

Brandlehow Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101001
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	363646
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Nicholls
Headteacher	Sara Grove
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 10 different teachers and talked to parents and carers, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked in particular at its self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the governing body minutes. They considered the responses in 69 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

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

- What is the quality of the teaching and does it challenge pupils to do their best?
- How extensive is the pupils' understanding of community cohesion, particularly in a global context?
- How effective are the school's measures to improve attendance?

Information about the school

This school is average in size. A lower-than-usual proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost half of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Around a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language, but few of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above average. Of these, pupils with dyslexia form the largest group. An external provider manages after-school care, which is not part of this inspection.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

One parent commented, 'Brandlehow is always striving to better itself, and succeeding.' This ethos is what makes the school outstanding. The leaders and managers plan each improvement in meticulous detail to ensure that the pupils receive the highest quality education. The leaders and managers have met every recommendation from the last inspection. They have raised attainment, they ensure that the pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve, and they work closely with parents and carers to help them support their children's learning. This relentless pursuit of excellence demonstrates the outstanding capacity of the school to sustain further improvement.

The leaders and managers make an outstanding contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring that improvement comes from self-evaluation by teachers and pupils alike. As a result, both teaching and learning have improved in quality since the last inspection and both are exemplary.

The children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A great deal is expected even of the youngest children and they respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment. This enthusiasm continues throughout the school and is fostered by the adults' high expectations for all the pupils.

The leaders and managers, in partnership with parents and carers, have been extremely effective in improving attendance and this is now high. The curriculum is creative and stimulates the pupils' imagination as well as their learning.

The school has a deep commitment to promoting community cohesion and the pupils have excellent opportunities to form links with schools in Europe to learn about different ways of life. Plans are in hand to develop community cohesion further in order to extend the pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures beyond Europe.

The pupils develop outstanding personal qualities in the school. They are kind and considerate to one another and relish the many opportunities to take responsibility for others.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide additional opportunities for the pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures by developing further links with schools outside Europe.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The pupils enjoy school greatly and their overall achievement is outstanding. All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an

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additional language, and those with dyslexia and other special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy their learning thoroughly and make excellent progress. This is because their needs are identified early and met through highly effective support. The pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is high. The school is very skilled at removing barriers to pupils' learning. This is because, as one parent commented, 'The teachers deliver the curriculum in a stimulating way and encourage children's different learning styles.' Close attention is paid to the needs of each pupil. The level of challenge is consistently high and the pupils rise to the challenge. For example, in one fast-paced Year 4 lesson, the pupils were busily engaged in planning the steps needed to prepare for a forthcoming outing to an army museum. The lesson provided exciting opportunities for the pupils to do their own research and discuss their findings with others. The high-quality questioning by the teacher stimulated the pupils to present their findings as ambitiously as possible. A scrutiny of further work they had undertaken to prepare for the trip showed a sophisticated understanding of history. As a result of such high expectations, the pupils perform exceptionally well in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6, especially at above-average levels.

The pupils are polite, friendly and confident. They feel completely safe in school and are considerate towards others. Their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. The pupils understand fully the importance of taking regular exercise and eating a healthy diet. They make an excellent contribution to their own and the wider community, for example, by writing the school's anti-bullying policy to make it relevant and clear to their fellow pupils. The very firm grounding that the pupils acquire in their personal development and acquisition of basic skills prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of schooling.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The teachers are popular with the pupils. One pupil commented, 'They support us all the way through.' The teachers manage the pupils' behaviour exceptionally well, ensuring that they sit properly and pay close attention. The teachers use questioning skilfully to stimulate the pupils to think for themselves and encourage them to discuss tasks with one another, so that they are all fully engaged. As a result, the pace of learning is brisk and the pupils' attention rarely flags. The teachers plan lessons meticulously and use information on the pupils' progress to match tasks exactly to their capabilities. As a result, lessons enable the pupils to make outstanding progress. The pupils are given frequent opportunities to assess the quality of their work and to decide, with the support of the teachers, the next steps they need to take to improve. The teaching assistants give excellent support, enabling all pupils, whatever their aptitudes or needs, to access the full curriculum.

The pupils receive a thorough grounding in literacy and numeracy from the balanced and creative curriculum, in which music and the arts are strongly encouraged. One pupil described the school as 'an adventurous school which tries new things'. The pupils enjoy the many clubs and the high-quality activities provided by the sports partnerships. They report that they enjoy their trips to other European countries greatly and their many trips and visits closer to home; these deepen their understanding of history and the arts.

