

Beatrix Potter Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100997
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	307555
Inspection date	13 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Rogers

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	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Britt
Headteacher	Mr S Neale
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2004
School address	Magdalen Road Earlsfield London SW18 3ER
Telephone number	020 8874 1482
Fax number	020 8871 9416

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas:

- the quality of teaching and learning, and improvements since the last inspection;
- the impact of improvement work done by leaders, especially in English, mathematics and science;
- the quality of pupils' personal development and the school's provision for their care, guidance and support.

She gathered evidence from lesson observations, examination of pupils' work, and school documents, parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Beatrix Potter is an average sized school. The proportions of pupils who require extra support with their lessons are similar to those found in most other schools. The percentage of pupils of minority ethnic background is higher than is usual. The proportion for pupils who take free school meals is low. The school holds the Sportsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Beatrix Potter provides a good education for its pupils. As a result, they make good progress and attain above average results in tests by the time they leave Year 6. Their achievements in personal development are outstanding. The headteacher and staff are well thought of by parents, the vast majority of whom are extremely pleased with the school. When commenting, parents typically wrote, 'a fantastic school' or 'nothing but good things to say'.

Children's skills and knowledge when they enter the school vary from year to year as numbers are small, but their abilities are always at least in line with national expectations. In some year groups they are above average. Consequently, pupils' results vary a little in Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science. However, they are always above average. Pupils make good progress because they have good teaching underpinned by a very exciting and interesting curriculum. There is an excellent range of activities planned to enhance learning, such as visits to Arran and to an outdoor centre in Wales. A themed approach adds to pupils understanding and enjoyment and good use is made of information communications technology (ICT). Pupils develop their language skills by writing blogs and making podcasts, for example.

Parents and pupils appreciate the community feel of the school. Pupils make remarks such as 'it's lovely because I know everyone and they know me'. As result, staff know individual pupils very well. They are very good at managing behaviour and developing speaking and collaboration skills. Teachers make good use of assessment information to ensure that challenging targets are set. On occasion, however, teachers' day-to-day assessments are not robust enough and, as a result, more able pupils sometimes begin their work at levels that are too easy for them.

Pupils are extremely well cared for and say that they feel very safe. All required safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils who need extra help with literacy or numeracy are identified quickly and are well supported by additional staff. Extra support from outside agencies is sought rapidly when necessary. Teachers are still developing their procedures for academic guidance. All pupils have long-term targets that they understand. However, teachers' marking does not consistently give clear specific next steps for improvement.

The school has excellent international links, for instance it works with a school in Louisiana. It also develops these links to include charity work, such as supporting a tsunami-devastated school in Sri Lanka. Excellent multicultural and cultural work and excellent relationships contribute to outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupil's behaviour is excellent and attendance is good. This is because pupils enjoy school so much. As one parent wrote, 'he runs all the way in his eagerness'. Pupils' charity work, interest in the environment and the good work of the school council help to show that the pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. Their good basic skills mean that they are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Pupils continue to make consistently good progress because of leaders' detailed knowledge of each class and individual. Senior leaders monitor progress closely and make swift interventions as necessary. Subject leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. Results in writing have been relatively weaker than those in other subjects and the school has taken effective steps to improve pupils' composition skills. Improvement is not always entirely efficient, as leaders do not always analyse the assessment information that they have in enough detail to identify whole school trends. Nevertheless, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, most notably in ICT, in the use of pupil assessment tracking systems and in pupils'

punctuality. The governing body have improved too, in their ability to support change. They now provide excellent monitoring and challenge and are becoming very influential in driving the school forward. The school consequently has a good capacity to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. Carefully kept assessment records show that they make good progress. Activities are designed to motivate the children and ensure that they settle well into school. For example, on the day of the inspection children were out on a day trip intended to expand their knowledge and understanding of the world by studying farm animals. The Foundation Stage leader has plans to reorganise the Reception and Nursery areas as part of ongoing building development at the school. She also, rightly, aims to review planning. At times current planning does not give enough detail about learning objectives. As a result, children are not clear enough about what they might learn. There is good liaison with parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers always plan to meet the needs of more able pupils.
- Improve marking so that it is consistent in making sure that pupils understand the next steps in their learning.
- Analyse assessment information rigorously, to identify whole school strengths and weaknesses.

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Annex A

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
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.

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

21 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beatrix Potter Primary School, London, SW18 3ER

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed watching you learn and talking to groups of you to find out what you thought about your school. You and your parents told me that you think yours is a good school and I agree with you. You make good progress and do well in your tests because the teaching is good. You do exceptionally well in your personal development. Everyone in the school gets on together and you are very well looked after. You, in your turn, learn a lot about how to look after others. You also learn a great deal about other countries, as well as playing your part in helping others abroad. I was very pleased to see that you are so polite and behave so well and so considerately. It was also good to hear how much you enjoy school, especially the many visits and activities that are organised for you, to help you with your learning.

Although your school is a good school, a few areas could still be improved. I have asked your teachers to do the following things:

- make sure that work is always set at the right level of difficulty for all of you
- improve marking so that it always tells you what you need to do next to improve
- analyse test results to tell them if there are whole school patterns in strengths and weaknesses.

Yours sincerely

Sue Rogers

Lead Inspector