



Brockholes Wood Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119230
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280500
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brant Road
School category	Community		Preston
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Lancashire, PR1 5TU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 792302
Number on roll	220	Fax number	01772 795523
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Carole O Neill
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Miss Allison Hickson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Brockholes Wood Community Primary School is an average-sized primary school in an area of high social deprivation on the outskirts of Preston. A high proportion of children qualify for free school meals. The re-housing of families from the nearby estate has led to a fall in school numbers over the last two years. Pupils are mostly from a white British background. A higher than average proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, though the number with statements for their special educational needs is average. There are no children at an early stage of learning English. The school is involved in several initiatives to improve provision for the children, including the Healthy Schools Initiative and funding for the development of a multi-sensory room to support children with social and emotional difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Brockholes Wood Community Primary School is a satisfactory but improving school, which gives satisfactory value for money. This matches the school's own views of its work. The clear vision and impressive energy of the headteacher appointed less than two years ago have been fundamental in enhancing the accommodation and in the successful reorganisation of staffing. These changes have resulted in good improvements in children's behaviour. The school's strengths lie in pupils' personal development and in the care, guidance and support they receive. This is evident in the welcome introduction of a breakfast club and the after school care the school provides. However, the school has not focused sharply enough on how to raise the standards that children achieve, particularly in writing.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The good teaching in the Nursery, with a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, helps children to get off to a good start and settle quickly into school routines. The accommodation is spacious, but children do not have ready access to a suitable outdoor learning area.

The school has developed close links with local agencies and in January 2005 a Sure Start Nursery was opened on the school site through the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative. This caters for children from birth, and, through close cooperation and liaison, complements the work of the school nursery very well.

The good progress the school has made in including and supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within the classroom indicates the school has the capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in speaking by giving children more opportunities in lessons to discuss and explain their ideas.
- Raise standards in writing by having higher expectations and by writing for a wider range of purposes in English and other lessons.
- Make better use of the varied assessment information available, especially in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspection findings support the school's view that achievement is satisfactory. Standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6.

Children enter the Nursery with a range of skills, but overall their attainment is below average, particularly in speaking and listening. They make sound progress, but nevertheless by the end of the Reception class the number of children achieving the recommended goals for their age is below average.

In the 2004 national tests, at the end of Year 2, standards were average in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing were well below average, with no child achieving the higher level in writing. Following considerable disruption to staffing in Year 2 in 2005, standards fell quite dramatically in reading and remained low in writing. However, the school made good improvements in mathematics. The number of children achieving the higher level in any area was low.

Results of the 2004 national tests in Year 6 were considerably below average in mathematics, but close to average in English. The number of children reaching the higher level was below average. In 2005, there was good improvement in standards and achievement mathematics, following considerable staff training and support. However, the number of children attaining the expected level in English fell considerably. Pupils' progress overall is satisfactory.

The school has rightly identified improving writing as a priority. However, the initiatives introduced, including regular assessments, are not yet sharply focused on raising standards.

