



Buckhurst Hill Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115052
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279506
Inspection dates 27 February 2006 to 27 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Mike Sutton LI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lower Queen's Road
School category	Community		IG9 6DS
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0208 5057300
Number on roll	302	Fax number	0208 5057300
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Eric Jackson
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Miss. Leslie Howes

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. Judgements are based on a detailed analysis of the data on children's attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation and other documents which it provided. Discussions were held with several groups of children, governors and teachers. The children were observed at work in the classroom and at various breaks during the day. Samples of their work were evaluated during visits to the classrooms. The returns from the questionnaires sent to parents were considered along with their views expressed informally in conversation with the inspector during the day.

Description of the school

The school, serving a residential community close to the border between Essex and Greater London, is a little larger than average. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is lower than average as is the percentage of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The number of children from minority ethnic groups, as well as those who do not speak English as their main language, is also average but rising steadily. This reflects changes in the local community. Children arrive in the reception class from a wide range of pre-school playgroups and overall they have the sorts of skills and knowledge typical for their ages. The school is popular and numbers have been rising steadily in recent years. The school has just opened an education resource centre to enhance provision for children across the consortium of schools in the area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which provides a good quality of education. It sees itself this way and has good evidence to show where it is performing well and where it could do better. Crucially, it takes action where it is needed. Teamwork is strong, as is the determination for the school to do its best for every child. The school provides good value for money and has the capacity to continue to improve. The decision to focus on the work that children do in the reception class is well judged; likewise, the decision to reorganise classes in Years 1 and 2. What is happening in reception is now of good quality. The school has also correctly identified the need to raise standards of writing. The school needs to see these developments through, and continue rigorously its programme of checks and reviews to make sure its plans are on course and standards continue to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have risen in the last few years and children leave Year 6 about half a year ahead of what is expected for that age. Four years ago children leaving Year 6 were about a term behind. Because the school looks critically at what it does, it realised things were not right, took action and has largely sorted out the problems. Teaching is better and information from the checks on children's progress is used well. The result is that children make good progress overall, particularly from Year 3 onwards. Progress in the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes is satisfactory, and the standards reached at the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected at this age. The school knows that some of these children are capable of more and has addressed this aspect of its work. It has also picked up that handwriting is weak for many children and that a few do not do enough high quality writing. Progress in mathematics is particularly good because of some imaginative approaches taken by the subject leader and staff. The progress of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is particularly good. Careful checks on progress have been the key to success with these children. The school has very good arrangements to help the children who do not speak English as their main language and they make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of the children is viewed by the school as outstanding and the evidence it has gathered substantiates this fully. The children's behaviour is very good both in class and around school. They are lively and friendly but know the limits. Serious incidents of misbehaviour are very infrequent. Minor transgressions are dealt with in a firm but friendly manner. Children report that bullying and racism are rare. The school's records show that the few incidents which do occur are dealt with promptly. Social development is outstanding, especially the ways in which children learn to support and help those with particular needs. The school is an inclusive

environment where care for one another is very strong. Cultural development is good. The children understand the major faith celebrations. They have access to a reasonable range of books reflecting the lives of people in other countries. Books representing the lives of those who live in this country and belong to different ethnic groups are less evident. Children enjoy coming to school as indicated by their high levels of attendance and in their responses to the school's surveys. In conversation, they give vivid examples of what makes their school special for them, such as the many educational visits or the eagerly anticipated Year 6 residential visit to York. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle. There are very good facilities in the playgrounds for children to exercise and extend their own physical abilities. Lunches are being changed to gradually include more healthy options and to introduce children to new tastes. The school council helps bring about improvements and has some imaginative ideas for this year. It is conscious of costs and is sourcing best value options for what it has in mind. The school considers itself a fundamental and successful part of the local community. The governors' survey of local businesses, residents, community providers and those who visit the school regularly shows that this view is well placed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges that the quality of teaching overall is good. Regular checks on teaching form a key part of the school's portfolio of evidence to show this. Coupled with the good outcomes for children by the time they leave school, a compelling case is made for the school's view being accurate. The records of the observation visits made by senior staff to classrooms are comprehensive and thorough. Discussion with four of the most recently appointed teachers confirms the value and impact of these observations. All could point to specific examples of how they had changed or adapted their teaching as a result of constructive feedback. Visits made to most classrooms confirm the school's view that work is purposeful, well planned and that children generally work hard. The classroom assistants are a vital factor in the children's learning. In many rooms seamless teamwork makes it hard to distinguish teacher from assistant. Looking through children's written work supports the school's evaluation that handwriting needs to be improved and in some cases children could write more. What is also evident is that the school's push to improve marking is effective. There are good examples of children improving their work as a result of the written comments made by their teachers. In the reception class, the improvements made to the work planned for children are evident. All the areas needed for the development of young children are being covered well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

