

Brimsdown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135535
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	341663
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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	685
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Bachelor
Headteacher	Jeremy (Jez) Fisher
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 31 lessons, observed 24 teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teaching staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' exercise books, documents including the school improvement plan, systems for tracking the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation and school policies and analysed information from the 280 parental questionnaires in addition to those received from staff and pupils.

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

- what leaders and managers are doing to ensure that attainment at Key Stage 2 rises and progress accelerates
- whether the quality of teaching and assessment is good enough at Key Stage 2 to raise standards and improve achievement
- how well leaders and managers embed ambition and drive forward improvement across the new school
- the possible strengths in care, guidance and support.

Information about the school

Brimsdown Primary is a recently amalgamated, larger-than-average-sized primary school. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in both Nursery and Reception classes. The school offers a breakfast club and an outside provider offers an after-school club. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds but are predominantly Other White, White British and Black African. Just over half speak English as an additional language. About one in three pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is above average. Their needs are wide ranging but are mostly related to moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and specific learning needs. There is a small unit catering for pupils with severe and profound hearing impairment. An above-average percentage of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual time.

The school has gained the Healthy School Award.

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

The good leadership and management of the headteacher have ensured that the challenging amalgamation of the two previous schools has been handled sensitively. He has ensured that the new school has made a positive start and has continued to improve. One parent wrote, 'The headteacher and staff are so helpful and friendly, my daughter loves it here.'

A real strength of the school is that children are able to make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching is lively and stimulating. This results in good progress. However, throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 progress slows and, although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, this is not consistent across classes, year groups or subjects. The headteacher and his team are aware of this and have already begun to tackle some shortcomings in teaching. Currently, the school's own tracking data and lesson observations by inspectors show that pupils' progress is accelerating and attainment, although still low, is showing strong signs of improvement in English, mathematics and science. Together with the strengths evident in the school's leadership, these offer clear evidence of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

Safeguarding is robust and care, guidance and support are good. Vulnerable pupils are supported effectively and the school is a caring, nurturing place for both pupils and their families. For example, if pupils miss work for any reason, the school has good strategies in place for them to catch up. Parents of these pupils are supported well to enable good support and help to be given at home. A number of pupils and a small minority of parents still have concerns about behaviour but during the inspection the vast majority of pupils behaved well in lessons and around the school. In addition, some parents say that their concerns and views are not always considered well enough and that the school does not act upon these sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make satisfactory progress. The small group of pupils in the nurture group have made particularly good progress. Most pupils are keen to adopt a healthy lifestyle and know how a good diet and exercise promote this.

There has been a high degree of turbulence at senior and middle leadership level and also amongst the governing body. This is the result of the amalgamation and some serious illness. Consequently some leaders are still getting to know their role. However, because the headteacher's vision for the school is beginning to embed, all are fully committed to moving the school forward and have a clear view of what is required to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Better use is being made of available data and a focus on progress is beginning to pay dividends. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning has not been rigorous enough.

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More remains to be done to eradicate the small amount of remaining inadequate teaching and to move satisfactory teaching to good. The most and least able pupils are not always supported or challenged as much as they should be in lessons because teachers do not plan well enough to meet their different needs. This is particularly the case in mathematics. There are examples of teachers' marking that helps pupils to improve their work but sometimes, insufficient time is built into lessons for pupils to act upon teachers' comments. Most pupils know their targets but are not always clear about exactly how to achieve them. A new system for tracking pupils' progress has promoted earlier identification of underachievement and teachers meet regularly with leaders to discuss their pupils' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
 - embedding new tracking systems to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress
 - ensuring that teachers match work more closely to the needs of pupils, therefore building upon what they already know and can do.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - eradicating inadequate practice and move teaching from satisfactory to good through a programme of staff training, support and challenge
 - implementing a more rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that parents feel listened to and that their views are taken into account by:
 - improving lines of communication as planned
 - increasing opportunities for parents to share in the life of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils have good attitudes to learning, apply themselves well and enjoy school. They work well in pairs and groups and are keen to contribute their ideas. When they are presented with a challenge they respond well and actively seek to improve their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 6 cross-curricular English lesson pupils worked enthusiastically and were eager to share their views about the Second World War while discussing inference present in good visual resources. Consequently, pupils often made good progress in their learning. However, this is not consistent across all year groups or subjects. In a number of mathematics lessons, pupils did not make the progress they were capable of because teachers spent too long recapping prior learning and did not challenge the higher attainers effectively. Since the amalgamation, there has been one set of national test results. These demonstrated below-average attainment in English, mathematics and science. However, current tracking data indicate that the school is set to achieve better results this year and exercise books reviewed by inspectors confirm this to be the case. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys or

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between different ethnic groups. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates, but some in withdrawal groups tend to make better progress because effective support enables them to become more confident learners. Attendance is broadly average and improving as a result of the school's effective tracking and response systems. In light of this and the improving picture of attainment, pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education and develop workplace and other skills satisfactorily.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that they can approach adults confidently with any issues and are assured that any problems will be sorted out effectively. Despite this, some pupils raised some concern about behaviour, although many said that it had improved. During the inspection, behaviour was generally good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils like to take on responsibility as school councillors and junior helpers and say they enjoy these and similar roles, such as working with the police to make the school entrance safer and taking part in a survey about how to improve the local area. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

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	4
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	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?

Good care, guidance and support are at the heart of the school's work. There are sensitive relationships in evidence between pupils and adults. There is a real commitment to vulnerable pupils and their families. For example, the school has appointed a family support advisor who works closely with families experiencing a range of difficulties. Some pupils with emotional and behavioural problems work with adults to develop their social skills. This helps them to cope better with their difficulties and to remain in school. Teaching assistants provide effective support for those pupils with specific and moderate learning needs, which helps to ensure they make at least satisfactory progress.

