

Brookland Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101262
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	286011
Inspection date	12 June 2007
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms C Marcus
Headteacher	Ms H Blackmore
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2002
School address	Hill Top Hampstead Garden Suburb London NW11 6EJ
Telephone number	020 8346 6937
Fax number	020 8343 1935

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This large school is situated in a generally advantaged area of Hampstead Garden Suburb. Just under half of the pupils are from the minority ethnic groups. There are three pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Just under a quarter of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities which is above that found nationally, and there are five children with statements of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It is a reflective and supportive community of learners who are committed to excellence in all aspects of their work. All groups of pupils achieve very high standards and make excellent progress in English, science and mathematics and have done so for a number of years. This is acknowledged by the parents who are overwhelmingly positive in their support of the school. One parent wrote, 'This is one school that can hold its head proud'. Another adds that, 'Brookland is an exceptional school and provides the children with an all-round education, including self sufficiency, kindness and tolerance as well as academic teaching of the highest quality'.

Leadership and management are outstanding. A key feature in the school's success is that leaders at all levels are continually seeking to improve and refine their practice. They are exceptionally effective at promoting high standards and levels of care for all pupils. Governors also play a leading role in evaluating performance and providing very effective support and challenge for the school.

Achievement is high because of the outstanding quality of the teaching and the excellent range of interesting and challenging learning tasks which motivate and inspire children to work hard. Teachers are very skilful at using assessment information to set tasks that are matched to the pupils' varying needs and abilities, including those who have learning difficulties or are identified as higher attainers. Pupils are very clear that their work is exciting and challenging and that they're 'not all doing the same thing'. As one pupil said, 'It is boring to repeat work and you don't make progress. Our teachers are brilliant at giving you challenging tasks to do rather than lots of tedious worksheets'. Teachers are also very good at getting pupils to assess for themselves how well they have achieved and to explore ways of improving their own work. Again, pupils find this very helpful as it helps them focus on the areas that need improving which they set about with determination.

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school, behave extremely well, respect each other and are confident, independent learners. They really enjoy learning because the curriculum provides excellent opportunities for them to work independently on interesting and challenging activities. Higher attainers have very good opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) to work on personalised learning tasks in mathematics. This underpins their rapid progress and increases their independence, motivation and enjoyment of mathematics but has yet to be used successfully in other subjects.

The quality of care is excellent and pupils say there is always someone to go to with worries and problems are readily solved. They receive excellent academic guidance and support in all that they do. Pupils are given targets for work and improvement and are held to them; they know this and respond very positively, knowing that support will always be provided. As a result, pupils feel happy, secure and able to achieve their very best.

The school's track record at sustaining high achievement and the very clear view of what needs to be done next means there is an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Explore ways of extending the personalised learning project using ICT to other areas of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding for all groups of pupils. The school adds much to the pupils' education and they make exceptional progress from age 7 to age 11. The school has been among the top ten per cent of all schools nationally for the last four years. Data supplied by the school confirm that high achievement has been sustained this year. Standards in ICT are also very good and pupils are using computers very well to support their work. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have individualised learning programmes for mathematics which they can access at home or school via the internet. The school has plans to extend this to work in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are extremely well supported and make excellent progress against their personal targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their very positive attitudes and high levels of enjoyment have a significant impact on their progress and are reflected in above average attendance rates. Pupils are proud of their school and of the high quality of their written work and artistic endeavours. In addition, their exemplary behaviour contributes to the calm, productive learning environment that pervades the school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the smooth running of the school by taking on wide-ranging extra responsibilities. They particularly enjoy participating in the very influential school council who play an active part in reviewing all aspects of school life, making decisions and suggesting improvements. Pupils have a very well developed sense of social responsibility and fairness. They make an excellent contribution to the life of the local and the wider community through an extensive programme of charity fund raising and other events. Pupils have a very clear understanding of healthy lifestyle and staying safe. They speak enthusiastically about healthy eating and are very aware of the importance of drinking plenty of water and taking regular exercise, but admit to having an occasional fizzy drink and burger as a 'special treat'. Pupils rapidly acquire literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that will equip them well for later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The high achievement of pupils reflects the consistently good and frequently excellent quality of teaching at the school. Teachers know their pupils very well and as a result work is very closely matched to the needs of individuals so they are able to make rapid progress. This is because teachers' expectations are very high and they encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils are adamant that their work is 'never boring' and there are 'always lots of additional tasks' so they are kept fully occupied and challenged. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects, use interactive whiteboards with skill and expertise and use questions extremely well to consolidate pupils' previous learning and to challenge their thinking. One pupil added, 'Teachers always want us to find different ways of arriving at the same answer and that really makes us think!'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent curriculum that is well matched to the individual needs and capabilities of the pupils. For example, higher attaining Year 6 mathematicians are particularly pleased with the personalised learning tasks they access at school and at home via the internet. They said it allows them to work independently at their own pace, catch-up quickly if they fell behind and increases their enjoyment of mathematics. The curriculum is further enriched through an excellent range of additional activities including an Arts Week, Literacy Week, Black and Asian History Month, Investigations Week and a summer term French course for Year 6 pupils. Pupils' personal development is very well planned through the school's personal, social and health education programme which effectively raises pupils' awareness of staying safe and keeping healthy. This high quality provision has a very positive impact upon pupils' personal development and their attitudes to learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school gives its pupils outstanding care, guidance and support, a view endorsed by the overwhelming majority of parents. The school is determined that individuals are guided and supported to become independent learners who can take responsibility for their own learning. The school is successful in these endeavours because it provides a caring and safe environment in which pupils' confidence and self-esteem are nurtured. There are very effective methods for keeping track of pupils' progress and these are used to set personal targets for them to aim for. Pupils find these particularly helpful as they help them assess their own progress and understand what they need to do to improve. There are very well developed systems to support pupils who find learning hard through individual programmes of work, interventions and the homework club.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher is a very effective leader and she is ably supported by her deputy and senior management team. They have very high expectations of what can be achieved, and show a strong determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. To this end, all staff have been successfully developed as leaders and managers. They share a clear vision for improvement based on rigorous self-evaluation, although on occasions some of their judgments are modest. This is translated into a comprehensive improvement plan which is reviewed regularly. The governors steer the work of the school very effectively. They work successfully with the headteacher and act as an effective 'critical friend'. Statutory requirements are fully met and the school is exceptionally well placed to improve further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brookland Junior School, London, NW11 6EJ

Following my visit to your school I would like to tell you what I think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. Here are just a few of the things I really liked about your school:

- you make excellent progress in your work because you are thoughtful and work very hard in lessons
- your teachers and teaching assistants do their jobs extremely well and make sure you get work that is enjoyable and challenging
- you have very positive attitudes to work and want to learn
- your headteacher, with governors and others, lead the school in an outstanding way and are always trying to make the school better for you.

I think that your school is outstanding. This probably does not surprise you, as most of you and your parents think the same. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6 your work is much better than in most other schools. You should be proud of this.

Some of you are already using the internet to access personalised learning tasks in mathematics at home and at school. You told me you find this very helpful and motivating. I have asked your teachers to explore more ways for you to use these skills in other subjects and activities. I'm sure that you and they are ready for this challenge!

I know that you will continue to work hard and I am sure that you will help your teachers to make your school even better. I hope that you have great success in the future.

Best wishes,

John Earish, Lead Inspector