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The pupils receive exemplary care. Each individual is known and valued and, as one parent commented, 'The staff put a great deal of effort into developing the children's self-esteem and confidence.' All groups of pupils achieve outstandingly because their needs are fully met. Children experiencing particular difficulties and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given exceptional care and support and, in many cases, catch up with their classmates. Transition arrangements are exemplary at each stage of the pupils' schooling. A Year 6 pupil commented, 'The school supports us in any way necessary to prepare us for good secondary schools.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

'The headteacher and deputy head always go the extra mile to ensure that parents as well as the children are happy with all aspects of school life.' This comment from one parent sums up the continual pursuit of excellence, which is the hallmark of the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her team. The governing body shares their determination to maintain the school's exceptional qualities and provides outstanding support. The governing body is fully engaged in the life of the school and ready to take the initiative in making improvements, for example visiting the school regularly to review all school policies. As a result of the leaders' outstanding ambition and drive for improvement, the pupils' attainment has risen since the last inspection. The leaders' management of the quality of teaching is outstanding and a particular strength is the involvement of the teachers in the evaluation of their own performance. The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well, tackling discrimination by removing barriers to learning so that all pupils have the chance to succeed. The headteacher and governing body ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and of the highest quality. The pupils are given exemplary guidance on how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet, and this contributes highly effectively to their feeling completely safe.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is exceptional. It ensures that the pupils have an excellent understanding of many faiths and ways of life in local, national and global contexts, and evaluates the quality of the provision stringently. The school plans to build more strongly on these foundations by aiming for more extensive links with non-European schools to deepen the pupils' understanding of global issues. The school works in excellent partnership with a number of outside organisations, opening opportunities for the pupils in the arts, music and sport. The leaders and managers work in extremely effective partnership with parents and carers, keeping them fully informed about their children's progress and encouraging them to bring their skills to the school community.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of excellent teaching and care, the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress in their learning and personal development. The children enter the Nursery with language and number skills which vary, but which are generally above those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, most have learnt skills which are well in advance of those of their age group. The school builds and maintains excellent relationships with parents and carers. The environment is highly stimulating. Much is expected of the children, both in choosing their own activities and in concentrating on what the adults are showing and teaching them. They respond to these high expectations with enthusiasm. They enjoy learning hugely and are happy and confident. This is because the adults know all the children well and meet their needs quickly. In this safe and supportive environment, the children develop excellent personal qualities. They behave exceptionally well and are ready to share and take turns. They take responsibility for others, for example by handing round fruit snacks politely.

The children's progress is assessed regularly and the information is used extremely effectively to address their individual needs. The teaching by all of the adults is excellent and the level of challenge is high. For example, the children in the Reception Year were excited to be put into teams to 'swat' computerised pictures of words beginning with the sound 'w' and they all joined in the task enthusiastically. Later, they built on their learning of the sound by making their own 'whales' from paper and craft materials. No opportunity is missed to develop all six areas of learning in the well-resourced indoor and outdoor play areas. For example, the adults gave the children a grounding in science by asking them why some receptacles of water had turned to ice overnight, whereas others had not frozen. The leaders and managers plan the curriculum and manage the provision

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impressively. Transition arrangements are exemplary and enable the children to move confidently to the next stage.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

All those who returned questionnaires or who spoke to inspectors agreed that the school meets the needs of their children and that it keeps them healthy and safe. All agree that their children enjoy school and that the teaching and the school's leadership are effective. The findings of the inspection are that all these aspects are exemplary. A very few expressed minor concerns about the school. There was no specific trend or pattern to these issues. Parents and carers are unanimous in being happy with their children's experiences at the school. One commented, 'The children benefit from their educational experience to the highest degree.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brandlehow 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 260 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	86	10	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	86	10	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	55	28	41	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	64	24	35	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	72	17	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	65	21	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	70	21	30	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)	40	58	21	30	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	58	28	41	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	70	20	29	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	58	26	38	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	56	81	13	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	75	17	25	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



13 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brandlehow Primary School, Putney SW15 2ED

Do you remember when three visitors came to your school recently to watch you learn and play? Thank you for making us so welcome and telling us your views.

- The school is outstanding. Your parents and carers love your school as much as you do!
- You get on with one another extremely well and always share and take turns.
- The school keeps you very safe and you have many chances to eat healthily and take exercise. All of the adults take very good care of you.
- You enjoy learning and are given many exciting things to do. You learn an amazing amount for children of your age and this is because the adults always encourage you to do your very best.
- The adults love teaching you. They find wonderful ways of making you excited about the world around you, sometimes in school and sometimes by taking you on trips and visits. You told us how much you value your links with schools in Europe and we are encouraging your school to do even more to help you link up also with schools in more distant countries.
- Those adults in charge and all the others work very hard to make the school better and better. All of you can play your part by working hard, too, and always asking when there is anything you do not understand.

It was lovely to see you all preparing so well for all your Christmas activities. By the time you read this, Christmas will be over, but we shall always remember how beautifully you sang such lovely Christmas songs as 'Little Donkey' in assembly. We hope you continue to be so friendly, cheerful and helpful.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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