

Brookside Primary School, Oadby

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number119989Local AuthorityLeicestershireInspection number379930

Inspection dates6-7 December 2011Reporting inspectorMichael Miller

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 4–10
Gender of pupils Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll 311

Appropriate authority The governing body

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Date of previous school inspection 12 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 22 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, teaching, support and non-teaching staff, and the school's education partners. Inspectors talked informally with many pupils, and formally with members of the school council and eco-council. Inspectors attended assemblies, daily form-time sessions and looked at pupils' work. They examined a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, and information provided for parents and carers. Minutes of governing body meetings were examined, including the headteacher's reports to the governing body and other reviews of the school's performance. Inspectors received and analysed responses to questionnaires from 104 parents and carers, 11 members of staff and 121 pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The team explored the ways the school has been working to close any gaps in the attainment of its different groups, and particularly between boys and girls.
- The work of the school in developing and adapting what it teaches to ensure it meets the needs of individuals and groups of pupils was examined.
- The ways the school works in partnership with its families to promote and support the learning and development of its pupils were considered.
- The extent to which pupils' personal development, and the care, guidance and support provided are strengths of the school was examined.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized school. The large majority of pupils come from the Leicester City, rather than the Leicestershire authority. The large majority of pupils are from Asian or Asian British heritages, the majority of whom come from Indian backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. The school has a higher proportion of boys than is typical and more pupils than usual leave or join the school during the year. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has specially resourced provision for special educational needs for up to 20 pupils, currently from Years 1 to 6, with moderate learning difficulties. All the unit's pupils have specific needs, including autism, speech, language and communication difficulties, and/or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. The school has achieved national Healthy Schools status and currently holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Eco-Schools Green Flag, an International School award and the Artsmark Gold award.

In collaboration with two other local schools, the governing body runs a daily preand after-school care club for its pupils. A privately-owned and managed nursery, the Childspace Early Years Nursery, operates from a purpose-built building in the school's grounds; this was inspected separately by Ofsted in October 2011

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

Brookside provides a good education for its pupils. As one family wrote, 'The staff model and encourage a caring, nurturing approach, resulting in a school full of happy, emotionally well-adjusted children'. The school's tracking of pupils' progress and the assessments of their individual needs are particularly good. The school works extensively with its education partners to ensure the assessments of its pupils are validated independently. This has a positive impact on achievement, especially among pupils who speak English as an additional language and the high number of pupils who join the school during their school career. School data show most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points, which are often below or well below average. Those pupils who benefit from a continuous education at Brookside, either from the Reception year or the start of Year 1, usually reach higher standards than the other pupils. Attainment by the end of Year 5 is broadly average and, combined with the quality of their personal development, pupils are prepared well for high school.

Pupils in the Education Support Unit (ESU) make good progress. Good teaching, support and assessment ensure the often relatively small steps they may make academically are secured firmly. Pupils make particularly good progress in developing the key skills necessary to enhance their future lives and well-being. This is true especially of their social and emotional development, and the promotion of their independence skills. Consequently, pupils gain significantly in confidence. While educated mainly in their own unit, pupils are integrated fully into the broader life of the school. The ESU is led and managed well; provision overall is good. Partnerships with families and specialists are excellent, ensuring the pupils' health and well-being.

Outstanding elements of the school lie in the excellence of its partnerships, both with its community and with organisations that support pupils' learning. The school provides a particularly rich cultural environment, is a cohesive community and an inclusive school. It has very effective methods for reaching out to its families, and the school's home—school liaison officer plays a vital role in this. The school is very well respected in the locality because of the ways it brings together pupils and their families from such a wide range of faith and heritage backgrounds. Pupils celebrate and reflect on each other's beliefs; cultural diversity is appreciated as a strength. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their well-balanced and respectful approaches to each other ensure an excellent perspective on their own safety and that of others.

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

The school understands well the broader value to its pupils of extended family visits abroad. However, it has not yet been able to convince some parents, carers and grandparents of the detrimental effect of term-time absences on pupils' continuity of learning and progress. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance rates are a relative weakness. The attainment of girls is close to the average but that of boys is below average. The school recognises the gap in attainment remains too wide, notably in writing, and has been working hard to close this. A review of its curriculum to make it more 'boy friendly' is proving successful, particularly in reading. The strong focus on literacy helps pupils to have improved access to learning. Nevertheless, teachers' planning of lessons is still adapting to the ways the good, new curriculum plans are being put into action. Pupils, especially those who are more able, have too few opportunities to write more challenging and longer pieces.

