

# Brent Knoll School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 100760          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Lewisham        |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 276376          |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 22–23 June 2006 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Mark Evans      |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Special                          |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community special                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–16                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                            |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                  |
| School                                    |                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body               |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr G Dolamore<br>Mr J Sharpe     |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | Not previously inspected         |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Mayow Road<br>London<br>SE23 2XH |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 020 8699 1047                    |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 020 8291 7216                    |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Brent Knoll provides for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs. These include physical, medical, speech, language, communication, social and emotional difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorders including Asperger Syndrome. There are currently no pupils in the Foundation Stage. The needs of pupils have become more complex and challenging over the last few years. Pupils travel to school from all parts of the borough and from neighbouring local authorities. Half the pupils are entitled to free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  |
| Grade 2 | Good         |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   |

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop an efficient way to analyse information on the relative progress of groups of pupils to identify trends and further improve outcomes.
- Ensure the attitudes to learning of the older pupils is consistently positive.

## Achievement and standards

Grade:

## Personal development and well-being

Grade:

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching and learning are good; on many occasions, teaching is outstanding. The teachers know their pupils very well and the pupils benefit from this by having work that is very well matched to their needs. All staff at the school work well as a team, and learning assistants, therapists, learning mentors and the premises manager play a significant part in supporting the high quality of education provided.

There are very positive relationships throughout the school. These support learning well, ensuring pupils feel valued and secure; in music for example, Year 9 pupils showed real confidence in the teacher and support staff when building up a rhythmical piece, involving all playing short solos. There is often laughter heard around the school, from adults and pupils alike, which underlines the effectiveness of the ethos of the school in supporting learning. Teachers' planning is detailed and based on good knowledge of the pupils' needs.

Assessment of what pupils learn is thorough and recorded in great detail. This wealth of information is very appropriate for knowing about individual pupils' progress, but the school is not yet analysing data to identify the relative achievement of different groups of pupils. Target setting on an individual basis is well established and monitoring of learning is very good.

### Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum provided is excellent; the out-of-school-learning activities are outstanding. Based on the National Curriculum, but adapted to ensure relevance to the pupils, the school has created a flexible structure which helps teachers plan and pupils to learn progressively. It is very effective in supporting learning in all subjects, including English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Innovations are encouraged if they provide for pupils' needs more appropriately, such as offering the Land Studies and Skills for Working Life programmes, as well as other vocational courses. There is a very effective programme for the teaching of swimming.

The enrichment activities provided for pupils outside school hours are a real strength of the school. The development followed identification through parental surveys and the pupil forum; some 40% of pupils are involved. The school was recently awarded the Quality in Study Support charter mark. The activities have a very positive impact on the development of social skills, and on the traditional curriculum such as art, French, ICT, literacy, science, sport and physical education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade:**

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are good; the school provides an outstandingly supportive, caring and friendly atmosphere that ensures the pupils are safe and feel secure. This allows them to strive for and reach challenging targets without feeling threatened. Health and safety requirements are monitored and risk assessments carried out carefully. The school is very aware of pupils' social, physical, welfare and academic needs: this enables the pupils to make good progress. Child protection procedures are very well managed and staff are trained appropriately to meet the changing needs of the pupils. Pupils receive very good support to help them access learning. They have good access to the wider community, including other schools, in preparation for life beyond Brent Knoll. Careers education and work experience is very well organised; it adds to the preparedness of the pupils for life after school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are very effective; the school does what it can within the current contractual restrictions to provide a healthy diet for pupils at lunchtime.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade:**

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## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Pupils

Hello everyone - you might have noticed me recently at your school. Some of you were kind enough to talk to me and others saw me in lessons. Thank you for making me welcome, for showing me your work and for telling me about your school. Owls class - thank you for my truffles! After my two days with you, I am clear that Brent Knoll is a very good school.

I have prepared a list of things that the school does very well, and another list of things that it could do even better. Some of the things you told me about, like the very good teaching and all the different activities you can do at school (in lessons and out of lessons), are on my first list. Other very good things we saw were: your very good behaviour around the school, the way the managers at school have made things even better, and the work that the school does helping children in other schools.

I've also talked to the headteacher about some ways of making the school even better. The main one is to look at the ways in which all of you learn; to see if there are other ways the teachers can help groups of you learn even more. I've also suggested that it would be good if there was a way to sort out the cramped classrooms in the secondary department, and to find a way of making sure all the secondary pupils want to learn. It would also be great if you carry on telling the staff how you think things are going, and by talking to the pupil forum. I hope that explains a little bit about what I was doing at Brent Knoll. I really enjoyed my two days there. Thank you again for making me feel so welcome.

Very best wishes,

Mark Evans

Lead Inspector