Teaching is improving, but there is still work to be done to improve it further and more quickly. There are many examples of good teaching throughout the school and sometimes it is outstanding. In an excellent Year 2 English lesson, pupils learnt how to use pictures to understand and describe characters in literature. Learning and progress were excellent because the teacher's high expectations coupled with effective feedback ensured high levels of engagement and enjoyment. Good use is made of ICT to support learning and to make links across subjects. For example, laptops used in English facilitated research into a current theme of the Second World War.

The school provides a satisfactory range of extra activities and visits. Enrichment activities such as themed weeks are enjoyed but do not take place often enough. Sports activities and the daily 'take ten' contribute well to healthy lifestyles.

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?

The headteacher has ensured that despite the absence through illness of some key leaders, there has been minimal impact on the school's progress. This is a credit to his dedication and vision for the future of the school. He and his senior team are well motivated and well placed to bring about further necessary improvements. Overall, satisfactory leadership and management have begun to raise attainment and accelerate progress in some year groups. Challenging targets have been set and new tracking systems are being used more rigorously to check progress towards them. There have been good improvements in attendance and behaviour and some improvements to teaching. However, some subject leaders are new to post and many have not been

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directly involved in monitoring the quality of teaching in their own areas which, consequently, has not been rigorous enough to bring about the rapid change the school needs. The school overcomes any potential discrimination and has a firm commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all through its highly inclusive environment.

Governors meet their statutory responsibilities and safeguarding arrangements are good. There has been much change within the governing body since the amalgamation but this is now settling down. Governors are working well in partnership with the school to embed ambition and drive improvement satisfactorily. Other curriculum partnerships are wide ranging and have a good impact on the well-being of the pupils. Parental questionnaires indicate good support for the school. There is a good understanding of the community in which the school sits because the action plan for community cohesion is regularly evaluated for impact. This ensures that the variety of links, both local and further afield, continue to grow and benefit learners.

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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children begin school with understanding and skill levels which are exceptionally low when compared to other children of a similar age. Despite this they settle in well to their nursery education and quickly develop confidence and show a desire to learn. They make good progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage, but even so, when they enter Year 1, their skills, knowledge and understanding are still below average. They enjoy their learning and develop good independent skills and confidence. They share and play together well. Sometimes, opportunities to develop emergent

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writing are missed. Activities are planned well and accurate observations and assessments of learning are made. There is a good balance of adult- and child-initiated activities and children are constantly challenged, even when tidying up! There is extensive outdoor provision which is used well, for example a group of children experimented with a ramp and some cars to see the connection between gradient and speed. One said excitedly to the other, 'Quick, quick, hold it higher!' Leadership and management are good and demonstrate a passion for raising achievement for all which shines through every aspect of provision. Staff work very well together as a team, which results in very good inclusive practice, particularly for the most vulnerable children. There are good links with parents and outside agencies, which ensures children's safety and security. Data are used effectively to map progress and to look at what needs to be improved.

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

Most parents and carers are very positive about the school and the level of disagreement with any of the questions on the questionnaire was low. Some parents and carers made additional comments. Some spoke highly of the caring ethos and how well the school helps children and families in times of stress. Some spoke positively about the work of the leadership team and about the good standard of teaching in Year 6 in particular. A significant minority, however, perceive behaviour to be less than satisfactory. This was not supported by inspection evidence, but was, nevertheless, brought to the attention of the school by inspectors. A few parents and carers also felt that the school does not take account of suggestions and concerns; this, too, has also been drawn to the attention of the school. Very few expressed other concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brimsdown 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 280 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 685 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	147	53	124	44	5	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	152	54	112	40	12	4	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	134	48	131	47	10	4	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	120	43	134	48	21	8	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	131	47	129	46	9	3	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	114	41	137	49	22	8	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	93	33	162	58	18	6	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)	88	31	153	55	15	5	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	86	31	150	54	20	7	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	102	36	127	45	26	9	11	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	86	31	151	54	24	9	6	2
The school is led and managed effectively	108	39	144	51	10	4	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	139	50	125	45	11	4	3	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

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.



9 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brimsdown Primary School, Green Street, Enfield, London EN3 7 NA

Thank you very much for your hospitality when we visited your school recently. My colleagues and I were impressed with your warm welcome and how well behaved you all were. We found you to be polite and helpful. We thought you would like to know what we found out during our visit. The school takes good care of you and you told us that you feel safe. Some of you said that you were a bit worried about behaviour, but during the inspection we only saw good behaviour and you all wanted to learn. Well done! You enjoy the extra activities the school provides, and the sport especially helps you to stay fit and healthy. I particularly enjoyed joining in with your 'take 10'; it was a good start to the day.

Some of you will remember when Brimsdown Infants and Juniors joined together to become a new school, Brimsdown Primary. Since then, your headteacher has worked well with his team to try to settle the teachers into their new school, and he has done a good job. Unfortunately, when pupils in Year 6 took their national tests last year they did not do as well as the school had hoped, although we thought that your work in class shows that things are now getting better. Your teachers all work very hard and many of them teach you well. Sometimes though, teaching does not help you to make as much progress as you should and some of your parents think that the school doesn't listen well enough to what they have to say. We have therefore asked that your headteacher and staff do a number of things to help the school improve.

- We want your teachers to ensure that you do better by the time you leave the school in English, mathematics and science. We have asked that all of you are given work which helps you make good progress. You can help make this happen by trying as hard as you can in class.
- We would like all teachers to teach well as often as they can. We have asked that your headteacher keep a close eye on things and make sure that teachers get lots of help.
- We want your parents to feel more involved with your school. We have asked that they are invited and encouraged to do this.

We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead Inspector

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