

Breckon Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111587
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	288993
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2007
Reporting inspector	David Shearsmith

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pam Clarke
Headteacher	Mrs Cherry Diemoz
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2002
School address	Breckon Hill Road Middlesbrough TS4 2DS
Telephone number	01642 243044
Fax number	01642 345518

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Breckon Hill Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school in an area close to the centre of Middlesbrough. Most pupils enter the school with skills well below the levels usually found for nursery-age children. The entry levels are falling, particularly in relation to their knowledge and understanding of the world, language and mathematical skills. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and this is slowly increasing with the school changing from being bilingual to multilingual in recent years. This proportion is well above the national average, with 17 nationalities and 16 different languages. There are also pupils who stay at the school for varying lengths of time as well as an influx of Eastern Europeans. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, with the number of pupils entitled to free school meals being twice the national average. The number of pupils who leave or join the school other than at the start of the school year is also significantly higher than that found nationally.

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. It has a number of outstanding features. Pupils' personal development and the care and guidance that the school provides for pupils are outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to eat sensibly, keep fit and lead healthy lifestyles. They develop excellent social skills and are sensitive to the needs of others. They are articulate and express their views clearly. Pupils from different backgrounds mix happily together and there is a strong sense of racial harmony; behaviour is excellent. Pupils enjoy accepting responsibility and the school council is keen to influence what takes place in school. The school helps pupils make good progress through their excellent links with outside agencies.

Teaching and learning are good and so pupils achieve well. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and children achieve exceptionally well. By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, standards are above average in English, but in mathematics and science broadly average and continuing to improve. Resources are good. Those in information and communication technology (ICT) are used effectively to support teaching and learning. The quality of teachers' marking and oral feedback to pupils about their work has improved and generally helps pupils to increase the rate at which they progress. These good marking strategies are not used consistently well in all lessons and this slows down the progress that some pupils make. In science and mathematics, most pupils make good progress; but for some, their progress slows because they do not always fully understand the scientific and mathematical language used in these lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress and attain higher standards than similar groups nationally. Pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and friendly, and support learning well. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of educational visits, many after school clubs and interesting visitors. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and parents greatly appreciate the warm welcome that new pupils receive.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has analysed the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately along with a very supportive leadership team. The governing body, ably led by the chair, monitors the school's performance closely and they are actively involved in school improvements. The leadership team give an extremely clear steer to the work of the school. The school has good capacity to improve further. Finances are managed well and the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that oral feedback and marking consistently help pupils to know how to improve their work in mathematics and science.
- Extend pupils' understanding and use of mathematical and scientific language in their problem-solving work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and pupils attain overall average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve outstandingly in English, in which pupils attain above average standards. Throughout

the school, pupils make consistently good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress and attain higher standards than similar groups nationally. Despite making good progress, pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities mainly attain standards that are lower than their classmates.

From a well below expected starting point for nursery-age children, they make excellent progress overall in the Foundation Stage. Despite this excellent progress, a significant proportion do not reach the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1. Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and standards are currently higher than the below average results of the national Year 2 assessments of 2006.

In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in mathematics and science lessons and reach standards that are higher than the below average results of the national tests of 2006. This is because the well-judged strategies introduced by the management team have been successful. These include: improved planning, work matched more accurately to pupils' varying needs and good use of learning resources to develop pupils' understanding. In English, pupils continue to make excellent progress and standards are similar to the above average standards in the test results of 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enthuse about their education. They enjoy school and appreciate all the help available to them. These positive attitudes are reflected in their excellent behaviour and warm, productive relationships. Pupils are committed to staying healthy and safe, and are keen to eat healthily and take up extra sporting activities, in particular swimming, to stay fit and healthy. The pupils' cultural, social, moral, and spiritual development is outstanding. It has benefited from the Philosophy for Children programme, which has helped them express their emotions in a supportive atmosphere in which they know that they will be listened to. The attendance of most pupils is good, largely because the school has put in place strategies and rewards to promote regular attendance. However, there are a large number of parents who take their children away on holiday during term time. The school has a turbulent population with many pupils leaving to visit relatives abroad for longer than half a school year. The pupils say school is 'like a family sharing' and, as a result, there are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and demonstrate initiative. A good example of this is the school council, which has already been instrumental in lobbying for the provision of a new football pitch and sports hall. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are mature, articulate and sensitive individuals who are excellent ambassadors for their school. They develop good basic skills and confidently express their opinions; they are well prepared for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Subject knowledge of teachers is good and the school makes effective use of its well-developed tracking and data systems to target activities to pupils' needs. Typically, ICT is used creatively to bring in interesting resources, actively engage the pupils and widen their learning. Challenge is obvious but so too is the support and guidance from other adults to achieve the lesson's aims. In one such lesson, high expectations were set, learning was demonstrated by the teacher and the classroom assistants and the

