

The Bromley-Pensnett Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103812
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	336166
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lyn Parker
Headteacher	Ms Alyson Smith
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 22 lessons and all 10 class teachers were seen. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, two governors, and three groups of pupils. Many pupils and some parents and carers were spoken to informally. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of assessments of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Questionnaire returns from 60 parents and carers were analysed, as were those from 31 staff and a representative sample of Key Stage 2 pupils.

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

- how good progress is in English and mathematics and whether attainment is high enough
- how well cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are being developed in the wider curriculum
- what contribution pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning make to their progress
- how well the school prepares its pupils for life in multicultural Britain.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. Virtually all pupils are of White British origin, with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. Nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than that of most schools. A broadly average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs. Most have moderate learning, behavioural or speech and language difficulties. A few have physical disabilities or a degree of autism. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils entering the school other than at the usual time of admission is also above average. The school was brought out of special measures at its previous inspection. There have been considerable changes to the staff in recent years, particularly affecting Years 5 and 6 and including senior members of staff.

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

2

Main findings

Bromley-Pensnett is a satisfactory school, which is now showing good signs of improvement after a considerable period of turbulence, and achievement is rapidly accelerating across the school. This is due to the high expectations of the headteacher, leadership team and governors, who communicate these expectations consistently to staff, pupils and parents and carers. School leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses through effective self-evaluation and work well together as a highly committed and motivated team. Effective routines have become established and the school runs smoothly. There is high morale amongst the staff, who all aspire to further improvement.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, but some parents and carers do not make sure that their children attend regularly, or on time, despite the school's best efforts to encourage this. Pastoral care is good and pupils needing additional support are especially well-cared for and helped to make progress. Pupils feel that all staff are there to help them and that there is a caring atmosphere. They feel safe in school and their parents and carers agree. Bullying is infrequent and quickly dealt with if it occurs.

Attainment remains low in the current Year 6. There is a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in that year and a significant number of them entered the school during Key Stage 2. Despite this, many pupils in Year 6 have made good progress from their low starting points. This is because of stable and improved teaching over the last two years. Reading skills show good improvement as a result of a focus on letter sounds. Writing remains as an area for further improvement and the school is working hard to take it forward. Mathematics is stronger than writing, and develops well through enterprise schemes. Attainment in mathematics, science and ICT is close to average.

The school's assessments show that a few higher-ability pupils in Year 6 are achieving above average attainment levels for the first time in the school. There is clear evidence of strongly improved attainment and much good progress throughout the school, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Year 6. This is because of consistently good teaching in those years. In other years, teaching is less consistently good, but improving at a good pace because of the work done by senior leaders in coaching and in modelling their own good teaching practice.

The school aims to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Currently this is satisfactory rather than good, because, although they take part in the good 'Moving on, moving up' induction activities, the standard of their writing does not yet prepare all of them well enough for the secondary school curriculum.

The school has made good improvements since its previous inspection. There are now

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strengths in pupils' personal development, attitudes and behaviour because of well-established practices, which are used consistently by all staff. The quality of teaching has improved so that it is always satisfactory and much is good. Consequently, the majority of pupils are making good progress. Attainment is rising rapidly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The senior team is now settled and rigorously tackling remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning. The school is in a good position to make further sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- improve attainment in English, particularly writing, by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write , particularly through stimulating topics which encourage writing for a variety of purposes
 - paying more attention to grammar, spelling, presentation and neatness.
- improve the quality of teaching to ensure consistently good progress in all year groups and raise all round attainment, by:
 - making sure that all teachers use assessment well to plan for the full range of ability in their classes
 - making sure lessons proceed at a quicker pace so that pupils remain focused and achieve more.
- improve attendance by reducing the rate of unauthorised absence by 50% by July 2011.
- About 40% of 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**

The current Year 6 experienced significant turbulence during the years before and during the school being in special measures, when they made little progress. Despite the good progress they are currently making, their overall attainment in English remains low, mainly because writing is weak. Nevertheless, because of the good and often outstanding teaching in Year 6, higher-ability pupils demonstrated a good standard of writing when motivated by an exciting topic based on ghostly happenings in stately homes. However, insufficient attention to presentation and grammar often let the standard of their writing down. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is close to average, as seen by the accurate way they present and interpret data in graphs and charts. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and guidance for their writing, which ensures they make good progress in this subject, and satisfactory progress overall.

