

Brownhills West Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104206
Local Authority	Walsall
Inspection number	344392
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Andrew Watters HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Hipwell
Headteacher	Stuart Cox
Date of previous school inspection	0 March 2008
School address	Shannon Drive Brownhills Walsall WS8 7LA
Telephone number	01543 452766
Fax number	01543 452766
Email address	postbox@brownhills-w.walsall.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Inspection number	344392

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Just over three quarters of inspectors' time was spent looking at learning. Inspectors saw eight teachers, either teaching whole classes or smaller groups of pupils. In all 15 lessons were observed. Brief meetings were held with a small number of parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors also held meetings with the chair of governors and senior staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation form, school development plan and various policies. Inspectors also looked at the outcomes of a recent survey of parents' views.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following, which are the key areas for improvement from the previous inspection:

- the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6, particularly the use of assessment information to build on pupils' previous achievement and learning;
- the school's success in raising standards and increasing rates of progress for all pupils;
- the quality of leadership and management.

Information about the school

When the school was inspected in March 2008 it was judged to require special measures. The school's progress was monitored regularly, and at the last monitoring inspection in October 2009 it was judged to be making good progress in tackling the weaknesses identified above.

The majority of pupils live on the local housing estate, in either privately owned or local authority housing. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin and around a third are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The school currently holds a number of awards. These include 'Healthy Schools Status' and the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark'. During the last two years there have been considerable changes in staffing, and it is only since January 2010 that many long-standing issues relating to staffing have been resolved.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Brownhills West has improved significantly during the last two years and is providing a satisfactory quality of education for all pupils. There is a growing confidence in the school's recent achievements and in the rising expectation that the school can do even better. This is reflected most in the successful way pupils' underperformance in English, mathematics and science has been eliminated. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory, and there are examples of an increasing number of pupils making good progress in each year group. However, rates of progress overall are not yet consistently good, particularly in writing and mathematics. While standards are average with a majority of pupils reaching the level expected for their age, and some doing even better than this, attainment levels vary between subjects. For example, standards in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics, because not enough pupils are reaching the level expected for their age. Pupils' good behaviour is a strength of the school. This reflects the strong and positive relationship between adults and pupils and the support and care that pupils offer each other. They have a really good sense of right and wrong and are polite, courteous, confident and welcoming to visitors. This shows in their hard work and determination to do well in their school life. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and extremely appreciative of the open dialogue between themselves and staff. One parent's comment reflects the views of many others: 'my son is making excellent progress. I feel he is being challenged well'he enjoys school, feels safe and all staff are extremely friendly.'

Although teaching has improved considerably in recent months, and was good in the very large majority of the lessons observed, there has not yet been sufficient time for this to bring about consistently good learning and progress, which is why the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. All teachers use assessment well to support the pupils' learning and plan work to match pupils' different ability levels. This is why in recent months rates of progress for all groups of pupils are increasing.

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. There has been a successful focus on eliminating inadequacies in provision, for example improving the quality of teaching and learning, which has led to a clear trend of improvement, particularly in the last year. The headteacher is held in high regard by parents and carers, and together with the recently appointed deputy headteacher has successfully led the drive to secure better outcomes for pupils. However, the school's capacity to improve is not yet good. This is mainly because middle leaders are not sufficiently involved in whole school improvement planning and do not demonstrate a secure understanding of how they might determine

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

the strategic direction of the school. Development planning is not sharp enough, and while the chair of governors leads the governing body effectively, not all governors have a sufficiently strong impact on embedding ambition and securing improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further in each year group by:
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the level expected for their age, particularly in writing in Years 1, 2 and 4
 - sustaining and embedding the recent rise in attainment levels for all groups of pupils.
- Increase the proportion of pupils making at least good progress, particularly in writing and mathematics by:
 - carefully targeting intervention where it is needed most, for example in writing in Years 1, 2 and 4
 - accelerating pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5
 - extending and making best use of the most effective teaching in school.
- Strengthen the school's capacity to embed and sustain improvement by:
 - extending the role of middle leaders in whole school development and improvement planning
 - implementing a coherent and systematic whole school vision for improvement across all areas of the curriculum
 - improving school development planning to include measurable success criteria and clear timescales, ensuring greater involvement of all leaders and managers, including all governors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards are rising rapidly and attainment at the end of Year 6 is at least average, with many pupils achieving even better than this, for example, the 2009 test results for Year 6 pupils showed standards were above the national average. Nevertheless the school is yet to show that this recent rise can be embedded and sustained over a longer period of time. There is no doubt that learning and progress in classrooms is much better, and is at least satisfactory with many signs of good achievement in most year groups. For example, lower attaining pupils in Year 2 made good progress in a literacy lesson because their work was carefully matched to their learning needs. Year 6 pupils performed at their very best in a mathematics lesson and pupils in a Year 5 science lesson enjoyed the imaginative way in which they learned about the function of their lungs. As a result, they made good gains in their knowledge and understanding about the human body. In all the lessons observed there was clear evidence that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress with no inadequacies in learning. There is no significant difference in the outcomes for different groups of pupils. Higher and lower

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

attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and boys and girls all make similar rates of progress and are achieving at least satisfactorily.