The school has improved well since its previous inspection and a national survey visit in 2009. The curriculum has been developed well to provide increased opportunities for investigation work. Assessment enables pupils and their families to be clear about their targets and next steps in learning. Increasing numbers of parents, carers and grandparents are being supported through the school's effective family learning programme. Provision for pupils' personal development is an established strength, and is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning, behaviour and working relationships. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement and close further the gap in performance between boys and girls by:
 - implementing fully, during 2012, the school's planned strategies to improve attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in literacy and writing
 - ensuring teaching provides work and activities which challenge consistently the school's more able pupils.
- Raise attendance levels, especially ensuring fewer long-term absences during term time, by working more extensively with families to promote the value of continuous education.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most groups of pupils currently make good progress, and attainment broadly matches expectations at this stage in Year 5. This is aided well by the pupils knowing their targets in literacy and numeracy, striving hard to meet them, and being involved in self-assessment. The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in the main school and the ESU, results from the teachers' accurate assessments of their needs. Support in lessons is good, and interventions effective. Expert teaching assistants work closely with teachers, providing effective support for pupils generally, as well as their specific charges.

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

Good learning was exemplified by a Year 5 literacy lesson. Here, pupils were challenged well to consider the thoughts, feelings and responses of a character they were studying, as well as those around him. This shows how well the school links subjects such as English and personal and social education. In a Year 3/4 science lesson, pupils made good progress in their investigation work when testing springs; pupils' vocabulary was extended well through the introduction of specialist words. Excellent progress was seen in a Year 1 lesson on the sounds that letters make (phonics), where outstanding teaching enthused and engaged pupils in tackling tricky words and sounds.

Behaviour around the school shows pupils are thoughtful, mindful of the safety of others, and have excellent levels of respect for each other. This reflects the quality of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons make a strong contribution to their good learning. However, when there is insufficient or inconsistent challenge for the more able, such pupils can be more passive in their approach and response. Yet, when given every opportunity to be active in their learning, pupils relish the experience. Pupils have been particularly active in campaigning in the media and with the local council in arguing for greater road safety measures in the vicinity of the school. The pupils' eco-council is very active in promoting environmental awareness, including energy saving and litter campaigns on the campus. Most pupils attend school regularly, but unauthorised absence due to extended term-time holidays and visits abroad affects negatively the overall attendance record.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2
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	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	_
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' enthusiasm shines through in lessons. They make learning interesting, and develop positive working relationships with the pupils. Explanations are clear and pupils know what they are expected to learn. There is a good awareness of pupils' individual learning needs. Consequently, teaching pinpoints successfully areas for improvement. Assessment is used well to accelerate learning. Marking provides well-judged feedback, including specific advice on improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught well, as are pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, the teaching is not always consistent in encouraging pupils to provide extended contributions during class discussions. This occasionally limits opportunities to develop pupils' vocabulary and skills in sentence construction, thus losing some opportunities to challenge the more able.

Provision for developing pupils' reading skills is good, with a systematic phonics programme. In writing, provision is less effective, but the school has started to introduce a programme to ensure additional opportunities across all subjects. This is both to challenge the more able and to ensure additional interest and motivation for boys. There are ample opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills across a range of subjects. In mathematics, there is a well-embedded programme for the development of numeracy skills. This has had a beneficial impact on standards. There is a good range of clubs which enrich pupils' education. In addition, many visits and visitors benefit pupils' learning well, acting as a springboard for stimulating work.

There is a strong, whole-school approach to the care and welfare of the pupils. It is active in building working partnerships with parents to support and improve pupils' progress, emotional well-being and self esteem. Targeted support and personalised programmes meet the individual needs of pupils and their families very well. There are examples of outstanding support, for example, where pupils have suffered bereavement in the family. There are also good arrangements to support transition to high school. However, there is more work to be done with families to improve attendance and ensure the continuity of learning for some pupils.

The before- and after-school club is organised well, and is a good example of the partnerships between local schools. It meets regulations, including those for safeguarding, and provides a valuable service to families. Activities meet the needs of the pupils well, including for children who are in the Reception year. The school's ethos is supported well through the club's work. There is regular communication with, and information for, parents and carers. The care, welfare and work of the ESU are enhanced similarly through good communication and social opportunities where families, teachers, support workers and specialist partners may meet.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequatePlease turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Taking into account:	2
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?

Active and successful leadership from the headteacher is strengthened by other members of the senior leadership team. Teamwork, good support from the governing body and a good team of subject leaders ensure an enthusiastic staff direct and integrate well their work on school improvement. As one parent wrote, 'The staff are very focused and equipped well to deal with anything thrown at them!' Morale at the school is good; the returns from the staff questionnaire reflect due pride in the school and its aims. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity, and to closing the gender gap in outcomes for pupils. The good work staff have already undertaken on the curriculum has resulted in improvements in the attainment of boys. However, this has yet to be achieved consistently across all year groups. The special educational needs and ESU coordinators have a clear oversight of provision, and ensure effective monitoring of their areas. Safeguarding of children is good, with particularly effective expertise in child protection and support for those pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. However, the school and its pupils recognise there is more work to be done with families and local residents to raise awareness of road safety both within the school campus and the immediate locality. There are often strong, mutually supportive working relationships between the school and its families. However, the school is seeking increased impact and cooperation in terms of the road safety and attendance issues.

