

Broomhill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107154
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	309331
Inspection date	15 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Valerie Moffett
Headteacher	Mrs Moira Alfaham
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Beech Hill Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S10 2SA
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues: the consistency of teaching across the school; strengths in leadership, academic guidance and curriculum provision and their contribution to pupils' personal development and academic achievement and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly for learning outdoors. Evidence was gathered from analysis of school data, the school's self-evaluation, parent questionnaires, classroom visits and discussions with staff, pupils, governors and parents. Samples of pupils' work and school documents were also examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This small school draws pupils from an area of mixed socio-economic circumstances. Fewer pupils than average are eligible for free school meals. More than one pupil in three comes from a minority ethnic background; this is far higher than average. The number of pupils who speak languages other than English at home is twice the average but few are at the early stages of speaking English. A larger than average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above the national average. The school has received the following awards: Healthy Schools; Activemark; Basic Skills; Britain in Bloom. It is working towards the Challenge Award for Able, Gifted and Talented pupils.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Broomhill Infant school is a good school where pupils make good progress because of consistently good teaching. It offers outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils, along with an excellent curriculum. These combine to ensure pupils' first-class personal development. Pupils here really are, 'Enjoying Learning Together', as the school's motto suggests. The leadership enjoys the full confidence of parents and pupils. Parents are unreserved in their praise for the school which they typically describe as 'a gem of a school' which 'offers something different' along with 'a strong sense of school community'. They recognise that the school is 'a very happy, child-centred, well-run family' where 'the staff make children feel so good about themselves'.

Senior leaders create a strong sense of purpose among the small staff team. The headteacher provides outstanding direction for the school. She encourages all the staff to further their own professional development and to become increasingly effective subject leaders and middle managers. Everyone is encouraged to play their part. Daily routines run smoothly because school administrators, ancillary and lunchtime staff are efficient. Governors bring a variety of expertise into school. They play an active role in school life and offer challenge as well as support to the school. The leadership has a very accurate view of its strengths and areas to develop, although very occasionally it is reticent about acknowledging strengths in its performance because expectations are high. Strong links between subjects, above average standards and good and sometimes better achievement by all pupils demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. Staff use every nook and cranny in school to support pupils' learning. Even so, it is not always possible to compensate for the shortcomings of the accommodation. Pupils are unable to all sit together for lunch and there is no specific outdoor area for young children in the Foundation Stage.

Pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2 standards are usually above average, except for last year where pupils had a far wider spread of abilities than usual. The most recent 2008 data shows that pupils again made more than the nationally expected rates of progress. Standards rose overall but were not as strong in reading and writing as in mathematics. The school accurately judges that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Inconsistencies found at the previous inspection have been eliminated. Even so, the school is right to continue to focus on fine-tuning teachers' assessments and planning in order to accelerate further pupils' learning. Teachers and skilful teaching assistants develop good working methods so that they constantly challenge pupils to move on well in their learning. Teachers are consistently strong classroom practitioners and the headteacher uses their expertise well. Outstanding support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make the best possible progress. Highly trained teaching assistants provide just the right levels of support to develop these pupils' skills and confidence so that they become successful learners. They are included in all the school's activities and their self-confidence grows rapidly as a result. The school is also quick to request the support of outside agencies when necessary. Pupils learning to speak English as an additional language achieve well. They make rapid strides in their learning as a result of regular adult-led speech and language support in school.

Since the last inspection, leaders have worked very successfully to develop the curriculum which now is a real strength of the school. Pupils were asked which topics they would like to study and these have been built into the new curriculum programme. As a result, pupils are more engaged in their learning and so make better progress. Boys, in particular, write more freely as