Pupils really enjoy their time in school and are very happy. They greatly appreciate the way the school has improved during the last two years. Pupils have confidence in the adults who they work with each day and feel very safe and secure, able to give of their very best. Many pupils have clearly made a positive choice to eat healthily and most take regular exercise. Pupils respond sensibly and well when given responsibility, for example, Year 6 pupils help in the school office and well-trained playground leaders help supervise younger children during break and lunch-times. Nevertheless pupils do not yet have a sound understanding and awareness of issues facing the local community and what they might do to make a more positive contribution. There are two other areas where outcomes for pupils, although satisfactory, could be stronger. Pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of how their personal beliefs affect their view of the world and other people's feelings and values. Although pupils' academic achievements and positive attitudes make a satisfactory contribution to their future economic well-being, many do not have a good knowledge of the world of work, and what options they have to lift their aspirations of what they might do in the future.

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	3
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	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.

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

How effective is the provision?

One of the strong features of lessons is the real sense of enjoyment and positive relationships between pupils and adults. Teachers and many teaching assistants make a strong contribution to support pupils' learning. Improvements in teachers' planning and the use of assessment to support learning are two of the key reasons why outcomes for pupils are rapidly improving. Pupils' work is matched carefully to their different learning needs and lessons are challenging and fun. Year 3 pupils really enjoyed investigating the properties of different soil samples and talked enthusiastically about their findings. There is no doubt that a rise in expectations has contributed significantly to improved outcomes for all groups of pupils. A good range of after school sport clubs are well attended by pupils. While the curriculum adequately meets the pupils' needs, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not yet promoted sufficiently in other subjects. Vulnerable pupils are supported well, and while pastoral care is satisfactory, there are a few occasions when incidents involving pupils are not always followed up sufficiently rigorously or quickly.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher, with satisfactory support from other leaders and managers, have ensured that the school's significant weaknesses have been eliminated. They have done this through rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, systematic tracking of pupils' progress and achievements, holding teachers to account for the standards achieved by the pupils in their care and by setting clear targets for improvement. Governors have played their part as well although not all are sufficiently involved in school development planning. The chair of governors has been resolute in her determination that the pupils should receive a better quality of education, and she has played a key role in securing the school's improvement. Collectively, senior leaders and managers are satisfactorily embedding ambition and driving improvement, and have built solid foundations for further success. However, while self-evaluation is generally accurate there is not yet a sufficiently coherent whole school plan for improvement linking all curriculum areas. Equality is promoted satisfactorily, which shows in the pupils' achievements, where no group of pupils is discriminated against and all are supported well to do their best. Safeguarding procedures are effective and all staff have

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

received appropriate and up-to-date training. The school has a very positive relationship with parents and carers, who are kept well informed about their children's achievements. Some parents told inspectors that they are really proud of all that the school is doing for them and their children. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school community is calm and harmonious although there is little evidence of how pupils are taught to understand the characteristics of their community in a local, national and global context. This is particularly the case in relation to religion and ethnicity.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The nursery and reception classes provide a welcoming, safe and secure learning environment. From low levels of attainment on entry, particularly in their personal and social development and language skills, the children make satisfactory progress and many enter Year 1 with skills broadly at the level expected for their age. Children grow in confidence and are able to make choices and share responsibility for decisions. They really enjoy role play, for example, pretending to be fire-fighters and also practical activities, such as exploring the texture of wall-paper paste and paint! The quality of provision has improved significantly in recent months. Careful assessments and observations are used to track children's progress and plan next steps in learning. Adults have a sound and improving knowledge of the learning needs and welfare requirements for young children. There is a good and developing partnership between the reception and nursery class and those in charge show a satisfactory capacity to identify and tackle

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

areas for improvement, for example, to make greater use of the outdoor environment and to secure better transition for children when they enter Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Over half the parents and carers responded to the school's recent survey of their views. Nearly all responses were overwhelmingly positive with nothing that expressed strong disagreement with the school's performance. Many parents took the time to write individual comments, to express their gratitude for the way in which senior leaders and managers have improved the quality of education for their children. The small number of parents who spoke with inspectors were wholehearted in their support for the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



29 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brownhills West Primary School, Brownhills, WS8 7LA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. Quite a few of you told us how pleased you are with the way your school has got better over the last two years. I've certainly noticed this in my regular visits, particularly the friendly way in which you have made sure I've known what you are doing, and how much you enjoy coming to school.

I was very pleased to tell Mr Cox and the teachers that your school no longer needs an inspection each term, because it is now making sure that you all get a good chance to do your best and do well in your work. Here are some of the things that your school does well:

- making sure you feel safe
- letting your parents and carers know what is happening in school and how well you are doing
- helping you improve your work and behave really well, which you do
- making sure more of your lessons are interesting and challenging, so that you enjoy coming to school.

Although your school is improving there are still some things that could be better. So we have asked Mr Cox, the teachers and the governors to make sure:

- more of you are helped to do even better in writing and mathematics lessons
- all the teachers and governors are fully involved in improving the school even more in the future.

Thank you again for making us welcome. I will certainly miss my regular visits and I wish you every success for the rest of your time at school and in the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Watters

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.