

Bromley Heath Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109028
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	337202
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Surridge
Headteacher	Marcus John
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 75% of their time looking at learning, visited 15 lessons and observed 9 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents and carers who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They also analysed questionnaires received from 114 parents and carers, and 101 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly for higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals with a particular focus on higher attaining pupils and those with a special educational need and/or disability
- how consistently well teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils in each year group and how well they inform them about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of the subject leaders in checking attainment, progress and teaching in their respective areas and sustaining improvements in the outcomes for all pupils
- how well the school meets its obligations to promote community cohesion and fosters an appreciation and awareness of other cultures.

Information about the school

Bromley Heath is similar in size to most other primary schools. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning difficulties, is broadly average and very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school achieved the Healthy Schools award in 2006 and there is a breakfast club managed by the governing body.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bromley Heath is a good school. Pupils are right to be proud of it and relish all it has to offer. Sensitive and watchful pastoral care ensures that by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school.

Although test results dipped in 2009, overall, the school has continued successfully on its journey of improvement since the last inspection. School self-evaluation is accurate. Most importantly, the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its improvement. This, together with improvements in teaching, the curriculum and its maintenance of good achievement since the last inspection, means the capacity to further improve is good.

The fall in national test results in 2009 greatly disappointed the school. It had lost a number of experienced teachers during the preceding two years and its monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress were not as consistently applied as they should have been. There are now very effective and reliable methods in place to check pupils' progress which show that currently, the overwhelming majority of pupils are being actively challenged and supported well, so that progress through the school is good and attainment is well above average overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and often very good progress. The attainment of some high attaining pupils, however, especially in English, is not as high as it could be and they make satisfactory progress.

A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are exceptionally strong. Consequently, behaviour is good and pupils have a high regard both for their classmates and for the adults who work with them. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy life. The school has worked effectively to promote good attendance which is above average. A very carefully planned, imaginative and varied curriculum inspires pupils to work hard and gain a very wide range of skills. Teachers ensure that pupils are very well motivated and are eager to contribute to lessons. They use questioning in lessons skilfully to promote learning and to analyse and improve pupils' performance. Teachers mark books carefully and regularly. As a result, the advice teachers give to pupils as to how to improve their work is effective and most pupils are clear as to the next steps in their learning. In a minority of lessons, learning is held back because teachers do not always ensure that pupils are given sufficient time to work independently, to learn in an active way and to talk about their findings. Staff recognise that there is still some way to go to make the fullest use of assessment data to ensure that the tasks they set in lessons provide maximum challenge for the high-flying pupils. The limited amount and range of lengthy pieces of written work which

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pupils are required to do hold back more of them from reaching the highest levels in the national tests in Year 6. The school's promotion of community cohesion has focused on the pupils' own and local communities. Links with people in other parts of the country that are different from their own community are not as strong as they could be. This is why the promotion of community cohesion is not yet good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring there are always sufficiently challenging targets for more able pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing on a wide range of topics.
- Build on existing practice to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the great majority of lessons by:
 - ensuring that teachers specifically plan for and extend the learning of the highest attainers at a consistently good pace throughout lessons
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.
- A realistic time scale for meeting the two objectives above will be by December 2010
- Extend the school's work on promoting cohesion in the wider community, beyond the school and immediate locality, by increasing the opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of communities different from their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils greatly enjoy school, grow in confidence and develop very positive attitudes to learning. The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of good and improving progress. Pupils confidently build key skills and benefit from a 'rounded education' right from the moment they start in Year 3. Pupils begin school with above average attainment and achieve well because most teachers expect much of their pupils and explain complicated ideas effectively. In an outstanding numeracy lesson in Year 6, pupils were seen by inspectors to be learning at an exceptional pace because of the teacher's immensely high expectations and the challenging tasks set. Progress is relatively slower for some other higher attaining pupils, particularly in English. Here, a lack of sufficient opportunities to write lengthy pieces of work inhibits their ability to write well at a high level. The school works effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Detailed plans to support these groups, coupled with thoughtful deployment of learning assistants and timely interventions, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

Pupils enthusiastically and knowledgeably explain the value of adopting healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise. Their very well developed understanding of right and wrong and appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them are reflected in

