

Broad Square Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133335
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	316092
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Padgett HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	277
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sian Watson
Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Spencer
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Broad Square Liverpool L11 1BS
Telephone number	0151 2261117

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2009
Inspection number	316092

Fax number

0151 2560848

Age group 3–11

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2009

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in the Norris Green district of Liverpool, east of the city centre. It is larger than the average primary school. Pupils from a wide range of home circumstances attend the school. Many families are socially and economically disadvantaged and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about twice the national average.

Most pupils are of White British heritage with small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic and mixed heritage backgrounds. A larger than average proportion of pupils, over one in every four, has a learning difficulty and/or disability.

The school has been awarded Healthy School and Dyslexia Friendly status.

In August 2007, one of the school's pupils was murdered, the innocent victim of gun crime.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Broad Square Community Primary School provides a good quality education for its pupils. It has outstanding features. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and the many extra-curricular activities provided for them. Teachers and support staff enjoy working in the school; they are very dedicated to the pupils and their outstanding care, support and guidance for them plays a very significant part in pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. The school is very highly regarded by parents.

Pupils achieve well. The majority begin school with levels of knowledge and understanding below and often well below those typical of most pupils. They get off to a good start and settle well in the school's Nursery and Reception classes that form its Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they are 11 and ready to move to secondary schools, the great majority of pupils reach the standards in mathematics and science expected of pupils of this age. In English they reach above average standards, and this represents outstanding progress. Generally, progress across Key Stage 1 is not as good as that across Key Stage 2. Compared with most schools, high proportions of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or come from backgrounds that place them at risk of underachieving. These pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the high quality care, support and attention they receive. Able pupils are enabled to reach the highest standards.

The main aim of the school, according to the headteacher, is to raise the self-esteem of its pupils. It does this very well indeed. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour, their keenness to learn and to take responsibility, and their care and support for each other are all exemplary. The outstanding relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff make for a very relaxed and happy school. Teaching is good overall, although it varies in quality. Teachers prepare interesting work for pupils. Each class has a teacher and a teaching assistant so pupils are taught in smaller groups. Three of the nine classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 have pupils of two age groups in them, a consequence of the numbers of pupils in each year. This works well. The able pupils are given harder work that stretches them. Good planning ensures that work is carefully matched to pupils' individual needs. The curriculum is of good quality. It has a clear focus on providing pupils with the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information communication technology (ICT), a strong pastoral curriculum and a rich range of extra-curricular activities.

The school takes great care to ensure that pupils' understanding of being healthy and staying safe are very good. The tragic death of a pupil has intensified the work undertaken by the school and external agencies to help pupils understand the dangers that they may encounter in the community. They learn how to be strong, individually and as a community, and to break down barriers where they exist. Provision for community cohesion in the school and the local community are therefore strengths, although the school has yet to fully address the wider issues of life in a multicultural Britain.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good direction for the school. She has empowered her senior team and teachers. The work of the school is monitored effectively. Teamwork among staff is very strong and staff with leadership roles are enthusiastic and innovative. Links with external agencies involved in children's services, such as the police, and with the nearby children's centre, are good and parents find staff very approachable. Governance is good. The issues from the previous inspection in 2004 have been

dealt with successfully. The school has a good track record of success. It provides good value for money and is in a positive position to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery at three years old with levels of development that are below and often well below those of most children of this age. They settle well and make good progress. By the time they are ready to leave the Early Years Foundation Stage at the end of their Reception Year, most children are working within the range of early learning goals considered desirable for children entering Key Stage 1.

Children learn and play happily indoors and outside. The quality of provision is good and covers all areas of learning. The classes are well organised, routines for children are established, and welfare requirements for children's safety and well-being are rigorously observed. There is scope for more opportunities for children to engage in imaginative role-play. Children get off to a good start in early reading and writing through specific lessons to learn about sounds and words. There is a very good partnership with parents, and the Early Years Foundation Stage at the school is held in high regard by parents.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Planning is monitored carefully and children's development is thoroughly mapped and recorded. Transitions between neighbouring pre-school settings and the Nursery, and between Reception classes and Key Stage 1, are carefully managed. Links with external agencies are good and becoming stronger with the developing links with the local children's centre. One very good example is provided by the speech enrichment programme. This is provided by staff funded through the children's centre. It is proving successful in supporting children's language and communication development, an identified weakness in many of the children on entry.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 to match that of pupils in Key Stage 2, through more consistently good teaching and learning.
- Raise the cultural awareness of pupils to prepare them better for life in a multicultural, multi-faith Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are below average. For many of the vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they are well below. Since the last inspection, in 2004, standards at Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, have been close to the national average, which represents good progress overall. However, the last three years show a slowly declining trend from slightly above to slightly below average.

Progress in Key Stage 2 during this period has been consistently good. In English, following a specific focus on writing in 2008, standards were above average with a high proportion of pupils achieving the highest level, Level 5. This represents outstanding progress in English. In addition, almost nine in every ten pupils reached the level expected of pupils in English, mathematics and science at Year 6. Since over one in every four pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the results indicate that some such pupils also make outstanding progress. Pupils

who enter the school later in their school careers, often arriving with lower than average levels of knowledge, skills and understanding, also achieve well and make up lost ground.

Pupils made generally good progress in lessons in a range of subjects observed during the inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning in lessons are strikingly good. They clearly enjoy their lessons and activities. They have excellent relationships with teachers and support staff and they show care for each other and consideration to visitors. They are proud of their school and proud to take responsibility within it. Attendance is in line with the national average.

