

Breadsall Hill Top Infant & Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112746
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	378548
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Stafford

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allen Embley
Headteacher	Rachel King
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2008
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Age group	3–7
Inspection date(s)	6–7 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford

Additional inspector

Heather Simpson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 14 lessons taught by eight teachers, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. They held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspection team took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, heard a sample of pupils read, and looked at the school's tracking of pupils' progress, teachers' planning, records of classroom observations, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's self-evaluation and reports from the local authority. The inspection team scrutinised 28 questionnaires from parents and carers, and 18 completed by staff.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from a White British heritage and there are fewer pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than is typical nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school has achieved several awards including Healthy School status and the Sing Up award. Since the previous inspection two new members of the teaching staff have been appointed and significant upgrades to the accommodation have enabled pupils to access indoor facilities for mealtimes in the nursery and outdoor learning and play.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good and improving school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, but despite many strengths it is not outstanding because the quality of teaching is not yet high enough to ensure that all groups of pupils reach their full potential, particularly in writing.
- Achievement for the majority of pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is good. Attainment at the end of both the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 2 is rising, particularly in reading. Progress in writing has also been accelerating, but attainment is not as high as in reading because the teaching of writing is not consistently good across the school.
- Good behaviour and effective pastoral care and support enable pupils to develop good personal skills. They are happy, hold positive attitudes, feel safe and enjoy learning. Well-targeted support ensures that pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly back on track.
- The quality of teaching rarely falls below good and is sometimes outstanding. Teachers generally ensure that learning moves at a brisk pace and pupils are fully engaged. In a small minority of lessons, work is not matched sufficiently to pupils' abilities, and the pace of learning is slower. Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their writing, and comments are not followed up consistently.
- The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body are ambitious for the school. They lead teaching well and have managed many improvements in performance since the previous inspection, showing a good capacity to maintain improvement in the future. Leaders and managers set challenging targets and staff share a high level of ambition for all pupils, backed up by an increasingly lively, exciting curriculum and creative use of resources.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in writing across the school to match that in reading by:
 - embedding the consistency of teaching of writing across all age groups
 - widening the opportunities for pupils' extended writing across a range of genres and subjects
 - applying consistently good systems for involving pupils in their own assessment so that they have a deeper understanding of how to improve their work.

- Ensure all teaching is at least good and a higher proportion outstanding by:
 - ensuring that work always matches pupils' abilities
 - maintaining a good pace of learning throughout each lesson
 - ensuring that marking indicates clearly how pupils can improve their work and is followed up effectively.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The very large majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are rightly happy with their children's progress. In most lessons it is good, with pupils excitedly applying their new skills to new tasks. Most work hard and concentrate well, frequently making positive comments about their enjoyment of learning. On occasion, more noticeably in writing, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and their progress slows. Many pupils have interesting thoughts and opinions but are not always able to regularly express these in extended writing. There is some inconsistency in the teaching of writing. For example, not all teachers use the same successful methods to give pupils a deeper understanding of how to improve their writing, and this leads to variable outcomes. Recent successful moves to broaden the curriculum have introduced greater opportunities for pupils to take creative approaches to learning. This has sparked greater interest in learning and demonstrates the school's effectiveness in advancing equality of opportunity, particularly for boys in writing and girls in mathematics.

Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are generally well below those typical for their age, but make good progress and rapidly make up lost ground. The school's assessment data show that the majority are on track to meet the levels expected by the time they move into Year 1. This good progress continues across the school, with the large majority of pupils making progress at or above the nationally expected rates. By the end of Year 2 attainment is broadly average and improving, and pupils are well prepared for the transfer to junior school. The school has taken significant steps to accelerate pupils' development of reading skills. Staff use a wide range of effective approaches

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to build knowledge and understanding of sounds and letters. Consequently, attainment in reading is rising rapidly; pupils reach average reading skills by the end of Year 2 with some exceeding expectations.

Detailed reviews of pupils' progress accurately identify disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Strategies to support them are effective in closing the gaps over time between their attainment and that of their peers. Pupils' overall attainment by the end of Year 2 is influenced by inevitable year-on-year variations in ability of the small groups involved. Despite this, there has been an upward trend over the last three years with particularly rapid progress in reading by Year 2, alongside gains in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is steadily increasing. Effective actions are maintaining this trend and challenging targets for Year 2 reflect high expectations. There are no significant variations in the progress made by different groups in the school.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is rated highly by the very large majority of parents and carers, and also the pupils. During the inspection it was typically good, and occasionally outstanding. As a result, most pupils develop good attitudes to learning and exhibit good relationships and social skills. The good subject knowledge of staff enables creative interpretations of the curriculum to inspire pupils. Teachers are highly skilled in planning lessons to include opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to a high level. For example, pupils in Year 2 were totally engrossed in a lesson when analysing the marks in Van Gogh's paintings that led them to look for, and discuss, similar marks in the environment outside. Occasionally teaching lacks a brisk pace and pupils' progress slows. Teaching assistants enthuse pupils well; they offer good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, particularly in reading and phonics, but also for those with other difficulties.