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their good and often exemplary behaviour. Pupils have a secure understanding for their age of how to be safe in the community. They eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in the life of the school and are very well informed about other people's needs. However, their awareness of different ways of life in other cultures and communities closer to home is not developed well enough. Pupils develop impressive social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively. This, together with well above average standards in the key skills of mathematics and English, means that they are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The recently introduced creative curriculum is beginning to make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. One parent summed up the views of many by saying '...the skills-based curriculum provides an excellent learning experience, my child is flourishing'. Carefully and imaginatively planned themes with strong links between subjects have successfully motivated and enthused pupils and have done much to increase their confidence as learners. Well-supported, creative and educational activities outside the

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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normal school day, including the well-attended breakfast club, make a valuable contribution to pupils' high levels of enjoyment. The school's strong emphasis on promoting pupils' emotional well-being results in them feeling very safe, secure and well looked after. Good support for vulnerable pupils and close partnerships with outside agencies ensures that the needs of these pupils are well met. Attendance is above the national average due to the school's highly effective work to improve attendance and punctuality.

The quality of teaching and learning was seen to be good or better in over 70% of lessons and no lessons were inadequate. Typically, lessons are fast paced and fun. Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained, and activities are carefully designed to challenge most pupils to learn at a swift pace. Adults ask perceptive questions and these help pupils to think and use more varied vocabulary in their answers. The use of 'can, could and challenge' objectives is useful in highlighting what pupils of different attainment levels can aim for in all subjects. However, not all teachers are explicit in sharing their expectations for high-level attainment in lessons until group work begins and this is a missed opportunity to promote better progress in the earlier part of lessons for this group of learners. Teachers sometimes talk too much, which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning, resulting in slower progress and less time for pupils to articulate and build upon what they have learnt by the end of the lesson.

The school has set up very thorough systems to check on pupils' progress and these are now used consistently well to ensure that none is in danger of falling behind and to enable teachers to set the next steps for each pupil's learning. They are also used well to identify strengths and areas for development in curriculum provision.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Clear-sighted leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. The headteacher works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. With strong support from his deputy headteacher, he has set a precise path for improvement based on accurate self-evaluation and embedding initiatives which have made a positive difference to pupils' achievements. Leaders communicate high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. The senior team check the school's performance rigorously, offer constructive advice

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and training and use their highly effective teachers very well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is rapidly improving. A climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating. Members of the senior leadership team and the subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities very well. There is no hint of complacency and there is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many gains of recent years. In this way, the school promotes well the equality of all pupils. The school has a good partnership with parents, and inspection evidence did not generally support the concerns raised by a minority in their responses to the questionnaire.

The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff, with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of inspection. They support school leaders well and fully hold the school to account for its work. For instance, following the fall in test results in 2009, they acted decisively to ensure that school leaders had secure procedures in place to avoid a repetition of such results. While there are good features in the school's existing work on promoting community cohesion in the school itself, for example, the school is aware that some elements have yet to be developed more fully. It is planning to forge links with other schools in more ethnically and socially diverse areas in England and enhance other aspects of this work across the curriculum.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

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The school and its headteacher clearly enjoy the confidence and support of most of those parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors totally agree with these views. A minority of parents and carers speak of concerns regarding instances of insufficient information being given to them about their child's progress. These were not supported by many other responses, which indicated that meetings held between the school and parents to discuss aspects of progress were regular and informative. Inspectors agree with the comments of a few parents and carers who indicated that some children did not make the progress of which they were capable in 2009. However, inspection evidence shows that currently most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bromley Heath Junior 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 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	50	51	45	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	49	54	47	3	3	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	18	72	63	18	16	3	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	21	67	59	12	11	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	35	31	60	53	12	11	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	17	68	60	18	16	4	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	40	62	54	3	3	1	1
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)	33	29	56	49	9	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	25	66	58	12	11	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	18	70	61	11	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	18	67	59	14	12	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	39	34	58	51	8	7	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	40	53	46	12	11	1	1

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



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22 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bromley Heath Junior School, Bristol BS16 6NJ

Thank you for the warm welcome and help you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to so many of you. We were really impressed with how polite and well behaved you are and how much you told us you enjoy school. It is clear that you go to a good school. Here are some of the things we found out that we would like to share with you.

- Your personal development is good. You behave well around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- You make good progress as you move through the school and your achievement is getting better all the time. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach standards that are higher than those in most other schools. This is because your teachers teach you well and you also work very hard.
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.
- Your headteacher, the governors and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to improve.

There are three things that I have asked the school to work on:

- ensure that more of you reach the higher levels in the national tests that you take at the end of Year 6, by planning work for you that really makes you think and by giving you more practice at longer pieces of writing
- make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own
- give you more opportunities to learn about the lives, values, customs and beliefs of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and the world.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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