Good behavioural support in the classroom for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that this area of its provision is good. Children are curious and willing to learn, although rather reluctant to write. A culture of politeness and mostly good behaviour helps children to learn happily. Parents are right in their conviction that children are cared for and encouraged to take responsibility. Children show enormous pride in the way they help to run many aspects of the school and say they feel safe and free from physical or racial abuse. This view is backed up by inspection findings. Children state that the rare incidents of aggressive behaviour are quickly resolved. The school has rightly been accredited as being a Healthy Eating school. Children are very aware of the importance of good diet and exercise. Older pupils help others at play and talk very positively of the 'Listening Partners' scheme whereby older pupils keep a caring eye out for others at playtimes. Pupils are proud and mature about their roles as school councillors, which certainly boost pupils' sense of being good citizens. The head boy and girl are positive figureheads for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their participation in deciding on the most acceptable way of treating others in class gives them a good sense of right from wrong. Frequent work in groups in lessons and a good range of extra-curricular activities contribute to good social relationships. Pupils have a respect for the way their actions affect others and most respond very well to support from caring staff when they feel upset or angry. Attendance is below average. A range of systems has recently been introduced to reduce absence, including a positive contribution from a learning mentor and a range of rewards for good attendance and punctuality.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The inspectors cannot support the school's view that teaching is good overall. Good teaching in the Nursery class gives children a good start to their school life. In the Reception class and Years 1 to 6, teachers' secure knowledge of the curriculum ensures satisfactory progress and achievement from a low starting point. Whilst lessons are competently planned and managed, pupils' involvement in their own learning is not exploited as much as it needs to be. The teaching of speaking and writing is not challenging enough and as a result standards in English are not high enough. Expectations for pupils to write are not consistently as high as they need to be in all subjects. Considerable staff training has led to improvements in mathematics and teachers have responded well to identifying and targeting pupils with different abilities. In this, the role of teaching assistants is particularly strong. Their good support for children with learning and emotional difficulties makes sure that they are involved in all lessons. Some good opportunities are provided for children to use information and communication technology (ICT) to help them learn, but the use of ICT by teachers as part of lessons is at an early stage of development. Assessment is satisfactory. Pupils have targets, but teachers' marking does not always relate to the targets. Whilst teachers know each child well, the school's systems for tracking progress and achievement are currently rather cumbersome and not as helpful as they could be, particularly in writing. Teachers welcome the involvement of parents in their children's education through homework.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Although a number of exciting and stimulating initiatives are in the process of being implemented, particularly in the arts and sport, inspectors cannot support the school's view that the curriculum is good overall. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage meets requirements with a strong and successful emphasis on the provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 to 6, although all subjects are effectively planned for and good attention is given to planning for pupils with learning difficulties, not enough thought is given to planning for more able pupils. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are given adequate time, but much needed adaptations to the way that writing is planned to support learning in all subjects have not yet improved standards. Good provision for personal and social education makes a positive contribution to raising pupils' awareness of good diet and exercise, as well as giving them tools to manage stress and the confidence to take responsibility in the school. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances well the more academic focus given during lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's judgement that this aspect of its provision is good is supported by inspection findings. The head has made sure that all pupils have equal access to learning at all times. High levels of care include identifying all possible risks, whilst not inhibiting learning, and ensuring that pupils learn in a safe and healthy environment. Good levels of supervision by adults during lessons and at lunchtimes enable pupils to learn and play happily and safely. Pupils talk of feeling secure and they say that they only very rarely experience bullying and never racial abuse. The good quality care available before and after school is a welcome addition to the school's provision. The school makes every effort to work in close partnership with parents so that important issues are responded to and they are kept informed about what goes on in the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. We cannot support the school's judgement that it is good overall. There is a considerable strength in the clear vision and leadership of the headteacher, who was appointed less than two years ago. In that time she has secured the funding to make extensive improvements to the learning environment which have had a positive impact on children's attitudes to school. She has also been successful in eliminating a substantial budget deficit without affecting the day-to-day provision for children in school. Her strong emphasis on including all children in lessons has led to a good improvement in behaviour. This has been achieved without there being a permanent deputy headteacher for most of the time. The school is aware of the aspects that need improving. However, the focus on raising standards in writing is not sharp enough to raise achievement quickly. The school has raised standards in mathematics with the help of a good coordinator supported by the local authority, but has not yet extended this effective coordination to other subjects. The improvements outlined indicate that the school is in a good position to move forward. Consultations with parents indicate that they value the planned visits to help children to settle quickly into the nursery.

Governance is satisfactory overall. Governors are a supportive presence in school and are aware of its various strengths. The committee structure now in place is helping them to be more aware of how the school can improve.

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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?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

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21 October, 2005.

Dear Children

Thank you for making Mr Byrne and myself so welcome when we inspected your school recently. You were polite and friendly and very helpful when we spoke to you in lessons and at lunchtime. We know that you like the recent improvements to your school buildings and enjoy the many after school clubs that you can join. All the adults in school look after you well.

We like the way the older children look after the younger ones at playtimes and were pleased to see how well you behave in lessons.

We have asked Miss Hickson and your teachers to help you to do even better in school by giving you more chances in lessons to discuss and explain your ideas; we know some of you are already doing this with your talking partners. We have also asked your teachers to help you to improve your writing in literacy lessons and in other subjects such as history and science. We know you have tried hard to improve your maths and we hope you will now work extra hard to improve your writing, and make sure you go to school every day.

Good luck with improving your speaking and writing.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Herring

Additional Inspector

Annex B