

Mitchell Brook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101524
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	363656
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Papprell
Headteacher	Theresa Landreth
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 16 teachers, observed 26 lessons and held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan and those of subject departments; minutes of governing body' meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, a scrutiny of pupils' work, staff and pupils' questionnaires and 139 parental questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- The impact of senior management in bringing about improvements in mathematics at Key Stage 1 especially for more able pupils.
- The provision for writing especially for boys at Key Stage 1.
- The achievement of different groups of pupils represented with the school community.
- The current progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially at School Action Plus.

Information about the school

Mitchell Brook Primary School is larger than average. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average. A few of these pupils are now at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, and the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Pupils' needs range from moderate learning difficulties to behavioural, emotional and social and speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Mobility of pupils is very high. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Nursery and two Reception classes for up to 100 children. There is extended school provision, a breakfast club, lunchtime and after-school clubs, and weekend and holiday care. The school has gained the Foundation Stage of the International Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Mitchell Brook is a good school where pupils achieve well and thoroughly enjoy learning. The extended school provision is excellent. The school is very popular with both pupils and parents and carers. There is a strong commitment from all staff to provide each pupil with the best possible education. Parents, carers and pupils appreciate the good quality care provided by the school and good quality learning opportunities. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority, saying: 'It is a good school, my child is very happy and he is making a lot of progress. The school offers an excellent after-school and holiday play scheme producing rich and stimulating activities. A lot of schools could benefit from this. My son loves all the clubs, especially the after-school football; the summer play scheme and Irish dancing are very good.' Pupils confirmed an equally positive view: 'We think we are learning a lot because we like the teachers and all the lessons and we also really like the sports coaches on the playground.'

The headteacher, the governing body and the senior management team provide strong leadership and clear educational direction that are ensuring good outcomes.

These are the key strengths of the school.

- There has been good progress at improving the provision for mathematics and writing throughout the school. Many initiatives are successfully embedded and making a positive impact on pupils' progress in these subjects.
- Pupils make good gains in their personal development because relationships are strong and the school ethos is very warm and welcoming.
- Progress is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good or better. All groups of pupils in Year 2 have made excellent progress in their writing and mathematical skills this year.
- Induction procedures are good and consequently children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are eager to start their education.
- Pupils feel extremely safe because they are totally confident any concerns will be dealt with effectively by staff.
- Good links with the local community and external agencies contribute very effectively to learning and personal development.
- The extended school provision is outstanding and is appreciated by parents, carers and pupils.
- The headteacher and senior management team lead the school effectively and have a clear vision for its future improvement.

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The effective systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school, together with the school's good organisation, strong and shared vision, continual drive for improvement and success in tackling issues identified in the last report, demonstrate its good capacity to continue moving forward.

These are the key areas for improvement which remain:

- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory rather than good because opportunities to challenge and extend children are sometimes missed.
- Attendance has improved significantly because of the success of strategies to improve it introduced by senior leaders. Despite this success, the levels of attendance by a few pupils are still too low.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By June 2011, ensure the quality of provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good or better by ensuring:
 - all teachers use assessment information rigorously to inform their planning
 - teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage manage and organise their lessons sufficiently well so that learning is consistently good or better.
- By June 2011, raise the levels of attendance by introducing individual target setting linked to rewards to promote attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From well below average starting points, pupils enjoy learning and they reach broadly average standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils achieve well because progress is good or better for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and particularly those at School Action Plus, because the quality of teaching for this group of pupils has improved. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve well because learning is active and fun. Their language is developed skilfully through activities such as visits to the local supermarket and learning to cook gingerbread men biscuits. Higher ability children are also achieving well and an increasing number are reaching the higher levels.

Lessons are well planned, and the positive climate for learning and good relationships with staff contribute to pupils' good enjoyment. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, there was a buzz of enthusiasm as all pupils were writing persuasive statements and arguments for a class debate about effective leadership. They used their writing skills well and debated the use of suitable words for their argument. Video snippets of Barack Obama, Martin Luther King and the Queen were used skilfully to stimulate discussion and extend knowledge of effective public speaking. The lesson contained good links with history and all pupils were able to talk knowledgeably about the effectiveness of their speeches. In a drumming class, led by a specialist teacher, all Year 1 pupils made excellent progress developing their ability to clap and play complex rhythms using an African drum because the challenge and pace of learning were outstanding.

Examination of pupils' work confirms that literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) and mathematical skills are contributing well to their future economic

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well-being. All pupils take a pride in their work, which is neatly presented. The school's tracking data and inspection evidence indicate an improving picture over time in all subjects, with most pupils meeting or exceeding their targets.

Pupils are well behaved, polite to visitors and cooperate well with each other. They are enthusiastic learners who have a sensible attitude to their work. Pupils develop excellent awareness of their own personal safety and they say they feel extremely safe because of the CCTV cameras and they know they can discuss any problems they have with adults. Pupils have a good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, selecting healthy options from the school lunches and attending the wide range of activity clubs. This has been recognised through the award of Healthy School Status. Pupils work well with others in small and larger groups. The school council has successfully raised money for playground resources and charities. Pupils make a good contribution to their school and local community. They have good awareness of other cultures, ethnicities and religions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Good relationships, attitudes and behaviour contribute to a positive climate for learning. Teaching is good overall. The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good, and a few lessons outstanding. In the better lessons, more able and different groups of pupils were challenged well because the work was planned to match the needs of all groups effectively. Teachers manage behaviour well and maintain a positive climate

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to learning. For example, excellent use of time and outstanding use of different teaching methods helped Year 2 pupils use words such as 'horrifying', 'selfish', 'angry' and 'greedy' to describe 'Jack's thoughts' as they prepared to write a letter from Jack to the giant apologising for their actions. Role play entitled 'Conscience Alley' involved the whole class and challenged them to consider the right and wrong of Jack's actions when taking things from the giant's home. However, there are still a few occasions where teachers do not pitch work at suitably challenging levels or they spend too much time explaining tasks.

