

Brunswick School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112117
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	337844
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Janette Corlett

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Kingsby
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Sanderson
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and held meetings with senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including policies, minutes of meetings of governors and assessment information. Forty four responses to parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the standards reached and progress made, especially by pupils in Years 1 and 2
- teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met and they make progress in line with their capabilities
- the school's systems to ensure that pupils are safe, to promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination and to promote community cohesion
- the impact of school leaders on securing school improvement.

Information about the school

Brunswick School is smaller than average. The proportions of pupils with statements of special educational needs and those eligible for free school meals are below average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school holds Healthy School Status and the Activemark Award. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had only been in post for one month and all senior leaders were new to their roles.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Brunswick School is a caring school that provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Parents agree that the school provides a safe and supportive environment for their children. This helps to ensure that pupils have a good appreciation of what it means to be safe in school and behave very well. Most other aspects of their personal development are also good. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the resources for information and communication technology (ICT) helping pupils improve their skills in this subject and contributing to preparing them satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

Attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in Years 1 and 2 is beginning to rise as the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is helping to accelerate children's learning in their first years in the school. However, not enough pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Recent initiatives to support pupils who need extra help with reading have helped to raise standards in this subject. Similarly, changes to the curriculum have given pupils more opportunities to practice their skills in writing in other subjects. As a result pupils' writing is beginning to show improvement, although the school knows that there is more work to be done. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and support staff, and through the school's effective links with outside agencies. They make satisfactory progress in their learning.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but variable in quality. Often, pupils learn at a good pace because teachers provide work which challenges pupils of all abilities and shows them clearly how to improve. Where teaching is less effective, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements are not high enough and the pace and challenge in lessons drop. In these lessons, teachers do not consistently use the information they have from assessing pupils' work effectively to plan tasks and activities which enable pupils to move on quickly in their learning. Furthermore, pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of how to improve their work.

Senior leaders are new to their roles yet already have a clear and realistic view of the effectiveness of the school's work. Appropriate priorities for improvement have been identified as a result of satisfactory and increasingly effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision. Consequently, the plans leaders have put in place are helping the whole school to focus on relevant issues. This planning places a clear emphasis on raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress. The school's actions are beginning to be successful in raising standards in some areas. These encouraging signs indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics by the more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 by raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace at which they can work.
- Improve teaching in Years 1 and 2 so that it is of consistently good quality by:
 - ensuring that pupils are made more aware of how to improve their work
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use the information they have from assessing pupils' work to plan tasks and activities which enable pupils to move on quickly in their learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

There are variations in the quality of pupils' learning and progress. In one Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils learned quickly and effectively as they displayed evident enjoyment in following written instructions to make traditional lemonade. In a Year 1 lesson pupils were interested in seeing how a dolly tub was used to wash clothes and cooperated well with one another in the writing activity which followed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also show good levels of concentration and commitment to their work and they make satisfactory progress in their learning. However, in some lessons the pace of learning drops. Pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet rather than actively engaging in their learning. Sometimes pupils are slow to settle to their work and teaching assistants do not intervene quickly enough to support those who need it. In too many lessons there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. Overall, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory, and this includes those very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Pupils have recently made the expected rate of progress between the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 2 and inspection findings confirm that this is still the case. Currently, pupils are making the best progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the quality of teaching is strongest.

Pupils have a good appreciation of being part of the school community and participate well in the wider community. The school council were keen to talk to inspectors about their involvement in choosing a new range of sports and activity clubs and explained how they report back to their classes in circle time discussions. Pupils help raise money for charities and take part in a wide range of local events. Their good awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles is reflected in their enthusiasm to participate in physical education lessons and extra-curricular clubs. They show a mature awareness of the importance a healthy diet. For example, during a lesson in which they were involved in making lemonade they explained that, 'sugar gives you energy but too much sugar is bad for your teeth'. Attendance rates are broadly average and most pupils come to

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school promptly each morning. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and they are developing their appreciation of the culture and lifestyle of different British ethnic groups.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In lessons where effective learning takes place, teachers plan practical activities which interest pupils and engage them in their learning. Lessons are introduced enthusiastically and pupils are clear about what they are expected to do. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are not fully attentive or sufficiently aware of what they are learning. Sometimes teachers' expectations of the quality of their responses and the speed at which they can work are too low. Teachers do not always use the information they have from assessing pupils' prior learning effectively to ensure that the tasks and activities set match their individual needs, and this is particularly so in relation to the more able pupils.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well through an effective whole school programme, emphasising the social and emotional aspects of their learning, and

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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through well structured assemblies. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are popular and well attended. The curriculum has been improved to emphasise more creative aspects of learning and to establish stronger links between subjects. This is helping to improve writing because it means that there are more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across all subjects. The school's provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, but pupils still do not have enough opportunities to use ICT as a tool to support their learning.

