

Brookfields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103175
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355332
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Cutting
Headteacher	Julie Berrow
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons taught by eight teachers. They observed break times and held meetings with a member of the governing body, staff, and groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the school gate. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 72 pupils' questionnaires, 24 staff questionnaires and 19 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- How well Black African pupils at KS1 make progress.
- Whether teaching provides sufficient challenge for pupils.
- The effectiveness of improvement planning in accelerating progress across the school.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in checking standards and ensuring that the school meets legal requirements.

Information about the school

Brookfields is an average-sized primary school. One-quarter of pupils come from Black Caribbean families and one-quarter from Black African families. The remainder come from a wide range of ethnic heritages. One quarter of pupils do not speak English at home as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have severe learning difficulties. A larger than average proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the normal times. The school has recently gained a number of awards including Sports Mark and Healthy Schools. Recently the governing body has found it difficult to recruit new members.

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

Brookfields Primary is a good school. It provides a very safe, caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils grow into mature and well-behaved young people. Pupils make good progress to reach average standards. Parents and carers are very pleased with the standard of education that the school provides. One parent told an inspector, 'My child is very happy at school. She is making good progress and is very well looked after.'

Since the last inspection the school has improved strongly under the determined leadership of the headteacher. Achievement, teaching, the curriculum and most aspects of leadership and management are now good. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Attainment has risen and the school has sustained pupils' good personal development. The lower attainment and slower progress of Black African pupils in Key Stage 1 has been successfully tackled, and their outcomes are now similar to their peers. The leaders' drive to improve the school is clearly articulated and enthusiastically embraced by staff. The rigorous monitoring of the school's performance by senior and middle leaders provides them with secure and accurate information for self-evaluation. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to this process, but recognises that it is not yet fully and systematically involved in evaluating the school to provide school leaders with a good level of challenge. Improvement plans lead to successful action and the leadership's record in bringing about change shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Pupils enjoy school and most attend very regularly. However, attendance is low because too many pupils arrive too late in the morning to be marked as present. These pupils miss the start of lessons, which hinders their learning. The school is working hard with pupils, parents and carers to improve attendance with notable success.

In lessons relationships are very positive. Pupils work hard because they find lessons relevant and interesting. Teachers use progress data well to plan work that provides a good level of challenge for each child. Occasionally, a rapid pace of learning is not sustained throughout a lesson typically because introductions last too long. The lively curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. Staff use their detailed knowledge of each child expertly to provide a high level of pastoral care. The school works extremely productively with external agencies and experts to support pupil's learning and welfare.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure a consistently good pace to learning so that pupils are fully stretched by ensuring lesson introductions do not last too long.
- Improve the punctuality and attendance of those pupils who are regularly late to school to ensure they have a prompt start to learning.

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- Strengthen the governing body's involvement in evaluating the school so that it can provide school leaders with a good level of challenge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry to the school is low. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enjoy learning, and their achievement is good. Pupils who join the school partway through the year make similar progress to their peers. Those who do not speak English at home as their first language also make good progress. The learning observed in lessons was at least good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils were keen to learn, try their best and take pride in their work. They were curious and enjoyed discussing ideas in small groups and with their class, which is promoting their self-confidence, communication skills and understanding. Pupils work with a good level of independence and concentrate well, even when they find the work hard. They use self-assessment and peer-assessment well to judge the quality of their work and to make improvements to it.

The outcomes for Black African pupils have improved because the school has raised their self-esteem and expectations. For example, project work embraces their culture and they are given many opportunities to meet successful adults from similar backgrounds to themselves.

Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and are most confident that any bullying, which is extremely rare, would be dealt with immediately. They have a very well developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, older pupils have an excellent appreciation of the dangers of divulging personal information on the internet. Pupils are committed to eating a healthy diet and taking plenty of exercise, which is reflected in the school's national awards. They are keen to take responsibility, for example as play or reading mentors for younger pupils. The school council takes responsibility for the school's generous charity collections. Average attainment and positive attitudes means that pupils' preparation for secondary school and work is satisfactory. Pupils reflect maturely on their own actions and those of others. A strong moral code underpins their good behaviour. Pupils cooperate well in groups and readily share resources. They have a well developed understanding of the diversity of British culture.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	4
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?

Teachers use resources such as computers well to engage pupils and develop their learning. Marking and other feedback provides pupils with a clear understanding of how they can improve their work. Because pupils know their challenging targets they can take a good level of responsibility for their own progress. Teaching assistants provide valuable learning support, especially for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they ensure pupils who find it hard to concentrate stay on task and make notes about pupil's progress and pass these to the teacher.

