

Bricknell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117717
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	290909
Inspection date	5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	June Tracey

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	606
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Marsters
Headteacher	Mr Graeme Brook
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2002
School address	Bricknell Avenue Hull HU5 4ET
Telephone number	01482 493208
Fax number	01482 443750

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bricknell is an exceptionally large primary school serving an urban area in Hull. An increasing proportion of the pupils come from areas close to the city centre and beyond the immediate catchment area of the school. Children's skills when they join the Reception year are broadly average for their age. There are three classes in each year group in Years 1 to 6. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of children from Eastern Europe joined the school in the current year and are at an early stage of learning English. Before-school care is provided by the school and after-school care is provided on-site by an independent provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bricknell is an outstanding school that provides its pupils with a wealth of opportunities to stimulate their curiosity and underpin their excellent personal development. The quality of care, guidance and support is excellent. Pupils are expected to do as well as they can in their academic work; they enjoy school and learn in a well-disciplined and well-organised environment, brought about by outstanding leadership and highly motivated staff. The quality of education is exemplified by the breadth and creativity of the excellent curriculum, its international dimension and wide range of extra-curricular activities. Parents' confidence in the school to provide a well rounded, exciting and relevant education for their children is well founded.

Children settle in quickly when they join Reception. They have plentiful opportunities to develop their independence and social and communication skills. The school focuses effectively on developing these crucial skills at this early stage. By the end of the Reception year, the children reach standards above those expected for their age in all areas of learning.

From their average starting points when they start school, pupils make excellent progress throughout the school and their achievement is outstanding. Standards are consistently well above average in each key stage, as shown by the results of national assessments and tests. Pupils of higher ability are challenged and high proportions exceed the standards expected for their age in each key stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make very rapid progress, often exceeding the targets set for them in their individual education plans. The school analyses pupils' progress rigorously and takes action to improve it when needed. Since the previous inspection, the standard of pupils' writing has improved dramatically and is now higher than in reading and mathematics. The school is now raising standards of reading and mathematics even further by encouraging pupils to think more deeply, to use their reading skills to the full, and to apply their investigative and problem-solving abilities in mathematics.

The teaching is excellent and pupils respond accordingly in lessons. Pupils make effective oral contributions to lessons; as one older pupil said, 'I look forward to lessons because my teacher makes sure that we all get a chance to say something ...' The school safeguards pupils properly through implementation of its policies and procedures. Staff successfully encourage pupils to adopt healthy habits and to know what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils' behaviour is excellent in lessons and about the school; they are considerate and sensitive towards the feelings of others. By the time they leave the school, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are excellent. The senior staff have established a welcoming and productive learning environment, which makes every pupil feel important and valued, despite the school's large size. Teachers and other members of staff are vigilant; they have a high profile about the school at all times so that pupils feel safe and secure.

Management structures and teachers' responsibilities are clearly defined and pupils and parents know who to approach if they have any concerns. Staff and governors demonstrate a corporate will to maintain the current momentum. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and identifies clearly and precisely what it can adjust and improve. The school, therefore, has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant issues that the school has not already identified and is working on.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards are consistently well above average. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make excellent progress throughout the school because teachers have high expectations and inculcate in them the desire to succeed. In the Foundation Stage, children learn to work sensibly with each other and to socialise. By the end of the Reception year, standards are above average for children of their age in all areas of learning, although this does vary from one year group to another. Standards are well above average in Years 2 and 6, which is reflected in the results of national assessments and tests taken in these year groups. The results have been consistently well above average overall, and in English, mathematics and science in each of the last five years. The school sets realistic targets, which are met and sometimes exceeded. The assessments for Year 2 in 2007 indicate that pupils' performance has risen further. Results for Year 6 are not yet available. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Currently, the school's assessments show that pupils are making even faster progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Because of this, the school is working to raise standards in these two subjects to equal those in writing. The small number of pupils at an early stage of speaking English are making excellent progress because the school supports their progress in English language and ensures that they join in lessons in all subjects. In this way, they constantly practise their English. Pupils' practical and creative skills are well developed and used very effectively in subjects such as art and design and technology.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The teachers get 'under the skin' of the curriculum to foster pupils' individuality. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy school and are keen not to miss anything. Through lessons and extra-curricular activities, they learn to consider and respect other people's feelings and why it is sometimes necessary to compromise when coming to decisions, which was evident in a session of the school council during the inspection. Pupils are beginning to understand the meaning of democracy and what it means to be a good citizen. They feel that their views are listened to and taken into consideration. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They think that the opportunities for them to take on responsibility, such as acting as 'buddies', are preparing them very well for the time when they will have to take on greater responsibility for their own lives. Pupils are developing a thorough understanding of why diet and physical exercise are important to their long-term health and say that they try to practise healthy living.