The school's action planning and approach towards community cohesion are integral to its life, work and pupils' learning. It is highly aware of its responsibilities to its local community, and its duty in ensuring its pupils are prepared for a contemporary, global community. This work is reflected in its International School award, the multicultural displays and a cosmopolitan approach to the celebration of festivals. The governing body's monitoring of community cohesion is comprehensive, and contributes significantly to the good governance. The school is well regarded by community leaders. The benefits pupils gain through the school's excellent links with its education and other partners is much valued and appreciated, particularly by families with children in the ESU and those for whom English is a new language.

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	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequatePlease turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry to the Reception class is well below average in relation to children's ages and development. School data show the majority operating around a year below their contemporaries nationally; there are particular weaknesses in their communication, language and literacy development. The widest gender gaps on entry are in the children's creative and emotional development, where girls score significantly better than boys. Many children start the Reception year with limited independence. However, good teaching enables children to make good progress. Attainment on transfer to Year 1 improves to below average overall. Good leadership and effective teamwork planning between teachers and the nursery nurses has ensured a positive review and re-focus of the curriculum, particularly with regard to the teaching of phonics and communication skills. This is starting to have a major impact. As one parent wrote, 'When my 4-year-old started in September he couldn't even write his name. Three months later he is able to read words by sounding out the letters'. In one session observed, it was impressive to hear children talk about their favourite sounds, when blending letters, and 'tricky words'. There is tight planning of all activities, both indoor and outdoor, adult-led and opportunities for child-initiated investigations and explorations. Children clearly enjoy their experiences, and have great fun in learning. They have plentiful opportunity to develop their curiosity through a wide and varied range of daily activities. Discussions with parents and carers showed themed work, such as that on 'Superheroes' fired their children's imagination. Assessments are very regular, and supported well by children's 'Learning Journey' files. Observations are perceptive, and enable staff to share proficiently with families their understanding of the needs of individual children. Working relationships between staff, children and their families are productive because the work is focused entirely on meeting children's needs.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire was average, but a much higher percentage than average agreed or strongly agreed in their responses to most questions. The vast majority were particularly appreciative of the ways the school keeps their children safe, and helps them to develop a healthy lifestyle. They appreciate the good teaching and the responses reflect their children's enjoyment of school and learning. This was reflected in additional written comments, discussions at the school gate, and the inspection findings. A few expressed some concern about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. The school's approach to behaviour management is unobtrusive, fair and effective. The pupils themselves prove good at monitoring and controlling their own behaviour, both in and out of lessons. Problem behaviour is rare because the pupils enjoy so much their time at school. A few parents and carers would like more information about their children's progress. In addition to the more formal parents' evenings, there are always additional opportunities to contact, and talk informally with, staff each day. The views of the very large majority can be summed up by one family who wrote, 'We think Brookside is excellent. We have never come across a school which has included and involved parents so much with their child's learning. It is great.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brookside Primary School, Oadby 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	nts Strongly Agree		ree	Disagree			Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	64	36	35	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	65	63	37	36	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	50	44	42	7	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	42	56	54	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	59	57	43	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	49	48	46	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	42	57	55	3	3	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)	44	42	50	48	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	40	56	54	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	46	40	38	9	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	38	50	48	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	47	45	48	46	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	52	44	42	1	1	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)					
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate		
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0		
Primary schools	6	46	42	6		
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9		
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3		
Special schools	30	48	19	3		
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5		
All schools	10	44	39	6		

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement: the progress and success of a pupil in their

learning, development or training.

the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and Attainment:

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.

the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, Leadership and management:

> 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: 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.

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.

the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and Progress:

> 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.



8 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brookside Primary School, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 4FU

We enjoyed very much our recent visit and we thank you all for your kindness, politeness, interest and the many ways you helped us to understand your school. Your school is a good school. In your Reception class year book there is an important quotation which says, 'A big journey begins with a little step'. We know that, together with your teachers, you are working to make sure your school becomes an even better place to be day by day.

These are some of the things we found are best about you and your school.

- You receive a good start to your education in the Reception class.
- You achieve well and make good progress in your time at the school.
- Your teachers are focused well on helping you to make even better progress.
- The adults at your school take good care of you to make sure you are safe.
- You behave well and know how to keep each other safe and healthy at school.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community.
- Your time at the school helps to prepare you effectively for your future lives.
- Your school works very well with others, and your families, to help you learn.
- Your headteacher, other teachers and governors lead your school well.

We have asked your teachers to do some extra things to help you make even better progress. We know you enjoy your writing, and have asked your teachers to make sure their plans to develop this work are put in place during the next year. Those of you who find learning easier will be given extra challenges. We have also asked your school to continue its work with your families to make sure you do not miss too much school due to family holidays, trips and visits during term time.

In one assembly you sang, with enthusiasm, 'Hip, hip hooray! I'm feeling great today. Yeah!' The way you sang this showed you meant it. You can indeed feel great about your school. Please continue to do so.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller Lead inspector

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