The good curriculum contributes to pupils' enthusiasm for learning. It is well planned and well matched to the needs of all groups of pupils. The strong personal and social education programme assists pupils' good personal development. Literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced well through other subjects such as history. Staff use ICT well to support learning in other subjects and pupils enjoy music lessons taken by the specialist drumming teacher immensely. There is an excellent range of after-school clubs and activities such as football and Irish dancing. More able pupils are able to develop their football skills at the Arsenal football academy after school and pupils learn complex Irish dance routines and perform them to a high standard. However, planning does not always identify sufficient opportunities to extend children skills and abilities, especially for the youngest children.

Meeting pupils' needs is central to the work of the school and all adults effectively help children, parents and carers to get the best from learning. High levels of very careful supervision during the break times and lunch time ensure that all pupils stay extremely safe. The school works effectively with external support agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are good induction and transition arrangements for children entering the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, at other points during the school year and when moving on to other schools. As a result, pupils new to this country make good gains and integrate well with their peers. Parents, carers and pupils comment on the excellent extended schools provision. Support outside the classroom for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and all staff share the same drive and ambition for school improvement and they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Middle managers are new to their roles but they show enthusiasm and determination to tackle any weaknesses. Tracking of pupils' progress over time is thorough and senior leaders identify any dips and intervene with sensible strategies to promote improvement.

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The headteacher and leaders at all levels are dedicated to making sure all pupils and staff achieve well. Members of the governing body are very well organised and supportive, but also challenge the school. They evaluate the work of the school well and ensure that school improvement initiatives are successful.

The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school celebrates and recognises the different countries from which the pupils originate and the school has attained the International Award. Pupils contribute effectively to their own and local communities extremely well. The school plans and evaluates community cohesion well but does not yet use the information to focus its contribution fully at national and global level. Safeguarding is good. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements. All checks on adults are extremely robust. Good liaison between the headteacher, external support agencies and families ensures any concerns are dealt with effectively. Equality of opportunity and elimination of discrimination are effective, as reflected in the profile of good achievement across all groups of pupils.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter Nursery and Reception classes with the skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. All groups of children, including those who speak English as an additional language, settle in well and enjoy school. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory progress in all other areas of learning. Consequently by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is well below average. Staff provide interesting activities, both indoors and outdoors, and children have sound opportunities to learn through activities led by adults and those they choose for themselves. Children enjoyed discovering a large beanstalk and very large footprints left by 'the giant'. Following the footprints helped them learn more about the

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school site. They made satisfactory progress learning to identify sounds and link objects to the sounds. The teacher used questions well to check children could recognise and say the word clearly but pace and expectation were not sharp enough to ensure they made good gains in their learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall but occasionally use of time, organisation and management is not as good as it could be and adults miss opportunities to challenge groups of children and extend their learning in the indoor and outdoor situations. There are satisfactory systems for tracking children's progress and the provision is adequately led and managed to ensure all learning and welfare requirements are met. Good links with parents and carers and well-planned induction arrangements contribute successfully to children's enjoyment of school.

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

There was a good response for a school of this size. Most parents and carers say that their children enjoy attending school and that they make good progress. Parents and carers regard the school as caring and supportive. They identify a number of strengths in the school, including the activities, the relationship with staff and pupils' enjoyment. The majority of the few parental criticisms were offered constructively, such as the need for more information on pupils' progress and more immediate response to parents' and carers' suggestions. These were discussed with the headteacher. Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mitchell Brook 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	93	67	42	30	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	82	59	57	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	62	45	69	50	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	42	66	47	11	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	45	69	50	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	45	61	44	7	5	4	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	44	64	46	9	6	1	1
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)	41	29	74	53	10	7	5	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	39	68	49	8	6	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	42	57	41	12	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	34	72	52	10	7	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	56	40	67	48	7	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	53	54	39	7	5	1	1

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.



9 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mitchell Brook Primary School, London NW10 9BX

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember your lively 'This is your life, Henry VIII' assembly led by Year 6 pupils and the excellent standard of Irish dancing we saw in your lunchtime clubs. You and your parents and carers told us that Mitchell Brook is a good school, and we agree. These are the things we found that your school does well:

- You settle into school well in the Nursery and Reception class and you make good progress through the rest of the school. You reach broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 because teaching is good.
- Your teachers work hard and this helps you do well in your learning.
- You all enjoy learning very much.
- Your behaviour is good, and you are extremely sensible. You benefit from many fun activities, excellent clubs, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares for you well, and teaches you a lot about how to stay extremely safe, to be healthy and to care for others.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and the governing body lead the school well, and all the staff work effectively together as a team to make sure that Mitchell Brook is a safe and secure, fun place to learn.

These are the two things we want your staff and the governing body to do to make you school even better:

- improve the rate of attendance
- make sure children in the Nursery and Reception classes are always challenged as much as possible so they make consistently good progress.

You can all help by continuing to work really hard and all learn to manage your time really well so that you are never late for school. Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace

Lead inspector

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