Pupils are successfully learning to research, interrogate and record information in a meaningful way by transferring their skills in information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and mathematics to other areas of the curriculum. An increasing awareness of what is happening in the world around them is making pupils think seriously about what is important for their own futures, for the planet and for good relationships between peoples of different nations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Teachers stimulate pupils' interest and motivation by thoughtful planning and a shared commitment to achieving the priorities in the school development plan. The improvement in pupils' writing since the previous inspection is the direct consequence of a unified effort from all staff to direct pupils' attention to the basic characteristics of good writing. Currently, the focus is on extending pupils' awareness of the subtleties and implications of text when reading or solving mathematical problems. Teachers are sharing the best and most effective practices and have a common willingness to learn from others about what does and does not move pupils on. As a result, pupils' progress is accelerating in mathematics and, even more quickly, in reading. Lessons are typified by teachers' high expectations of all pupils and a fast pace that engages them to work hard from start to finish. Pupils' work is assessed and marked effectively with helpful, written comments to show pupils how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. It is rich, relevant and well suited to pupils' needs. It embraces practical and creative activities well and introduces an international flavour through the teaching of French and German. Pupils' interest in these subjects is reinforced by the provision for regular links, through video-conferencing, with a school in Germany. The recent contribution of trainee teachers from Germany to class and extra-curricular activities has intensified pupils' enthusiasm. Overall, pupils' needs are well catered for because the provision is designed to develop pupils into skilled learners. In the Reception year, excellent foundations are laid for the development of literacy and numerical skills within the children's free-choice activities.

A thoughtful approach towards the integrated study of history and geography provides pupils with a good background to historical issues and their impact on contemporary society. A typical example, directly relevant to the history of Hull, is pupils' study of William Wilberforce's work connected with the abolition of slavery. Pupils of all ages benefit from the contributions of many visitors who share their expertise and provide hands-on experiences; for example, in art and music. The opportunity for every pupil in Year 4 to learn to play a musical instrument, currently a brass instrument, is stimulating their interest in music and encouraging a significant number to continue with tuition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Provision for care, guidance and support is excellent. The staff understand pupils' individual needs and have close working relationships with parents. Parents become active partners in their children's learning because the school sounds out and responds to parents' views and concerns. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for, through the support of teachers and teaching assistants and through productive links with external agencies. High priority and effective practices safeguard pupils' safety and protection. Pupils indicate that they can turn to adults in confidence if they have any concerns. They receive accurate and

realistic guidance about what they can achieve in their academic studies, to which they respond well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership, management and governance are excellent. The leadership of the school is visionary and is the driving force that informs and motivates staff in their planning and day-to-day teaching. Parents have confidence in the leadership and its ability to provide for the range of pupils' abilities and talents. This is challenging, considering the size of the school and the variability of the intake from year to year. The staff are well motivated and their morale is high. The school knows itself well and accurately identifies, in order of priority, where it can adjust and improve on the current provision. Teachers of each class are fully involved in the critical and accurate analysis of the work of their pupils. They understand the implications of what they do on the performance of pupils in other year groups. The responsibilities of senior management and heads of year have been redistributed effectively in recent years. The school's buildings are relatively old but they are in reasonable condition and fit for purpose. Improvement since the previous inspection has been excellent, particularly the quality and range of pupils' writing. The school's plans for the future are realistic and flexible. They take good account of local and national initiatives and directives.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bricknell Primary School, Hull, HU5 4ET

Thank you for talking to me so enthusiastically about your school and for making me so welcome. You had such a lot to tell me, in so little time, and I came away with the impression that you are proud of your school and its reputation. I found it to be an excellent school with plenty to offer each one of you.

I was impressed by your behaviour and courtesy. It was good to hear you sharing ideas and testing out suggestions on your friends. Your frequent references to the written targets on your tables and in your exercise books told me that you knew what you had to do to reach the next level of work. I liked the way that most of you committed yourselves wholeheartedly to learning in the lessons that I observed; for example, in the English lesson in Year 2 and the lessons in investigative mathematics in Year 5. Your writing has improved in recent years because your teachers have made a point of getting you to write accurately and in different forms to suit different purposes. You may have noticed that they are putting a similar emphasis on guided reading and on solving problems in mathematics. This is to help you sustain and improve on the high standards that you achieve.

Your school works hard to help you to understand the importance to your health of eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. This, together with your personal development and awareness of what is going on in the world around you, is preparing you very well to be good citizens. Through what you learn, you have the education and capacity to contribute to the protection of the planet and to make life better for all peoples of the world.

I hope that you continue to enjoy school and to gain pleasure from joining in the many opportunities available to you. Best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Mrs June Tracey

Inspector