The attainment of younger pupils, in Key stage 1, is much closer to average, because they are building successfully on good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Key Stage 1 pupils were seen paying careful attention to finger spacing, full stops and capital

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letters when writing about being a good neighbour in religious education.

Higher-attaining pupils showed good understanding of complex patterns in mathematics when making a 'flower garden' using two-dimensional shapes.

Pupils' progress is accelerating quickly throughout the school, but still remains variable and satisfactory overall. It is good in The Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, but less consistently so in Key Stage 2 until Year 6, where it is always good and often outstanding. Currently, many older pupils have a great deal to catch up on, because their progress has been poor in the past, but there are clear signs of much improved attainment in Key Stage 1, which is now being built on in Key Stage 2 with a higher proportion of good teaching.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and want to learn. There is a small minority who find it hard to conform to the school's expectations, but this is well controlled by the good use of the school's system of rewards and sanctions, which all pupils understand and respect. Pupils' social and moral development is good. The school does everything it can to improve attendance and punctuality and attendance is, therefore, broadly average. Nevertheless, despite this, a few pupils are persistently absent or regularly late, so limiting their progress.

Pupils work and play harmoniously together. They understand how to keep themselves healthy, participating in a wide range of sporting activities. They choose healthy options from the tuck shop run by the school council at break times. The school council is also very active in raising money for a local hospital and other good causes. Many pupils have responsible jobs as monitors and in organising the hall for assemblies.

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

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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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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory, but within that, there is a range that includes an increasing proportion of good and some excellent practice. All teachers share the school leaders' ambition for improvement and understand the role they have to play to achieve it. They plan consistently, making use of assessments to meet the needs of all pupils, but this is tailored to meet the needs of the wide ability range more precisely in some classes than others. In Year 6, pupils are taught in ability groups for English and mathematics, which enables the higher-ability pupils to be fully challenged and some to reach above average attainment levels. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own progress through the use of class targets and, in Year 6, individual targets. This use of targets is not yet being consistently applied in all classes, however. In the best lessons, pupils are constantly being challenged, learning moves on rapidly and is constantly checked by the teacher. In others, the pace is slower. Pupils sometimes spend too much time listening as a whole class to the teacher. Pupils said they found this 'boring' and were observed losing concentration and fidgeting in these lessons.

The curriculum meets all requirements. It offers a range of subjects, including French. When pupils are given the opportunity to do more individual and group work, as in the well-planned and challenging Year 5/6 project on the Mexican oil spillage, they are very well motivated and achieve well. The curriculum is currently under revision, with the view to moving towards a more theme-based approach to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT more widely. There are too few opportunities to aid pupils' cultural development, particularly relating to life in multi-cultural Britain.

Consistently good care, guidance and support make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils talk positively about the relationships that they enjoy with the adults who work in school and say they can approach any of them with any worries or concerns. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by well-qualified teaching assistants helps these pupils to access most aspects of the curriculum and develop their self-esteem. Very good care is given to pupils needing additional support and their families through well-developed links and partnerships with outside agencies. Pupils receive very good guidance when starting school or leaving for secondary education.

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

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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 led the school well through some particularly turbulent times and has been effectively supported by the governing body, who have good knowledge of the school. Together they have appointed effective leaders, whose impact can be seen in improved outcomes for pupils, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6. The leadership team is now well established and self-evaluation is good. Areas of weakness in learning and progress have been identified and strategies put in place to improve them, so that academic performance is improving strongly and quickly.