Support for pupils' well-being and welfare is at the heart of the school's provision. The good pastoral care supports pupils' learning and personal development well and provides a nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils who are vulnerable or have specific needs are identified effectively and they receive sound support and encouragement. Good links are maintained with parents and there is close collaboration with other agencies when required to provide further support for pupils and their families.

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?

School leaders have a clear and realistic view of the school's strengths and areas to be developed and are in the process of enhancing self-evaluation procedures to underpin further improvement. The new headteacher demonstrates the vision and determination needed to drive the school forward and raise pupils' achievement. In the very short time since she took up her post she has gained the confidence of parents, pupils and staff and has identified clear priorities for development. Senior leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic, involved well in planning development initiatives and share ambition for the future. Recently, several initiatives have been successfully introduced, particularly in raising attainment in reading and developing the curriculum. However, there has not been a sufficiently robust programme to develop writing skills and the impact of some initiatives has been lessened because expectations of progress have not been high enough. Procedures to monitor the quality of teaching are satisfactory and improving. Governors support the school well and ensure sound financial management. They do not currently provide sufficient challenge to the school about the standards reached and the progress pupils make.

Safeguarding procedures are good. There are good arrangements for ensuring that adults have the required security checks and that the school is a safe and orderly place.

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The school's relationship with parents and carers supports its care and welfare provision well. Several parents commented on these strengths of the school. The school is fully inclusive in the way it promotes equality, for example, by openly welcoming and supporting families moving into the local area from outside the United Kingdom, and all pupils are looked after and encouraged. Its positive ethos contributes well to community cohesion locally, but less is done to compare and contrast the immediate area with more distant communities. The school works effectively with other local schools and settings to widen opportunities for pupils.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. From starting points which are generally lower than those typical of youngsters of this age, children make good progress to reach the standards expected for their age in most areas of learning when they begin Year 1. The development of early writing skills remains the weakest area but the school has already identified the need to focus more on the effectiveness of teaching letters and sounds. Children make good progress in their personal development. School routines and expectations are made clear, children settle quickly and relationships are very positive. Behaviour is excellent and children play and learn exceptionally well together. They are beginning to demonstrate great independence and share and help one another willingly. Parents feel welcome and value the regular opportunity to meet staff and the high levels of communication between school and home. Planned activities meet the children's needs and interests well. During the inspection, high levels of enjoyment and some effective adult interventions were

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observed as children checked on the progress of some of the fruits and vegetables they had grown in the garden. Planning is clear and detailed. All areas of learning are addressed in an exciting and enjoyable way. There is a good balance between activities that the children choose and those led by adults. Children are encouraged to take ownership of the choices they make. Regular and useful assessments are made of children's progress and these are used well to support and develop their learning. Good leadership and management have resulted in an effective staff team. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader is already effectively improving provision. For example, the limitations of the school building restrict continuous access to outside play areas, but careful planning with meticulous attention to safety means that all children can spend a significant part of every day learning and playing outdoors. Further improvements to outdoor access are awaiting the construction of new storage facilities within the next few days. Children are now well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

In their responses to the questionnaires, the vast majority of parents and carers were positive about the school and its impact on their children's learning and well-being. Almost all thought that their children enjoyed school and were confident that children were kept safe. A very large majority agreed that the school was led and managed effectively and that the school took account of parents' concerns. Several parents commented on the good start their children received in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Overall, parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brunswick 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 161 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	75	22	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	80	18	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	52	40	45	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	50	42	48	0	0	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	62	70	26	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	55	38	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	61	32	36	2	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)	46	53	36	42	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	57	34	39	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	48	40	46	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	46	46	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	56	34	40	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	71	24	28	0	0	0	0

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.



Inspection of Brunswick School, Penrith CA11 7LX

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we came to the school recently to see how well you were doing. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work and at play. We judged that your school is satisfactory, but the school leaders know how to make it even better.

Those of you who are in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a particularly good start when you begin school. All the adults in your school look after you and care for you well. You know how important it is to keep safe and to lead healthy lifestyles. We were very impressed when some of you told us when making lemonade, that it is not good to eat too much sugar as this can spoil your teeth. Your behaviour is very good and you look after one another very carefully.

We have asked the school to do two main things to help you make even better progress:

- help those of you who are capable of reaching the very highest standards at the end of Year 2 to learn more quickly and make as much progress as you can
- make sure that all of your teachers expect you to work hard in every lesson, give you advice on how to improve your work and give you tasks and activities which mean that you are always able to learn as much as you possibly can.

You can help by always trying to do your very best in lessons and listening to your teachers' instructions.

Thank you again for your welcome. We wish you the very best of luck for the future.

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