they enjoy developing new skills while learning, for instance, about 'stormy weather' or 'fun and games'. The ever evolving curriculum is enriched by exciting clubs and activities such as belly dancing and Spanish, as well as a very broad range of visiting sports coaches. Pupils make the most of educational visits both near and far. Pupils arriving from landlocked countries, for example, marvel when they visit the seaside for the first time. The leadership is outward looking and seeks out local partners. Pupils participate in writing festivals and music concerts and school councillors visit the mayor. Parents and garden experts are full of praise for the beautiful and extensive wildlife garden which has won city and national awards. Parents agree that, 'The environmental teaching is a strength.' Pupils explore an extensive variety of natural habitats hidden among the dense foliage or play for extended periods in the stone pile, where they make up imaginary games, build structures or grind the stones. They grow a variety of fruit and vegetables and use these to raise funds for the school. Their knowledge of what it means to live healthy lifestyles is developing very well.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and have several adults to turn to with any concerns. The appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. First-class pastoral care, personal support and academic guidance for pupils ensure that they feel secure physically, emotionally and academically. Pupils are clear about their targets and how these change throughout the year. Staff track pupils' progress assiduously and make certain that their skills develop well as they move through the school. Class teachers are held to account for how well pupils in their classes are developing. High quality links with other local schools ensure that times of potential anxiety for pupils and parents, such as when children move schools, are relatively free from stress.

Many parents are closely involved in the work of the school and the partnership with parents is first class. Parents bring many skills that broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world beyond school. For instance, they help pupils to create a wonderful set of mosaic scenes on the playground walls. Pupils flourish in the calm, purposeful atmosphere. They behave with self-discipline and have a clear understanding of adults' high expectations. They cooperate and collaborate extremely well and relationships are of the highest order. Attendance is rising sharply due to concentrated efforts by the school's leadership so now few pupils miss significant chunks of work. Pupils from different nationalities regularly come and go but the pupils settle in quickly and learn much from their peers about the world beyond school. During the recent carnival week, each class studied a different country and compiled detailed albums of all the information they collected. The strong spiritual and moral ethos is palpable here. Parents confirm that the school is, 'A fantastic example of multicultural education working well!'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the school from a wide range of early years' settings and with a huge variety of experiences but overall attainment on entry is similar to national expectations. They make good progress and many are working securely within, and some attain beyond, the goals expected for their age. Strong teaching ensures that children enjoy a wide range of activities that bring their learning to life. For example, they eagerly search for pirate treasure buried on a 'sandy beach' segmented into a grid. Children carefully record the coordinates of any treasure found on a chart. Adults ensure that children enjoy their learning and that the activities meet their individual academic needs. Staff track children's progress carefully so that the school quickly builds up an accurate picture of each child's strengths along with the areas that need more support. As a result, there is first-class support for children with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities and these children make excellent progress. Parents acknowledge how well children with individual needs blend in here and their reactions are typically, 'My child has felt safe, protected, encouraged and enthused here.' Strong leadership and clear expectations lead to impressive behaviour. Children are happy to follow the simple rules. They show increasing maturity as they access resources independently and collaborate well during role play. Although children spend part of each day outdoors, there is no dedicated outdoor space solely for use by children in the Foundation Stage. This restricts children's growing independence as they have limited opportunities to decide for themselves when to learn and play inside or outdoors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading.
- Improve provision for outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I inspected your happy school. I enjoyed listening to you talking about your school and looking at your work. In my report, I tell everyone that Broomhill Infants is a good school. This is because you know lots and learn well. Those of you who sometimes need more help and support from the teachers do really well. This is because all the adults know exactly what help to give you so you can do your best. They take the very best care of all of you, and have even changed the topics you learn to fit in with the things you said interest you the most. You all behave beautifully and listen very carefully to what other people think. Lots of you come from different parts of the world and you are all very good at sharing the things you know about different countries and beliefs. These are very useful skills to have when you are older.

You said that one of the good things about Broomhill Infants is that, 'There are always lots of really good surprises in the classrooms and on the walls.' I saw for myself that your teachers work hard to make sure there are lots of ideas around your classrooms to help you when you are working by yourselves. The walls are packed with interesting information and pictures from around the world. I really enjoyed looking at the albums you have in each classroom, showing what you learned in carnival week just recently.

Some of you told me that, 'The school council arranges things that are going to make the school better because inspectors don't come here very often.' I hope you all agree with the two things I found that I would like your school to do better. I have asked your teachers to help you to reach higher standards in reading by the time you leave Year 2. I have also asked that your school improves the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage so that they can learn as well outside as indoors.

Thank you for making me laugh so much during my visit and for sharing your beautiful garden with me. Keep grinding those stones!