In most lessons pupils show that they have ideas to express and these are valued, but they have insufficient opportunities to write about them at length in a range of genres and subjects. Good written work was seen about the causes and outcomes of the Great Fire of London, but opportunities were missed to study and write about the geography of London, and puzzle about what would have happened if there had been no fire. As part of the school's drive to tackle discrimination, staff acquire a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils. This adds to the accurate assessment of pupils' work, which is used to plan lessons which usually meet the pupils' needs. On occasion, this knowledge is not used effectively enough and some of the more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Marking has improved with the introduction of a clear school policy. It is increasingly involving pupils in evaluating their own achievement and giving pupils guidance about how to improve it. The helpful comments that teachers write, aimed at telling pupils how to improve their work, are not always followed up systematically.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has a well-organised induction programme that

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helps children settle very quickly into school routines. The setting provides a bright and stimulating learning environment. The outdoor area offers a good and safe working area for children to learn through experiencing a wide range of practical activities. Enterprising teaching, with a well-organised range of activities that capture children's interest and imagination, helps them make consistently good progress and develop understanding rapidly.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are typically well behaved and considerate, and this makes a positive contribution to the safe and friendly environment within the school. Pupils are punctual and their enthusiasm for school is reflected in above average levels of attendance. Incidents of bullying in any form are few. Pupils' voice is valued through opportunities to express their ideas about how the school can be improved, which develops self-esteem and independence. Pupils typically treat others with respect and courtesy and no incidents of disruptive behaviour interrupted learning in the lessons observed. The school's active approach to managing incidents of undesirable behaviour ensures that pupils are very aware of the importance of behaving well. Pupils are adamant that they feel safe, and say that if they are upset by others they trust in the quality of support from staff. Pupils are very aware that this can focus on improving behaviour and engagement in lessons so that their academic progress improves. These strategies are having a positive impact on how pupils relate with each other, and are addressing the concerns raised by a very small minority of parents and carers. The questionnaires confirm that most pupils and their parents and carers feel that good behaviour is the norm.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's resilient leadership has created a strong team whose members are keen to continually improve their practice. Effective self-evaluation provides a good basis for embedding ambition and driving improvement through effective systems for professional development. The good capacity of leaders to move the school forward is evident in the way in which they have brought about improvements since the previous inspection. Strategies to accelerate progress in reading, and to improve the quality of teaching, have been most productive and the setting of challenging targets for pupils and staff is raising attainment. Effective systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the school underpin a good and developing plan for further improvements. Adults at all levels are good at promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination through raising the expectations of pupils and their parents and carers of what can be achieved. Pupils are known as individuals and the effective use of accurate assessment data underpins sensitive and effective support for any pupils in danger of falling behind. Any differences in performance between groups of pupils are quickly identified and rectified. Swift action is taken to narrow any apparent achievement gap for pupils, such as for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

The curriculum is good. It is being developed to promote more creative and active

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learning experiences, for example through increased use of the extensive school grounds, while maintaining good basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It meets the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs very well and accommodates the aspirations of all pupils, including those who are talented. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Opportunities are given to broaden their understanding of the wider world, for example by visits to the zoo and library, museum and parks in Derby and residential stays in Sherwood Forest. The arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and all reasonable risks to pupils and adults are removed. The governing body provides good support and challenge and is clear about what leaders need to do next to improve provision further. Together with the staff team, members of the governing body ensure that all resources, including accommodation and staffing, are efficiently managed to get good outcomes for pupils.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Breadsall Hill Top Infant and Nursery School, Derby DE21 4ET

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and telling me your views, including through the questionnaire some of you completed. I was impressed by your behaviour and good attitudes to learning. Your school is good because it prepares you well for your next stage of life. You benefit from a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As you move through the school you make good progress, particularly in reading. Most of you also make good progress in writing but some of you could do better. Your teachers and support staff are caring and those of you who need help benefit from good support. Many lessons are exciting and opportunities to go on a range of visits out of school help you to develop a better knowledge of the world. Everyone is treated equally and you rightly told us you feel safe. By the end of Year 2 you are growing into caring young people who respect others.

Your headteacher, teachers and support staff are constantly seeking ways to make the school better. The school has improved since its previous inspection and, with your support, should continue to get better. Part of our job is to suggest how this should happen. We have asked the school to accelerate your progress in writing by giving you more opportunities to write longer pieces of work for a range of purposes. In addition, we have asked the senior leaders to ensure that all teaching is at least good and a higher proportion is outstanding.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford
Lead inspector

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