Lively assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to share and celebrate each other's culture, which is promoting pupils' well-developed understanding of diversity. The good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument develop pupils' confidence and add to their enjoyment of school. A good number of clubs and educational visits broaden horizons and raise aspirations.

Adults take pupils' concerns very seriously and are always ready to listen to and quickly resolve their worries. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are accurately assessed and their learning programmes are appropriate. The school takes great care to evaluate the effectiveness of its support for these pupils to ensure that it is the best possible. The procedure to support those who arrive part way through their primary education are most effective, which means these pupils settle quickly and happily into school routines and make friends. Pupils who do not speak English at home as their

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first language are extremely well supported. For example, some staff speak their home language and, if this is not the case, the school draws on its list of outside experts to act as translators when this is needed. The school's close liaison with the educational welfare officer is improving attendance strongly and is just one example of the many highly productive links it has with outside agencies.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders articulate clearly to staff the school's challenging targets and their plans to make the school better. Teaching and learning have improved because leaders have accurately identified needs and, supported by excellent partnerships with the local authority and consultants, have provided successful training that has sharpened teachers' skills; for example, in assessing standards in English and mathematics lessons and planning practical mathematics activities. Middle leaders take a good level of responsibility for checking standards in their areas and ensuring that they are quickly improving. The governing body is now stable and meets its statutory obligations. It works hard on behalf of the school and its improving understanding of data means that it is starting to challenge the school robustly over its effectiveness.

Safety and safeguarding are given a high priority. Child protection procedures are robust, regularly updated and fully meet current safeguarding requirements. The checks that the school makes on the suitability of adults to work with pupils are rigorous. The school's commitment to equal opportunities and the success of its plans to remedy previous differences in the progress of Black African pupils show that its policies are having a positive impact. The school is a happy and harmonious society in which pupils from all backgrounds integrate well. It actively promotes community cohesion in the local area in many successful ways. The school is helping to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of the community by providing classes, for example, in cooking. It helps local people gain childcare qualifications. The school has developed links with a community in Jamaica to support pupils' understanding of diversity.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because teaching is good. By the time they start Year 1, children have reached expected levels except in writing and calculating, which reflects their very low starting points in these areas. Best progress is made in personal development. Children are well behaved and readily share games and apparatus. They make rapid strides in their understanding of diversity. For example in the Nursery they are encouraged to greet each other at the start of the day in their home language. Children are very safe and well looked after in the setting. Parents and carers are very happy with the way children quickly and happily settle into the routines of school and the information they are given about how they can help their children's learning at home.

Teachers plan interesting and challenging work that children enjoy. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities, but sometimes children are not clear about what they need to do in an activity they choose. The classrooms are well resourced and these are used well to engage and promote children's learning. The outdoor learning area is underused to develop children's gaining of independence.

The training, which leaders provide for adults who work in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is promoting their teaching skills well. Leaders are correctly working hard to fine-tune assessments to make planning more precise, so that children's progress is even better.

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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

Views of parents and carers

About one in ten parents and carers returned a questionnaire, which is lower than in other primary schools. Most are very happy with the school. Many said that their children make good progress and that the school is managed well. They all think children are very safe and well-cared for. Inspectors endorse these positive comments. Several parents and carers think that the school worries too much about punctuality. Inspectors found that too many pupils are late for school and this prevents them getting a prompt start to their learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brookfields 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 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	79	4	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	68	6	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	42	11	58	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	37	12	63	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	3	16	13	68	2	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	16	15	79	1	5	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)	7	37	11	58	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	32	12	63	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	26	11	58	2	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	32	9	47	2	11	1	5
The school is led and managed effectively	5	26	11	58	2	11	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	37	10	53	2	11	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.



7 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brookfields Primary School, Birmingham, B18 6PU

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit, particularly the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially enjoyed joining Year 4 for your guitar lesson. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. Brookfields is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out.

Your teachers ensure that you get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception.

You work hard in your lessons and make good progress.

You told us you enjoy school and feel extremely safe and secure.

You try your best to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise.

Your behaviour is good.

You are involved well in the school and wider community.

You have good relationships with your teachers and you try to work hard for them.

The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits, which you enjoy.

Adults look after you extremely well and are always ready to help you.

The headteacher and staff are working hard to make the school better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning:

- help you to always learn at a fast rate by making sure lesson introductions do not last too long
- improve the punctuality of those of you who are regularly late to school so that you can enjoy the start to lessons
- provide the headteacher and staff with more support from the governing body to make the school even better.

All of you can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons, behaving well and attending regularly. We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector

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