



Brookfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102977
Local Authority Sutton
Inspection number 286538
Inspection dates 12–13 September 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Gray

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ridge Road
School category	Community		North Cheam
Age range of pupils	3–11		Sutton SM3 9LY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8644 8616
Number on roll (school)	272	Fax number	020 8641 6194
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Graham Belcher
		Headteacher	Miss Joanne Morley
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	12–13 September 2006	286538

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is bigger than others of its type, though it is being reduced in size as part of a borough project to eliminate surplus school places. This had recently threatened closure of the school, but that has been avoided. There has been considerable staff turnover in recent years. The school has more pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than found nationally, though the proportion at the early stages of learning English is average. There is a smaller percentage of pupils with statements of educational need than most schools have.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school gives a satisfactory standard of education and is clearly an improving school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the standards they reach by the time they leave are average.

The school has had many obstacles to overcome since the last inspection, and the success of its work is evident. An example is the good progress now made in English by pupils in Years 3 to 6. Another is pupils' good use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in many subjects throughout the school. Both of these were key issues at the time of the last inspection. Raising standards in mathematics was another. The school has moved forward on this but still has further to go. Pupils' progress in this subject is only satisfactory because higher attaining pupils do not always reach the levels of which they are capable. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress, but teachers' expectations about the amount and difficulty of the work pupils can do are not always high enough. The school has already recognised this issue.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, especially in personal development. Most children reach the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 and a number exceed them. The provision for these children is good.

Throughout the school, pupils are developing well as individuals. They enjoy being at school and are enthusiastic in lessons. The good curriculum which the school offers helps bring this about, because it is very well enriched with interesting activities. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning the trumpet and clarinet in Years 3 and 4 was immediately obvious. Pupils in Year 6 were keen to use the Internet to research the Beatles in a history lesson.

The school gives its pupils a good standard of care and welfare and is thorough in meeting requirements for pupils' safety. Personal guidance is very good. Pupils spoke of how a visit from Childline made them more aware of issues such as bullying. This is an example of the many good partnerships the school has made to increase pupils' development and well-being.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher gives good direction to the school and leads her staff well. She and the senior management team are clear about what needs to be done to improve the school. Not all coordinators are sufficiently rigorous or prompt in checking on the impact of their work and this has resulted in a greater improvement in standards in some subjects than in others.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are given sufficiently challenging work in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils in Years 1 and 2 can achieve.
- Sharpen the monitoring of actions to improve the school, in order quickly to assess if initiatives are successful or need revising.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards by Years 2 and 6 are average. Given pupils' broadly average starting points, this represents satisfactory achievement. Pupils achieve well in English in Years 3 to 6. This has been a focus of school improvement and it has worked well. Their progress in mathematics is satisfactory, but not enough pupils identified as higher attainers reach above average levels. Standards in ICT are above expected levels by the time pupils reach Year 6.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils are set targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Though most pupils reach these, they do not always represent enough challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve at similar rates to other pupils. There are no significant differences in the progress made by the various ethnic groups in the school. Support for the small number of pupils with English as an additional language is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They are polite and friendly and most display good, responsible behaviour. Exclusions are rare but are made when necessary. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping safe and act on this knowledge. They also know about healthy lifestyles, and many apply this effectively to their diet. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. One pupil said that their frequent visits to a range of places of worship had taught her how similar people are: 'They all have a god or gods'. Attendance has steadily improved and is now above the national average. Pupils express their confidence in the adults in the school and feel safe. They make a real contribution through the school council - the school council helped set up a working party on healthy eating. Pupils' basic skills, especially in English and ICT, mean that they are well prepared for the next stage of education, though their skills in mathematics are not as well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. For English and mathematics, pupils learn in groups (sets) organised by ability. This is working well in English in Years 3 to 6, as results show. Teachers' marking is mostly thorough and helps pupils to improve. In mathematics, teachers' marking is not as helpful. Throughout the school, all pupils in the same set for mathematics are often given the same activity, with some subsequent 'extension' work, undertaken if pupils finish. When tasks are made different for varying

abilities, they are not always sufficiently different or hard enough. This is because teachers' planning often focuses more on what pupils will do in an activity, rather than on what different groups need to learn. In Years 1 and 2, this is also true of some English lessons.

Pupils' good ICT skills help them to learn well in many other lessons, such as history or science. Teachers' own ICT skills, when using interactive whiteboards, make their teaching clear and interesting. Music teaching for Years 3 and 4 is outstanding. This is another example of the good partnerships the school has created to enhance learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good because it engages pupils well in their learning and promotes enjoyment of school. ICT and music are great strengths and enable pupils to enjoy a broad range of subjects. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 has been redesigned to interest pupils more by linking subjects and skills together. This has been effective and a similar approach is being adopted for Years 3 to 6. The wide range of clubs after school is over-subscribed. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well, though it is not as strong in meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Child protection and welfare arrangements exceed statutory requirements and staff training is up-to-date. Visits from the emergency services give pupils good opportunities to test their skills in role play. Pupils explained how these improved their understanding of how to stay safe.

Help for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Good use is made of the specialist skills of outside agencies to evaluate pupils' needs and provide support and guidance to pupils' and staff.

Assessment procedures are good, but not enough use is made of them to set sufficiently challenging targets for all pupils. The procedures are used well to give appropriate support to pupils who join the school at other than normal times.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and senior management team have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their school. The large number of key issues from the last inspection has been dealt with well, as is shown by the good provision for ICT. The school has also had to cope with extra pressures since then. The threat of closure, coupled with considerable staff turnover, has led to repeated change in middle management. This has had an impact on the school's ability to evaluate its work

rigorously. This restricts the school's capacity to improve and the effectiveness of its self-evaluation to satisfactory, despite the good lead given by the head and senior managers. The process of development planning is cumbersome and it is not easy to see how successful key initiatives are, because they are often split over several plans. Timescales are clear, but evaluations sometimes take place a long time after the end of the period and vary in rigour. The governing body carries out its responsibilities satisfactorily and provides good support for the school's leadership.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and the chance to speak to so many of you. For the youngest of you, these were only your second and third days in school and we were able to see how quickly you settled in.

You clearly enjoy school and the many exciting opportunities it offers you. Those children who are learning the trumpet and clarinet showed how keen they are, and we are pleased that so many of you continue your lessons as you get older. You told us how you feel safe at school and that help is available if any problems happen. You also know about healthy living and many of you try to carry this out in your food choices.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. You do well with your ICT skills and use them frequently in many subjects. Some of the health-warning posters you designed were very realistic. You make good progress in reading and writing as you get older. In mathematics, those of you who learn fastest do not always have work which is hard enough, and we have asked teachers to give you more challenge. In Years 1 and 2, pupils mostly work hard, but your teachers sometimes could urge you to do a bit more or give some of you more difficult work. You can help by always working as hard as you can.

Your headteacher is good at her job and her staff work hard to improve the school. They keep a check on how well it is improving. We have asked them to make some changes to the way they plan this, so that it can have a quicker effect on how well you learn.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead inspector