positive energy produced outstanding results. Well differentiated tasks are a feature of the good planning and the needs of those with language or other learning difficulties are well catered for. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 know their targets and how to make progress towards them. In the Foundation Stage, excellent initial work on literacy scaffolds later learning very well. Behaviour and relationships in class are outstanding and pupils clearly enjoy their time in school. In some lessons in mathematics and science, there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of the language and meaning of concepts and how they should be applied in problem-solving work. Marking of pupils' work and oral feedback to them about how to improve are generally good but not consistently applied in all lessons in mathematics and science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. There are some outstanding features. Clear planning, informed by the school's good tracking system, ensures that from Foundation Stage onwards, the curriculum reflects the needs of learners. It is broad and balanced and has an appropriate emphasis upon literacy and numeracy. More able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well served, especially those whose first language is not English. There is strong provision for physical education and a wide range of extra-curricular activities helps build pupils' experiences and skills. This contributes to their outstanding personal development and well-being. Literacy is well embedded across the curriculum and more recent developments in mathematics and science are increasing the rate at which pupils make progress. Progress within ICT since the last inspection has been good and it now supports the good teaching and learning across the school. The personal, social and health education programme builds awareness of social, moral, cultural and spiritual issues; health and safety learning is also well provided for. The impact of the curriculum is shown in the excellent relationships that exist within the school, the racial harmony and the good progress made by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school provides high-quality integrated day care from Nursery to 11 years of age which, together with the excellent personal development of pupils, helps to ensure their good progress. Provision for those who have English as a second language is exceptional and good for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' learning is monitored and tracked well, and support and guidance from teachers, learning mentors and teaching assistants are well planned and targeted to provide progression in pupils' learning. Pupils know where to go to gain advice and feel safe and happy. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle through nutrition and exercise. There are excellent links with parents and a range of local agencies. In this safe and supportive environment, learners reach challenging targets. Safeguarding systems meet national guidelines and child protection and risk assessments are in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed by a very good, thoughtful, nurturing and caring headteacher. Her team of staff have high expectations and are well supported by a senior leadership team

that has been recently extended to more effectively raise standards. Together, the leadership team provides exceptionally clear direction for the work of the school. The robust monitoring of actions and accurate self-evaluation inform the priorities in the school's development plan. Staff have been very well supported by, and benefited from, the contribution of the local authority and an additional support programme. Strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants enhances provision and has a positive impact on standards, particularly in English; this is now evident in the work the school has done in raising standards in mathematics and science. Close partnerships with other agencies, such as local authority link advisors and the pupil support services, help to ensure that the school fully includes all children in the full range of provision and activities. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. Financial management is secure and resource deployment is good. The school provides good value for money. It has well-considered priorities and a strong cohesive team approach, which shows a good capacity to improve.

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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?	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	1
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	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	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?	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?	2
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	2
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	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

18 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Breckon Hill Primary School, Middlesbrough TS4 2DS

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Yours is a good school with many exciting activities to take part in. You all work and play well together and support each other in your learning. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour in and around the school.

Your teachers are good at providing you with interesting things to learn about and you are very enthusiastic about your learning and most attend school well. We were very impressed with the school council who make good suggestions for improvements to your school. Your school provides you with a wide range of activities out of school and you say you enjoy attending these extra activities.

Your work in English is particularly good and you have started to improve in mathematics and science. Keep up this good work.

There are two things that would help you to get even better. I have asked your teachers to help you improve your understanding of mathematical and scientific language and to give you suggestions of how you can improve your work. I am sure you will make a big effort to help make these improvements. I wish you well for the future as I am sure you will continue to get better and better.

Yours sincerely

Dave Shearsmith

Lead inspector