



Brookland Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117233
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280020
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Ms. Tricia Pritchard 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	Junior	School address	Elm Drive
School category	Community		EN8 0RX
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01992 624487
Number on roll	244	Fax number	01992 623223
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Phil Bodsworth
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Val Townsend

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, who held discussions with the headteacher, teaching staff, teaching assistants, and the school council, observed teaching, scrutinised pupils' work and observed pupils playing outside. In addition, the inspector studied documentation, including the school development plan and pupil assessment files, and read the responses of 125 parents who returned Ofsted's parent questionnaire.

Description of the school

Brookland Junior School is a two-form entry school serving a mixed catchment area of local authority and private housing in the Lee Valley. There are 244 pupils on roll. An increasing number of pupils are joining the school from inner London as families relocate to Hertfordshire. Mobility in the present year 6 is higher than usual. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and from minority ethnic backgrounds are below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils with English as an additional language has traditionally been low but is currently increasing. Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brooklands Junior School is a very good school. Pupils make very good progress, especially in English, where there has been a key focus on improving attainment in writing. Over the past five years, pupils' overall attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 has been consistently well above pupils' attainment in other schools. Pupils are happy and enjoy school. The range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities is impressive and contributes to pupils developing a keen interest in learning. The school is well led. Teaching is mostly good with some outstanding practice. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, the headteacher ensures that staff are supported. Most teachers plan activities which are well matched to pupils' abilities. The exception is in subjects such as history and geography where the work sometimes lacks challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Self evaluation is well embedded into the ethos of the school. Staff, governors and pupils are committed to raising standards. They are rightly proud of their school and want to do well. The school provides good value for money. The majority of parents are very satisfied with the education their children receive. However, there is scope for further improvement in the way the school communicates with parents when they raise concerns.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

During the last five years, Brookland Junior School has been recognised nationally as a school where pupils achieve very high standards. At the end of Year 6, pupils attainment is consistently well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Attainment on entry in Year 3 is above average and the school builds successfully upon this with pupils making very good progress throughout the school. In contrast to the national trend, boys perform exceedingly well and often do better than girls. Pupils' progress and attainment is carefully tracked. Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are accurate and pupils are set challenging targets. In comparison with pupils in other schools, higher attaining pupils do particularly well, especially in English. Pupils who need more help with their work make satisfactory progress in all subjects and do very well in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils are very well motivated and enjoy learning. They are confident and articulate. Their social skills are particularly well developed and they make very good progress with their moral, spiritual and cultural development. They develop considerable financial expertise through engaging in business enterprises and raising money for charity. Their behaviour is excellent. They possess a keen sense of justice and fairness. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent. At breaktimes, the buddy system works well and no pupil is left to feel lonely; pupils feel safe and secure. They are very focused upon adopting a healthy lifestyle through eating healthily and participating in physical

exercise, and are very good at taking responsibility for their personal well-being. Those elected to the school council take their responsibilities seriously and are well able to represent the views of their peers. They have offered sensible suggestions for rewarding good behaviour and for developing the school grounds, and these are being acted upon.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Overall, the quality of teaching is good with outstanding practice in some classes. The few weaknesses which exist have been identified. Staff are highly committed. Classrooms are bright and welcoming. Teachers are very effective at using the outcomes of annual statutory and non-statutory assessment to identify strengths and areas for development. For example, they are focusing very successfully on extending pupils' thinking skills through problem solving. The staff adopt a consistent approach to help pupils to self assess their learning and to set individual pupil targets. These measures contribute significantly to the high standards achieved by the pupils. Most teachers are successful at planning activities in English and mathematics which meet the differing needs of all pupils. However in some classes, in history and geography and occasionally in science, there is an over-reliance on worksheets which lack challenge, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Booster sessions, offering additional support to specific groups of pupils, are very well organised and planned. Teachers ensure that teaching assistants and parents are well informed about pupil's learning. For example, a family learning initiative on 'using information and communication technology to support your child with their school work' has been implemented very successfully. Homework is set regularly. In most classes, it is well designed to complement learning in the classroom.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The planning of the curriculum is exemplary. It is very well designed to meet pupils' individual needs and interests. Pupils are provided with extensive opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to gain enjoyment from learning and for developing enquiring minds. Currently, the focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills is having a positive impact on improving the quality of their writing. Healthy eating is actively promoted through the delivery of fruit and healthy living workshops. Very good use is made of visiting artists, writers and musicians to deliver specific lessons and workshops. All Year 6 pupils have French lessons. An excellent development is the links which are being established with local businesses in order to prepare pupils for the future world of work. For example, engineers from a local business visit the school and help pupils to make working models which are controlled by computers. In this way, pupils get expert help and advice and so learn to master

the important aspects of information and communication technology. There is an exceptionally wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well supported pastorally and academically. The special educational needs co-ordinator audits and maps carefully pupils' individual needs. Most teachers are highly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils during whole class lessons. The additional learning needs of lower and higher attaining pupils are also well met through specific group teaching. Child protection procedures are implemented effectively. Pupils comment that they feel safe and well supported. The school has a very strict anti-bullying policy and pupils know who to approach if they have a problem. They are well looked after at lunchtime by midday supervisors and they care well for each other too. The organisation of the two playgrounds into a physical activities area and a playground games area works well. Pupils who want to stay indoors can sit and read in a quiet area or participate in board games; others can opt to attend a lunchtime club. Links with feeder schools are good. The school shares the same site with both the infants and secondary schools and this contributes significantly to a smooth transition when pupils change schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team has a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's key priorities are rooted firmly in sustaining high standards and improving provision. Teaching is monitored regularly by the headteacher and local education authority advisers. Subject leaders are well qualified to undertake their responsibilities. Plans are in place to strengthen their roles further and involve them more in monitoring standards. The professional development needs of all staff are well met. Staffing is fairly stable. The school actively seeks the views of parents through regular parent questionnaires. Where concerns about the quality of teaching have been raised they are being addressed. The majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are very happy with the school. However, a third of parents believe that communication could be better. The inspection agrees that communication could be improved particularly in informing parents about how concerns which they have raised are being addressed. The last inspection report contained no key issues for action. However, the school has addressed all the minor points it raised and is maintaining the momentum to sustain improvement. The school development plan identifies very clear priorities based upon raising standards. Over half of the governors are new to the role. They have been well briefed by the headteacher about standards and priorities for development and are now developing their role as critical friends.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	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	3	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	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	1	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?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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	2	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	2	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

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you. Your school is a very good school and provides so many exciting learning opportunities. It was obvious that you enjoy participating because you talk so enthusiastically about all you do. The range of lunchtime clubs and after-school activities is impressive. You work hard and make very good progress in English, mathematics and science but particularly in English. This is because your teachers plan lessons which are interesting and challenge your thinking. It was good to see so many of you actively involved in solving problems and debating strategies to solve them with each other. You work hard in other subjects too. I have suggested that in history and geography some of your teachers might consider using fewer worksheets so that you can practise your literacy skills even more in this area of your work. You have a lovely school environment in which to learn and play. Everyone I saw was behaving excellently both in the classroom and in the playground. Well done to the playground buddies and to the school council members who take their responsibilities seriously. Your headteacher and staff are very good at planning ahead and ensuring that your individual needs are met but I have suggested that they look at ways to improve communication with your parents when they raise concerns. You receive very good support from everyone in school and from your parents, who also support your learning very well. I hope that all your sporting activities in the summer go well and that you continue to be keen to adopt a healthy lifestyle by eating healthily and taking physical exercise.