



Brookside Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106036
Local Authority Stockport
Inspection number 287392
Inspection dates 14–15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Mark Madeley

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

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Ashbourne Drive |
| School category | Community | | High Lane, Stockport |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 | | Cheshire SK6 8DB |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01663 763943 |
| Number on roll (school) | 134 | Fax number | 01663 766617 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mr P Frankin |
| | | Headteacher | Mr George Bulman |
| Date of previous school inspection | 5 November 2001 | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Age group 4–11 | Inspection dates 14–15 February 2007 | Inspection number 287392 |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Almost half the children attending this small school do not live in the village and virtually all are of White British heritage. Very few children are eligible for a free school meal. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average, as is the percentage that have a statement of special educational need. This is because the school is resourced for nine children with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. The percentage of children who join the school at times other than in the Reception class is very high. There are fewer than twenty-one children in six of the seven age groups, so in national tests results are not always reliable because each child represents 5%.

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, with outstanding strengths in children's personal development and in the progress made by those with severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It gives good value for money because the school meets the very varied needs of all children well. The children's understanding and acceptance of each other is outstanding. One parent of a child with severe learning difficulties wrote that the children are, 'very kind and thoughtful and have a wonderful relationship.' with her child. New arrivals, and there are many, are made to feel welcome quickly and, like other children, are well cared for. Good quality teaching manages children's sometimes 'difficult behaviours' well and they quickly settle into the 'Brookside way' of doing things. They really enjoy learning and willingly help in school and in the local community. They choose healthy options at snack and lunchtime and exercise regularly. They say that they feel safe from bullying and their parents support this view.

Effective leadership and management has maintained children's good rate of progress since the last inspection. Very good systems to check provision and children's progress are in place. As a result governors and managers have a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development on which to base their future planning. For example, after identifying writing as a weakness, effective action has been taken to make improvements. The issue from the last inspection has been addressed fully. This, together with the school's accurate self-evaluation, which involves staff and governors and which is based on good checking systems, shows that the school has good capacity to improve further. Highly effective partnerships with parents, the learning support service, the pre-school provision and the local community all contribute outstandingly to children's learning and personal development.

Children start school in Reception with skills that are broadly expected of children of this age. Good provision helps them make good progress in Reception and this is continued throughout school. For instance, some parents are 'delighted' and 'amazed' with their children's progress. In 2006, Year 6 national tests results were average. Results in English were lower than those for mathematics and science and more is still to be done to improve children's skills in writing in Years 3 to 6, especially the most able. Children are making good use of individual learning targets in English and they know how to improve their work because teachers' marking is informative. Overall, children achieve well. Learning is made interesting for them, for instance, by the use of new technology or the much appreciated 'theme weeks'. Children consolidate their learning through answering teachers' questions, often in considerable detail.

The well planned curriculum ensures that, despite mixed age classes, children do not repeat topics. The school has identified those who are particularly good at English, mathematics and music and supports their learning well. The school celebrates the achievements of other talented children in assemblies, but does not have a complete register of them or give much additional provision to foster their talents further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve children's writing skills in Years 3 to 6, particularly the more able.
- Identify, register and provide a stimulating additional programme for children with specific talents.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

On entry to Reception children's attainments vary widely. Effective provision in the Foundation Stage helps all children to make good progress. Entry standards into Year 1 vary considerably from year to year. Test results at the end of Year 2 are improving. In 2006 results were above average and were strong in writing, an indication that the school's initiatives to raise standards in writing are working. Annually, at the end of Year 2, a few able children transfer to other schools. Consequently, standards on entry to Year 3 are average.

Over the last five years, standards in Year 6 have been average. However, the inclusion of those children who have severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the school's overall national test performance has tended to depress overall standards. When the performance of those children who actually take the national tests is evaluated it is clear that their achievements are good. Challenging targets in the 2006 tests were met, except in English at the higher level. Currently, standards by Year 6 are higher than those reflected by the 2006 test results. Children's achievement is improving. However, in Years 3 to 6, there is still more to be done to raise standards further in writing, especially for the most able. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because provision is very well planned to meet their needs. The children with a statement of special educational need make outstanding progress in their social skills because they are extremely well integrated into school life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. All children get on very well together, show respect for each other and support each other's learning. They love school and show this by their above average attendance. They enjoy taking part in exercise and understand exceptionally well the importance of eating sensibly in order to remain healthy. They behave well in class and around the school because they have a good understanding of right and wrong. For example, ball games were starting to get a little boisterous and so the school council discussed the situation and came up with a solution. This is one example of the very sensible way children help to manage the school. They feel very secure and also have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, for instance, gymnastics equipment was handled with great care. Children treat the remembrance garden and the wall mural, a celebration of the life of a pupil, with great respect. Their

