



Brookhurst Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125565
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293293
Inspection dates 15–16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Martin James

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ullswater Avenue
School category	Community		Leamington Spa
Age range of pupils	4–11		CV32 6NH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01926 420051
Number on roll (school)	365	Fax number	01926 429899
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	James Knight
		Headteacher	Angela Stanton
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brookhurst Primary School is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage, and the number of pupils for whom English is not their first language is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children enter Reception with a wide range of ability levels, but overall their attainment is broadly in line with 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: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory; it also has some considerable strengths, as well as areas which need improving. Parents are very positive about what the school provides. Several parents have commented on how much they value the commitment and hard work of the staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school and believe their views are taken into account. They benefit from a good and improved curriculum, which includes visits and a variety of different clubs. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are good. Whilst the school's care for its pupils is satisfactory overall, pastoral care is good, and pupils' safety is a priority. Their personal development and well-being are good, and they have a good understanding of the multicultural society in which they live. Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory because the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers do not always provide pupils with adequate guidance to help them understand how to achieve better. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Reception and Years 1 and 2, and by the end of Year 2 they reach broadly average standards, and in some years above average standards. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils make steady progress from their starting points, and by the end of Year 6 standards are generally above average, although there are particular weaknesses in pupils' writing, especially among boys. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation is generally satisfactory, although it currently tends to overestimate its own effectiveness. Self-evaluation is not always sufficiently focused on how well pupils are achieving, and whether they are doing as well as they can. The school has, however, identified where improvement is needed. For example, the school recognised that some pupils with learning difficulties were not doing as well as they might and has taken appropriate action to remedy this weakness. All staff and governors demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the school. The school has acknowledged the importance of increasing the involvement of senior staff in checking teaching, and in particular improving the consistency of support and guidance for pupils in order to raise standards and achievement. Marking of pupils' work and setting them targets are recognised as the main areas of weakness. Governors are fully involved in budget setting and development planning. However, they do not currently hold the school to account adequately for the progress that pupils make. The school has taken effective steps to improve since the last inspection, and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of both marking and target setting, so that pupils know what is expected of them to improve their work and achieve better.
- Improve leadership and management through a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievement, and ensuring that all pupils are achieving as well as they can.
- Ensure that teachers consistently provide opportunities to challenge and extend pupils in their writing in order to raise achievement, particularly among boys.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. During their time in Reception, children make satisfactory progress, and by the end of the year most achieve the targets set for them. They achieve well in their personal development. Pupils in Year 2 generally reach average and, occasionally, higher standards. This represents satisfactory achievement. Standards in Year 6 are currently above average, demonstrating satisfactory achievement from these pupils' starting points. Standards in English improved in 2006, with a higher proportion of pupils reaching Level 5, overall. However, whilst progress is still satisfactory, standards in writing, especially those of boys, are weaker than other aspects of the subject. The school is addressing this issue through changes that have been made to the curriculum this term. The school has also addressed the needs of pupils with learning difficulties by providing improved support for them. As a result, these pupils now make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour is good, and they also have good attitudes to their work. Pupils are courteous and polite, and they really enjoy school. Pupils feel safe in school, and one said, 'The teachers look after us'. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. Pupils readily carry out a variety of responsibilities, and the school council has helped introduce new initiatives, for example re-cycling. Pupils are also involved in the wider community and regularly take part in fund raising activities. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives, and they benefit from the good opportunities provided by the school for exercise. They especially enjoy the 'Huff and Puff' activities. All of these strengths exemplify pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils benefit from the close links the school has with a school in Sierra Leone. The school develops in its pupils a range of skills such as confidence and independence. However, the fact that some pupils are less competent with their writing skills is limiting their preparation for their next stage of education, as well as later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Within the satisfactory teaching there are good features. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and teachers employ a good variety of teaching approaches. For example, in Reception, children are provided with opportunities to choose their own work, as well as tackling teacher-directed tasks. Assessment is often used effectively to provide for differing abilities. Teaching assistants are well deployed,

especially with pupils with learning difficulties. Interactive whiteboards are being increasingly used to support teaching and learning. Pupils generally have a receptive attitude to their work, and they enjoy their lessons. There are important features of the teaching that require improvement to raise it to a good standard. Introductions to lessons do not always fully engage the pupils, and some of them lose concentration. This in turn slows their rate of work. Pupils are provided with much help and advice in lessons, but the quality of support given through marking is not as strong. Written comments are not always precise enough, and then pupils are not adequately helped to understand how to make their work better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides its pupils with a good curriculum. In Reception a wide range of activities is provided, and teachers are currently planning increased use of the newly re-furnished outdoor area. Elsewhere, the addition of philosophy as a core element to the curriculum helps the pupils to reason and to develop good speaking and listening skills. This is evident across the school where standards of articulation and listening are good. Provision for the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, and its use is now standard practice throughout the school. The increasing use of writing across the curriculum, as well as an increased provision for drama, is showing signs of helping to improve writing skills. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged, and responsible attitudes to environmental issues are fostered. A good range of additional activities, including visits and visitors, and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities, some provided through links with other schools and colleges, enrich the curricular experiences of the pupils, as well as enhancing their enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, overall. The school is dedicated to the pastoral care of its pupils, and this is a major strength. Improved procedures ensure that pupils are kept safe, and they have confidence in the support systems. Pupils say any problems are quickly sorted out. Parents are confident that their children are well looked after. The close links forged with the nursery mean that pupils are well prepared for the start of school. Staff know the pupils well and are strongly committed to their welfare. Child protection procedures are good, and risk assessments are carried out regularly. Health and safety issues are emphasised to pupils. The careful monitoring of pupils whose first language is not English helps to ensure they feel happy in school. Pupils are provided with targets for improving their work in literacy and numeracy, but some of these are too general, and so pupils are not sufficiently helped to understand how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is effective in creating a positive and caring atmosphere, as well as a good team spirit. Selfevaluation is carried out conscientiously, but a lack of adequate rigour in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress has resulted in the school overestimating its effectiveness. As a result of recent improvements in procedures, the school now has a better focus on the analysis and use of data to assist school planning, monitoring and review. There is a determination among the staff to raise achievement. Strategies such as those to improve writing skills, especially those of boys, have been put in place. It is too early to judge the impact of these initiatives as yet, although initial signs are positive. The role of the subject leader is being developed. The leaders for literacy and numeracy demonstrate a clear understanding of how to take the school forward. The school is to provide them with more time to implement their action plans. Governance is satisfactory, with the governors being more involved in planning and monitoring than at the time of the previous inspection. However, they do not currently monitor closely enough the progress that pupils make as they move through the school.

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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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	2
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	3
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	3

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?	3

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 making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you and we were very interested in what you had to tell us. You are making satisfactory progress with your school work because the school provides you with a satisfactory education. Here are some of the highlights:
- You behave well and you help to make the school a happy place.
- You are sensible about making decisions on how to improve your school.
- You enjoy the wide range of extra activities the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- All adults in school care for you and look after you and keep you safe.
- You know all about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise. We have also found some things to make the school better. This means that we have asked the school to:
- Provide you with more comments in your books, and clearer targets, so that you have a better understanding of what you need to do to improve your work.
- Make sure that all the adults who work with you keep a close check on the progress you are making, to ensure that you are doing as well as you can.
- Provide you with even more opportunities to improve your story writing, which should then help you all, but especially the boys, to make better progress. We wish you good luck for the future, and we hope you have a lovely Christmas.