enjoy being involved in many aspects of school life. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and Science is just below average. In English the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level is significantly below the national average. In mathematics attainment is in line with the national average, both at the expected and higher levels, because it has been an area of focus by the school. The support provided by the local authority following the previous inspection has had a positive impact on improving attainment in mathematics and building the capacity within the school to drive improvement further. Pupils do not always make as much progress as they should in their learning as they move through school. At the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, however, pupils make better progress because of the intervention strategies employed by the school and the higher expectations of their teachers.

Pupils are caring and supportive of others; they behave well most of the time although

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the behaviour of a few pupils is sometimes not appropriate. The school encourages pupils to eat healthily although a few still enjoy crisps at break time. All pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise through sporting activities. A broad range of activities take place after school and there is a good take-up by pupils. Many pupils say they feel safe and cared for at school. They are confident that they can talk to adults if they have any concerns and that these will be resolved quickly. Members of the school council contribute successfully to the life of the school, including becoming involved in the appointment process for senior members of staff. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and participate enthusiastically in fundraising activities which benefit those less fortunate than themselves. Money has been raised to support a pupil in Ethiopia as well as fundraising for UK charities. The school has plans to extend pupils' awareness of cultures outside those experienced by pupils in the local community. Attendance remains low despite substantial efforts made by school staff to improve it. The recent improvement in pupils' attendance and their application of basic skills, in particular information and communication technology (ICT), ensures they are appropriately prepared for the future. Pupils have well developed social skills; they interact well in lessons and on the playground.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is variable although satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that activities are matched well to pupils' abilities. In the same lessons, teachers use questioning skills well to provide an appropriate level of challenge for pupils and to check the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. Teachers use ICT to very good effect in some lessons, inspiring pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Where teaching is less effective there is an inconsistent level of challenge which does not enable all pupils to make as much progress as they could. Senior leaders are now working to ensure consistency of practice across all year groups. Most teachers assess how well pupils are learning and the progress they are making. Some pupils are unsure of their targets. They are more aware of what they must do to improve in mathematics than in English. Marking of pupils' work is broadly satisfactory. Inspectors observed some good practice where the next steps which pupils must take to improve their work were clearly identified. Some pupils are involved appropriately in assessing the work of their peers and this enables them to consider carefully how they can improve their own work.

A range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs enhance the curriculum. The clubs enable pupils to develop their skills in many areas including their basic literacy and numeracy. The school is developing a curriculum which is better suited to the needs of all pupils. The new curriculum is beginning to engage all pupils appropriately in their learning. Teachers are endeavouring to increase the progress of boys by adapting the curriculum to better suit their interests. Staff know the pupils well and take good care of them. The learning and development of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are tracked and monitored so that those working with them know what they need to do next to improve. Transition arrangements between year groups and between schools work smoothly as a consequence of careful liaison between staff. Much has been done by the deputy headteacher working in partnership with the education welfare officer to improve attendance. The attendance of 45 pupils targeted this year because of their low attendance, has improved. Class awards motivate pupils to ensure they are punctual for school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

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The senior leaders are striving to improve further the quality of education provided and the attainment and progress of all pupils. They have a generally accurate picture of the school's strengths and the areas where improvements are needed. The school's improvement plan sets out priorities which are relevant and targeted to bring about improvement. Teachers are held to account for the progress made by their pupils through regular meetings to discuss their progress. Monitoring of teaching and learning carried out by school leaders is used appropriately to identify broad areas for improvement, but it lacks the precision to reflect accurately what is happening in all classrooms. The governing body is very supportive and has a broad understanding of the areas in which the school needs to improve. Governors hold the school to account in many areas; they recognised the inadequacies in Early Years Foundation Stage and are working together with the new leader to bring about improvement. School leaders have put in place appropriate measures to ensure the safety of all pupils, including adequate checks on adults who work in the school. The school works with a range of partners to support the learning and well-being of pupils. Some of these partnerships, but not all, are having a positive impact on improving the progress made by pupils in their learning. Relationships with parents and carers are good, and this was apparent when inspectors spoke with a number of them as they collected their children from school. The school seeks the views of parents and carers and acts upon them. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to help their children in their learning. The school is a cohesive community which is involved in work within the immediate locality. The school plans to give pupils more opportunities to experience and learn about different cultures and beliefs across the world because it has recognised this as a less well developed area. The school's leaders work hard to resource the school appropriately but do not always focus sufficiently on the deployment of resources which have the most impact on pupils' learning to achieve value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for learning and development in Reception has many shortcomings. Assessment data do not robustly support the school's judgement that progress made by children is satisfactory. Inspectors found that the initial assessments from which progress was measured were not reliable. In lessons observed the progress made by children was inadequate. Resources are adequate, although many need replacement. Children are encouraged to make independent choices although there are insufficient opportunities for adults to monitor and initiate development activities. Opportunities for adults to interact with children and foster their learning are frequently missed. Planning does not take full account of children's needs and is not challenging enough. Insufficient focus is given to providing writing activities designed to improve children's skills. Weaknesses are apparent in programmes designed to aid children's learning of English. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader has been in post since January 2010. She recognises the significant shortcomings for children's learning and development and is beginning to focus on bringing about improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

About a fifth of parents and carers of families registered at the school returned the inspection questionnaire. The majority of these parents and carers were positive about the school and its work. Some of the parents wrote comments to expand upon their views and overall these were positive.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brockmoor Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 371 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	49	20	41	2	4	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	21	43	25	51	3	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	43	28	57	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	37	29	59	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	39	27	55	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	35	30	61	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	29	33	67	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	24	34	69	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	27	32	65	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	20	29	59	5	10	4	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	20	28	57	9	18	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	18	37	27	55	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	49	21	43	2	4	2	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brockmoor Primary School, Brierley Hill, DY5 3UZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors so warmly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking with you to find out about your school. Thank you to all who completed the pupils' questionnaires; they provided us with a great deal of information about your views. It is clear that you go to a very friendly and welcoming school. The education you receive could be better and this is why the school has been given a notice to improve. Inspectors will visit again to check that things are getting better.

These are the main things that we found out about your school.

Many of you behave well

You enjoy school and always want to do your best

You care well for each other

You know those who care for you and this makes you feel safe

You like lessons that are interesting and help you to learn.

To help your school to become even better we have asked the school's leaders to:

- improve how well the youngest children in your school learn
- make sure that your learning in English and science improves
- make sure that teachers look closely at how well you learn in all your lessons
- ensure that you all attend school regularly.

We hope that you continue to attend school regularly and work hard in the future.

Yours sincerely

Declan McCauley

Lead inspector

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