

Lady Bankes Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102388
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	307989
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Spencer
Headteacher	Mr George Knox
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2003
School address	Dawlish Drive Ruislip Manor Ruislip HA4 9SF
Telephone number	01895 634 318
Fax number	01895 673 124

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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 issues:

- What is the current progress of pupils in mathematics and why?
- Are there outstanding aspects to care, support and guidance and how do they impact on pupils' personal development and well-being?
- How well do pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities progress and why?

Evidence was gathered from performance data, external monitoring, observations of teaching and the work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, the chair of governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. 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

The school is average in size but has had spare places in recent years. Measures of economic and social characteristics, such as the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, are broadly average. There is an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. These are mainly for dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties or for autism.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lady Bankes Junior is a good school. Pupils achieve well academically and make strong gains socially as a result of the good provision. The school has a high reputation for catering for the needs of vulnerable children and this is richly deserved. There are good links with a wide range of agencies and other partners and these add to the good provision. The great majority of parents are very positive about the school's work and, as two parents wrote, 'The school ethos starts at the top and is felt throughout' and, 'The school goes from strength to strength.'

Standards are above average. They are consistently so in English in the tests taken at the end of Year 6. This is because of good teaching and the sustained drive by managers at all levels to ensure that planning by teachers meets pupils' needs. This includes providing ample opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, speaking and listening skills in meaningful ways in other subjects. For example, there is specific attention to research and writing in different styles and for different audiences in history and geography topics. The school has successfully developed a structured reading programme, which links well to the new school library. Reading has been a focus for the last three years and this is yielding dividends. Parents have usefully been involved in this initiative. Although there is improvement since the previous inspection, there is more variation in the standards attained in mathematics from year to year. Regarding the Year 6 tests, in 2006 performance was significantly above average but dipped to be just above average in 2007. The school has introduced measures such as half-termly targets for pupils but these are not yet sufficiently embedded. Consequently, a few pupils did not make the progress they should have. The school has rigorously analysed the reasons for the slippage in performance. They identified that pupils had not fully grasped concepts relating to shape and space. The school is modifying the teaching of mathematics as a result but it is too early to judge the effectiveness. There are some differences in the performance of boys and girls but these are reducing. There are no underperforming groups. Pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

The school is a very harmonious community where every individual is valued. Pupils respond very positively, make a good contribution to the school and the wider community and feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Those with records of disruptive behaviour in their previous schools usually settle down well when transferred because of the high quality induction and care they receive. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is also good. Their needs are identified effectively at an early stage. This is then followed up with well-targeted intervention and, consequently, the personal development of these pupils is excellent and they make the same progress in their work as their classmates. This is a strong element in the outstanding pastoral care provided by the school. For instance, the school has developed its own distinctive 'effort report' programme for evaluating pupils' personal development. Parents and pupils are usefully engaged in this process. Several pupils have had difficulties with punctuality and completing their homework. By working with families, routines have been established at home and at school. As a result, these pupils do their homework, arrive at school on time and are prepared well for their lessons. A good range of extra-curricular activities contribute the enjoyment of pupils. This includes many opportunities to participate in sporting activities, often through links with other schools or clubs. Their understanding of healthy-living is further enhanced through teaching in science and other subjects.

The headteacher provides good leadership and he is supported well by his senior leadership team. There is a rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Where the teaching is judged

to be only satisfactory, then support and training is provided until the teaching reaches a good standard. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress have recently changed and a new computer package is being used to record and analyse performance. The school is still learning about the new program and does not yet use it fully to check on the progress of particular groups of pupils. Nevertheless, teachers make effective use of the resulting information for individual pupils to plan their lessons and to give constructive feedback to them on how they might improve further. Senior leaders use data well to allocate resources effectively and to set challenging targets. The attainment of many pupils appears to dip in Year 3 after transferring from infant schools. Consequently, the school has strengthened induction programmes for these pupils and also procedures for joint working with the feeder schools. The school's own monitoring shows that pupils make good progress in Year 3. The school recognises that more work needs to be done to ensure continuity in learning for all pupils joining it at the end of Year 2.

The school has budgeted prudently to offset the effects of falling rolls without lowering the quality of education. Governors have acted effectively as a 'critical friend'. High standards of care have been maintained and standards improved. Given its track record the school has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality standards in mathematics to match those in English.
- Work with the school's partner infant schools to ensure that there is a smooth transition from Year 2 to Year 3.

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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 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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.

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	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

08 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lady Bankes Junior School, Ruislip, HA4 9SF

Many thanks for your help and cooperation when I inspected your school. You told me that you enjoy school and feel safe there. You say that there is little or no bullying. Your school councillors feel that they are listened to. For instance, they have made suggestions for wet play equipment that were accepted and acted upon by the school.

You and your parents say that you go to a good school and I agree. The things I like most are that:

- you behave very well
- the school takes exceptional care of those pupils who need extra support
- you do well in your SATs, particularly in English
- you have good teachers who you say are firm but fair
- the school provides a good range of clubs after school and other interesting things for you to do
- the adults in the school look after you well
- the school is well led by the headteacher and his team.

There are two things that I have asked the school to do to be even better. These are:

- make sure that you do as well in mathematics as you do in English
- make sure that your start in Year 3 is as good as it can be.

For your part, make sure you ask if you do not understand. The teachers will be very pleased to help you. I wish you continuing success in the future.

Barry Jones

Lead Inspector