There is an active school council and the head boy and girl are representatives on the Liverpool schools' parliament. There are trained pupil 'advocates' who look out for pupils who are unhappy and befriend them. The extensive programme of personal, health and social education develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem very effectively.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle is excellent and largely put into practice through eating healthily and taking exercise, particularly through sport. Pupils' understanding of staying safe is excellent, as is the positive contribution they make in the school and the community. Pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being is good and they have a good understanding of business and enterprise as a result of links with local employers.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although wider cultural development is the weakest of the four elements. This is partly explained by the understandable current focus on building community cohesion at school and local community levels.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. The relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are excellent. Teachers prepare interesting lessons with varied activities that capture the interest of pupils. The use of ICT, in the form of wall-mounted interactive whiteboards for teachers and individual laptops for pupils, increases pupils' interest and motivation. Teachers prepare generally challenging tasks of different levels of difficulty that suit the individual learning needs of groups of pupils. With the help of the teaching assistants, one of whom is attached to each class, teachers are able to give the groups a good deal of individual attention. For their part, pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, listening carefully and working well individually and cooperatively. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly although, as in teaching quality, there is some variation in quality from class to class. In marking, this involves the effectiveness with which marking helps pupils to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum of good quality. Basic skills feature highly and the school follows closely the nationally recommended guidance for literacy and numeracy. Science and other subjects outside of English, mathematics and ICT are taught as topics. The topics provide opportunities to practise core skills and link subjects together in meaningful ways. This is work-in-progress as teachers put the final touches to their plans and 'learning journeys'. The pastoral curriculum is of outstanding quality. It promotes pupils' personal development very well and successfully challenges and supports them in developing their emotional well-being and self-esteem. The school provides a very wide range of enrichment activities for children out-of-school hours, including a breakfast club, lunchtime clubs, after-school activities on site and with two external providers, and a Friday afternoon session of activities led by external agencies and organisations. Out-of-school activities are enhanced by several residential visits: these are very popular with pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. This is a very caring school, where pupils thrive. Care and support for pupils is of a high order from the Nursery to Year 6, including care and support for vulnerable pupils. The school has had significant success in supporting pupils who have transferred from other schools. The policies to safeguard children and promote their health and safety are all in place, monitored and fully meet the government's requirements. Pastoral support from teachers, teaching assistants and, in particular, the learning mentor, is exceptionally strong. Links with external agencies, other schools and settings, and children's services are well established. The school has adopted several successful support programmes designed to promote pupils' personal development and self-esteem. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities of an increasingly wide range are well supported and their parents fully involved at all stages. The academic progress of pupils is measured regularly and checked against expected progress. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind with their work and targets are monitored carefully by the teachers, headteacher and the special needs coordinator.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. The vision and direction for the school, including its excellent ethos, are the result of good leadership by the headteacher. The school has clear, up-to-date policies. It runs smoothly and efficiently. The school occupies a well-maintained building constructed under the Private Finance Initiative and it enjoys a good and productive relationship with the provider and contracted staff. The headteacher has the support of capable and experienced senior staff who provide significant support in the task of monitoring the provision in the school. A sound start has been made in self-evaluation of performance. Leadership has been distributed effectively and staff provide enthusiastic and effective leadership for their subject and aspect responsibilities.

Governance is good. Governors provide good support for the school. The membership represents the diversity in the community and individual governors have a range of financial and audit skills which help to provide the necessary challenge for the school's leadership.

Strong partnerships have been forged with local schools, external agencies and parents. Community cohesion is good. Following the tragic events of August 2007, the school has worked very effectively with its partners to rebuild community confidence and self-esteem at school and locality levels. There is a clear policy of good quality in place with clear procedures to evaluate the impact of actions. The school plays a full part in the community's regeneration.

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 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

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember I inspected your school recently along with Mrs Davenport and Mr Lawrence. We came to see how well you are learning. Thank you for your help during the inspection, especially to the groups of pupils who were interviewed by Mrs Davenport. We enjoyed talking to you and what you told us helped us come to our judgements about the school. This letter is to let you know what we decided.

We believe Broad Square is a good school in every way and that it does some things outstandingly well. Most importantly, it helps you achieve well with your learning and in your personal development. Your behaviour, your attitudes in lessons, such as the way you listen carefully to what your teachers tell you, and the way you support each other are so good we believe your personal development is outstanding, our top grade. The reason why you achieve so well is down to the excellent care, guidance and support you receive from Mrs Spencer, the teachers and support staff, and to their good teaching. We saw how much the staff enjoy teaching you and how much you enjoy your lessons and all the other interesting activities the school provides for you. Broad Square is a good school to belong to whether you find learning easy or difficult, because the teachers plan work for you at the right level.

More than most children of your age, you have had to think carefully about staying safe and helping to support each other and we believe this has made you stronger and better prepared for the world.

Please accept our congratulations for what you have achieved. You have helped make Broad Square the good school it is. Can the school be better? We think it can. We noticed that you do not learn quite as fast in Key Stage 1 as you do in Key Stage 2 and we have asked the school to see if learning can be speeded up in Years 1 and 2. We understand that your learning about communities has been mainly about helping the school and its local community become strong. When this is achieved, we think you should then learn more about all the different cultures and races in Liverpool and the United Kingdom.

You have our very best wishes for the future.