School leaders monitor the deployment of staff and funds satisfactorily to ensure that all pupils get equal opportunities to take part in school activities and to access the curriculum. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored by the headteacher and a senior team member in each key stage. Standards are rigorously checked through book scrutinies and lesson observations. Governors monitor effectively through links with subject co-ordinators. Increasingly, pupils' views are also being sought. This is helpful in setting the right priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school adopts recommended good practice in all areas of its work. Staff and governors are well trained, particularly in child protection. The school updates procedures regularly to ensure the safe use of developing technology, such as the internet.

The establishment of the school as a cohesive community has been a major achievement, considering the degree of turbulence experienced before and during the period of special measures. The school has strong partnerships in the local community, with the church, other schools and agencies which support pupils facing additional challenges. There are plans in hand to make more connections with communities with a wider ethnic mix in this country and abroad.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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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

Most children enter the Nursery class with skills and abilities well below those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority have attained the early learning goals and their attainment is similar to that expected for their age. This represents good, and for some children, outstanding progress. It is a direct result of the consistently good teaching by all adults. Children thoroughly enjoy learning and behave well. They are confident and happy in this secure and welcoming environment and readily engage in the good range of activities prepared for them. They understand the class routines fully and take very little time to settle on the carpet for work. They are very keen to help with the clearing up when they hear the 'one minute tambourine'. Children's social skills are good and they work and play well together, for example, when setting up an exciting track of guttering to race their cars.

There is a well-equipped learning environment both indoors and outdoors, with 'free-flow' use of both teaching areas. Children enjoy a good mix of adult-led and independent learning through play. They were seen enjoying counting the leaves on 'Jack's Beanstalk' and recognising animal picture-cards when playing 'snap'. There are good learning opportunities that include motivating activities across all the areas of learning. There are daily sessions to develop linking letters and sounds. These form a good basis for the further development of writing in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Strong leadership ensures planning is good and there is effective use of assessment to ensure that activities are matched well to the different abilities of the children. The safety and care of all children has a very high profile. Good relationships with parents and carers extend children's learning into their homes.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Virtually all of the parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires were very positive about the school. They were particularly pleased with the quality of

- teaching. There was one concern about bullying and there was a less positive
- response to the question relating to the management of unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that there is some challenging behaviour from a very few pupils,
- which is managed well and does not significantly disrupt learning. Pupils themselves
- said that any bullying was quickly dealt with. Several parents/carers wrote to
- express their thanks to staff about the much better progress in Year 6 and the
- overall improvements in the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Bromley-Pensnett 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 286 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	48	29	48	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	52	28	47	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	42	33	55	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	40	35	58	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	37	38	63	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	35	38	63	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	37	36	60	0	0	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)	17	28	34	57	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	32	37	62	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	25	37	62	5	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	28	36	60	4	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	32	38	63	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	35	38	63	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

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.



27 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Bromley-Pensnett Primary School, Brierley Hill, DY5 4PJ

Thank you very much for being so helpful to my colleagues and me during our visit. We found that yours is a satisfactory school, which is improving.

Your headteacher and governing body make sure the school runs smoothly. You make satisfactory progress in learning and good progress in Year 6. Younger children in the Nursery and Reception class also make good progress, which is built-on well in Key Stage 1. The standard of your work is improving, but still needs to get better, particularly your writing. Most of you behave well and usually come to school wanting to learn and this helps you make the most of your school days. You told us that bullying is quickly dealt with and we agree with you. All the adults take good care of you and you can always talk to someone if you are worried. You know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe and many of you do useful jobs in school. Some of you are often late and sometimes do not come to school at all, so you are not learning!

All the adults in your school want it to be even better. To make this happen we have asked them to do the following things:

Make sure you get more opportunities to write about interesting things, and that your spelling, grammar and neatness improve

Make sure that teaching is always good, so that you make good progress in all your lessons

We are also asking you to do some things to help:

Make sure you come to school every day and that you are on time

Make sure you work hard and really try to make your writing better

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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