This is judged by the school as good overall and is supported well by the evidence put forward and particularly from discussions with children. Over lunch, the older children

talked about their favourite subjects and could explain clearly their opinions. Mathematics is a big hit and when asked why, they said that they 'enjoyed the challenges' and 'teachers made it fun'. The weekly 'maths quiz' posted on the board outside the hall also attracts much attention. The answer box alongside was stuffed full of children's responses for the week. Staff say that some children have been seen to slip into school a few minutes early to complete their answer sheets and at least one parent is known to be a regular participant too! The range of visits and visitors commands a great deal of enthusiasm and pride amongst the children. Their work with the local potter is high amongst such examples. It is also evident from the school's photographic records that many other visitors provide children with a broad view of life from different perspectives. Sports and clubs figure well amongst the activities that children say they enjoy outside their lessons. Music too is referred to as a clear favourite. The art work around the school also suggests a broad range of skills and techniques are taught. The school hall is small for the number of children now on roll. Facilities for indoor physical education are no better than adequate. The enhanced facilities for children with learning difficulties and disabilities provided within the consortium centre are already in use and giving particular children valuable alternative sources of therapy and stimulus.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school sees this as outstanding and makes its case very well through a wide range of evidence. There is a coherent and systematic approach to ensuring every child is considered as an individual and helped as much as possible. One example from the inspection illustrates this. The school's 'buddy' system was much praised in discussions with groups of children who had come from abroad and who did not speak much English when they arrived. The new children explained how welcome they felt and how quickly they got to understand routines. Many of these buddy arrangements have evolved into firm friendships. More than providing just social support and help in class, the buddies also give feedback to teachers on the progress their new classmates are making. This arrangement helps the school understand how well new arrivals are doing and where and when they need more help. A scan of the risk assessment file shows that all visits are thoroughly appraised from a safety angle. New staff report that all police and reference checks were completed before appointments were taken up. Annual training and re-training for child protection is in place. All this confirms the school's evaluation of care procedures as being secure. Children have a good idea of how well they are doing. They explain what they need to improve although are not always clear about how to do so. Parents' surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the academic and social guidance provided by the school. Many returns highlight the particular help that the school has provided for individual children and families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's evaluation of this aspect of its work is that it is good. Through the headteacher and senior management team there is a strong drive for continual improvement. Because regular reviews and checks on progress are systematic and accurate, the school knows its strengths and areas for development well. There is strong evidence of the school addressing difficult issues successfully in the past. All these factors present a convincing case for the inspection findings being in line with the school's. Fundamental to the school's success is the way it involves and consults with everyone involved in its work. For example, questionnaires issued shortly after children start in the reception class showed that their parents were uncertain about daily routines. As a result information was quickly provided and a potential problem was nipped in the bud. The drive for enhanced facilities for children with learning difficulties and disabilities has been seen through to completion with strong determination. The result is a facility for the whole community that has the potential to improve significantly the education opportunities for many children. The regular checks which the school makes on children's progress and on the quality of teaching strike a good balance between support and challenge. The result is a strong team with a lot of potential. Governors play a crucial role in the school's development and aspirations. They have a clear oversight and understanding of standards through the good quality information received in committees. They have a tight grip on finances and strive to ensure that money is spent promptly and effectively. The school has set down its markers for quality in terms of the care and personal development of children. It delivers good standards and knows where these could be still better. Making these improvements as well as maintaining the current strengths are the goals it has set to achieve and it is well placed to do so.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to tell you just how much I enjoyed my recent visit to your school and to thank you for all the help you gave me. I would also like to tell you what I think about your school. It was very clear from all the information which your headteacher gave me and from what you told me yourselves that you really enjoy your school. As I walked about your classrooms I could see that you work hard and try your best. Out in the playground I could see that you get on well with each other and behave very well. Your teachers and their assistants make sure you are all safe and well cared for. Over lunch I discussed with some of you what you particularly enjoyed about school. As a scientist and mathematician myself I was really pleased to see your enthusiasm for mathematics. I peeked in the box where you post your maths quiz answers and was quite amazed at how many entries there were. Here's another maths problem for you to have a go at: What numbers come next in this series? 9, 11, 20, 31, 51, 82, and so on. What really impressed me too was the way you care for and look after one another and particularly for those who come to your school from other countries and who don't speak much English when they arrive. Talking with you helped me understand how effective your buddy system is. Your teachers have a good idea of how each of you is doing and they want to help you do even better. I agree with what they think about your handwriting; for many of you it isn't as good as it could be and it's something to be worked at. Some of you could write a bit more too. The changes in the youngest children's classes have been well planned and I think they will help those children get on even better. I agree with your teachers that you have a good school. Continue to work hard together and it will continue to improve further. Good luck for the future.