

Inspection of The Brook Special Primary School

Adams Road, Tottenham, London N17 6HW

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

As pupils arrive at the school, staff greet them with a smile and warm welcome. Throughout the day, staff foster a culture of positivity. They speak gently and kindly to pupils and give them continuous encouragement. They celebrate with pupils every success, be that in communicating, learning or in behaviour. This makes for an incredibly happy and purposeful environment. It enables pupils to thrive and feel safe.

The school is determined to ensure that every pupil achieves their best. There is in-depth and aspirational curriculum thinking across the subjects. Staff also have a deep understanding of each pupil's needs. Working hand in hand with therapists, staff make bespoke adaptations to resources and their teaching of the curriculum. This enables pupils to succeed extremely well in their learning and be well supported in their personal development.

The school sets clear routines and expectations for behaviour from the moment children arrive in Reception. Across the school, staff consistently support and encourage pupils to act sensibly. As a result, pupils behave extremely well. When, on occasion, a pupil becomes anxious or upset, expert staff quickly step in to help the pupil calm down.

The school provides pupils with an extensive range of high-quality enrichment activities to promote their personal development. These are in addition to every class going on a weekly educational outing to augment their current learning.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has a passion for wanting all pupils to succeed. Over the past few years, the school has worked rigorously to review and develop the curriculum. This has resulted in an extremely ambitious and rich curriculum offer. In all subjects, the school has broken down knowledge into small, well-sequenced chunks. Within that, leaders and staff have further considered the differing needs and prior learning of pupils. This means that appropriate teaching activities, tailored for pupils on bespoke pathways, are identified and put into practice with precision. For example, those pupils who need it receive carefully chosen sensory input to help them grasp new knowledge. Each pupil's pathway in a subject is ambitious and responsive to them as an individual, with the school taking the approach that 'one size does not fit all'.

The school has produced bespoke assessment approaches across the subjects and year groups. These enable teachers and leaders to keep a close eye on pupils' learning. Teachers use the information to inform teaching and for providing extra support to pupils as needed. Staff benefit from regular training across the subjects and for early years education. This gives them the subject and teaching expertise they need to teach very effectively. Collaborative work with therapists ensures that pupils get the range of expert support they need to succeed.

The school prioritises the teaching of communication and, as appropriate, reading. Staff use a wide range of communication tools and strategies consistently and effectively. This ensures that all pupils are included in learning and other activities. Staff read well-chosen books and stories to pupils several times a day. The entire school staff are trained in the school's phonics programme. Early years staff have also developed a structured programme for children who need more support in being ready to learn phonics. This approach is highly successful, and has been disseminated to other special schools. Pupils on the phonics programme learn to read successfully. Over time, they become confident and fluent readers.

With the careful nurturing they receive on arrival, children in Reception are taught how to socialise. They learn to share and take turns. This work continues across the school. Pupils develop an understanding of how to interact well with other people. The school works with persistence to encourage regular attendance. Leaders find solutions to any barriers pupils face, for instance by helping families get their children to and from school.

The school's work to support pupils' personal development is highly commendable. All pupils swim every week. From early years onwards, visits in the community are designed to develop pupils' independent living skills. For example, staff take pupils to a market to learn to buy ingredients which they then use in cooking classes. An extensive range of people visit the school to enrich pupils' experiences. Examples include a music company who took pupils on an imaginary trip around the world. They played music and sang songs from diverse cultures and countries. This activity linked to the geography subject content that pupils were learning at the time. A charitable organisation delivers a programme introducing pupils to the world of work. Pupils with a talent or interest in art have their work exhibited in a local gallery. The school's choir joins others in performing at the Royal Albert Hall. Clubs offered during all school holidays have an extremely high uptake.

The school works very closely with parents and carers. Staff are always on hand to support parents. They offer parents workshops on a range of topics. For example, each year, early years staff deliver a seven-week programme on understanding and supporting children with autism spectrum disorder.

Governors bring a high level of expertise and much experience to their roles. They collaborate closely with leaders to support and assure the quality of the school's work. School leaders make an extraordinarily strong contribution to supporting other local schools.

Staff very much appreciate the streamlining of their work practices and the care that leaders show for their well-being. Morale is remarkably high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	102177
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10289834
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nofer Fari
Headteacher	Maureen Duncan
Website	www.thebrook.haringey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Broadwater Inclusive Learning Community and shares a school site with the Willow Primary School and the Broadwater Children’s Centre.
- All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan. Most pupils have autism spectrum disorder and additional learning needs.
- The chair of the governing body took up his post in September 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading and communication, physical education and development, history and geography (humanities). For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the chair of governors and six other governors. They also spoke with two representatives of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including looking at records of pupils' behaviour. Inspectors also had formal meetings with staff and with pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with parents in the playground and took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. They also considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nell Nicholson

Ofsted Inspector

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