positive attitudes and good basic skills prepare them well for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a wonderfully warm relationship with the children, which enables learning to flourish. They manage the children very well, using praise and rewards very effectively. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) and the Internet to interest children in lessons. Both teachers and children handle this equipment skilfully. Tasks, which usually meet the needs of the different ability groups, are explained clearly, enabling children to settle quickly to their work. Occasionally, tasks in writing for the more able are too repetitive and do not offer them sufficient challenge. Teachers use questioning well to find out what children remember and to consolidate their learning. Sometimes, teachers do not give children enough time to respond to questions, which means their answers lack thought. The school makes extensive use of test information to modify future teaching and to accurately identify the specific needs of individual children.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets requirements and the needs of most children. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy helps children make good progress. The recently acquired new facilities for ICT enable children to develop their skills further and to use them with growing confidence in other subjects. Children enjoy French lessons and the regular 'theme' weeks. Particularly successful was the science week, planned by Year 6 children. The school does not clearly identify talented children and there is little extra provision for them. Children enjoy the good range of sports clubs offered by the school which give them additional opportunities to exercise. They all have access to an exciting selection of educational visits, including the very successful residential visit for older children. These broaden their experience and contribute positively to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judged this aspect to be outstanding but the inspection found it to be good with some strong features. Parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully involved in reviewing their child's progress and future learning programme and greatly appreciate the dedication of all staff. The school has put in place procedures to safeguard children. Risk assessments are regularly and thoroughly carried out. The school has successfully developed before and after school care facilities that are warmly welcomed by working parents. Children know their literacy targets

and work hard to achieve them. Positive marking helps children to know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work further. Targets in mathematics, however, are not as well reviewed and are prioritised for development. Informative school reports tell parents how well their child is progressing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. All staff, governors and parents share the school's vision. The school is fully inclusive: a telling example is that all Year 5 and 6 children go on the annual residential visit. The headteacher provides high quality leadership. Staff have welcomed and gained confidence from the opportunities provided for them to take more responsibility in their subject or management roles. The quality of teaching is checked regularly and when areas for improvement are identified, training is quickly put in place. Parents are highly supportive and many of them work hard for the school in many ways. Governors are effective. They are well organised and highly supportive of the school and its ethos. Whilst they rigorously question the management about spending, they do not probe children's academic performance as searchingly.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

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 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

| | |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| 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? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| 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 very much for making me feel welcome in your school. You shared your views with me in a very confident manner.

Yours is a good school because it helps you make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Your headteacher and the staff work hard for you and teach you well. You play your part too. You have the most wonderful way of welcoming and valuing children new to the school. The children I spoke to said that they really like school and your high levels of attendance indicate that too. I thought that you behaved sensibly in class and were keen to learn, though you became very shy in the French lesson - very unusual the teacher told me! You show an outstanding knowledge of how to stay safe, fit and healthy. For example, you told me that you felt safe in school and free from bullying. You sensibly take part in lots of exercise and choose healthy snacks at break. The school cares for you very well, especially those of you who have teaching assistants. You are taken on a very good range of visits, to help you learn. Year 6 mentioned that the Lake District residential visit was great and I could see from the photographs of you all doing adventurous activities that it was a wonderful experience. The brass band, along with the choir, is forging very good links with the community. I thought that the work your parents do to support your learning and to raise additional funds for school was very good too.

Even good schools need to continue to improve and I have asked the headteacher to do two things, which will make it a better place for you:

- improve the writing skills of all children in Years 3 to 6, but especially those of you who find learning easier
- find out which children are really good at things other than English, mathematics and music and to provide clubs and activities that will help them practise those special skills.

You can help your school to improve by continuing to be very kind and helpful to each other and by working hard towards your targets in English and mathematics. I hope that you are all proud of what you, the staff, governors and parents have achieved and I wish you and the school all the best for the future.