

Brooklands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100148
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	323233
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	June Woolhouse

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)	237
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 Geraldine Harris
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Medebourne Close Casterbridge Road London SE3 9AB
Telephone number	020 8852 8210
Fax number	020 8852 1314

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brooklands is a popular and over-subscribed primary school which includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for three- to five-year-olds. It is ethnically and culturally diverse, with a few pupils at the earliest stages of learning English as an additional language. It is similar in size to most schools of its type but has a smaller than average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly in speech and language, is similar to national figures. The school has a number of awards including Healthy School accreditation and Activemark. There is on-site provision for four- to eleven-year-olds before school and extended school provision for four- to eleven-year-olds after school, neither of which is managed by the governing body.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Leadership and management are inadequate because the actions of senior leaders to tackle weaknesses in the school's performance have been neither coordinated nor decisive. In their self-evaluation, leaders judged the school's overall effectiveness to be good, but this is not supported by inspection evidence. There are some areas of effective practice, notably the Nursery and one class in Key Stage 2. However, because there is a lack of common direction and purpose from senior leaders, this does not extend to all classes. A minority of parents expressed their concerns to inspectors about how the school is led and managed and its impact on their children's progress. Leaders are unable to demonstrate that they understand the procedures that must be put in place urgently to prevent and rectify underachievement. The school's capacity to secure improvement is, therefore, inadequate. Inspectors also drew the school's attention to its failure to meet all the current government requirements relating to safeguarding, for example confirming which, if any, members of the Governing Body require Criminal Records Bureau checks and ensuring that where necessary external doors and gates are securely locked. Action to tackle these weaknesses is an urgent priority.

There has been a sharp decline in standards and a downward trend in pupils' performance. Over the past three years standards have fallen from being exceptionally high to broadly average. Although the latest evidence shows some improvement, it also shows that many pupils who achieved well by the end of Year 2 do not make the progress, and reach the levels they should by the end of Year 6. Many pupils, in all year groups, do not make enough progress year on year, and consequently underachieve. Achievement is inadequate overall. Provision is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage and children are working at a good level of development by the end of the Reception year. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in the Nursery class, from their starting points. Their personal development is good.

Pupils do not make sufficient progress because teaching is inadequate in Years 1 to 6. While there is some good teaching, there is not enough to eliminate underachievement and ensure that pupils reach the standards they should. Teachers do not assess pupils' work accurately or plan lessons that challenge them to move to the next level. Teaching does not meet the needs of all groups of learners, especially the more-able pupils, girls in Key Stage 1, those learning to speak English as an additional language and those born in the summer months.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Behaviour is satisfactory. When pupils are enthused by their learning they behave particularly well and contribute positively to lessons. They have a good understanding of how to live healthily and keep safe and are involved in musical activities in their community. They develop important life skills of co-operation and reflection in group discussions. Clubs enhance the satisfactory curriculum. Pastoral care is satisfactory but academic guidance and support are inadequate. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment, tracking their progress and setting challenging targets for improvement are not sufficiently robust or understood. Pupils' achievement suffers as a result.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery class. Children start with skills that are expected for their ages, make satisfactory progress and are working at a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Effective induction procedures and the involvement of parents ensure that children settle quickly. Good resources, planning that caters well for children's needs and sensitive involvement by adults promote good attitudes to learning. Children in the Nursery class have time to explore and investigate a rich selection of activities, inside and out of doors. They are given time to practise and repeat skills, for example pouring and mixing paints before they use them on paper as well as their hands! Their personal development is good because excellent welfare procedures are in place and they feel safe and confident with adults and each other. Careful assessments contribute well to their good progress. The Reception class is situated in the main building and there is restricted access to outside areas. Children have satisfactory opportunities to explore and investigate within all six areas of learning but these are not routinely available outside. Although adults are directly involved in children's learning, they do not circulate among children to question and enhance their thinking during their spontaneous play. Children are taught literacy and numeracy skills in a satisfactory and systematic way. Their personal development is good and they show good levels of independence and social awareness. Leadership and management are satisfactory, but the national Early Years Foundation Stage guidance is not used sufficiently well to assess children's levels of development, especially when they enter each class.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and accelerate the progress made by all pupils and in particular the more able, girls in Key Stage 1, those at an early stage of learning to speak English and those born in the summer months.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, as a matter of urgency, through sharply focused school development planning based on accurate self-evaluation, so that there is a clear direction for the school.
- Improve teaching and learning by establishing consistent planning, accurate assessment and the setting of challenging targets.
- Improve systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and guiding and supporting their academic learning, so that all teachers and leaders have a clear understanding, and a long-term view, of what all pupils are capable of achieving.
- Ensure that the school complies fully with current government requirements for safeguarding.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The secure start made in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not being built on successfully. Although progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, in Key Stage 2 it is inadequate, and not enough pupils reach the higher levels in national tests. This is because planning and teaching do not identify and challenge those who find learning easy, girls in Key Stage 1, or groups who need additional support, such as those learning to speak English as an additional language or those born in the summer months. Standards at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated between average and above, over the last few years. At the end of Year 6, standards have fallen sharply from exceptionally high to average, and below in English. Although standards and achievement were

higher in science than in English and mathematics, not enough has been done to reverse the general decline. The school did not achieve many of its end of Key Stage 2 targets in 2008.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from satisfactory support in small groups and in class, and as a result make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy many aspects of school life and attendance is average. In lessons, most pupils show positive attitudes but when the teaching does not cater for all their needs, a minority loses concentration and private conversations begin. Many pupils behave well and show respect for each other's views. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' personal development are satisfactory, but there are missed opportunities for improved cultural and spiritual understanding because of inconsistent curriculum planning. There is an articulate school council which readily points out the school's strengths and shortcomings. In discussion, pupils are adamant that there is no bullying to concern them, notwithstanding the comments of a small number of parents. Pupils believe that they are all treated equally. They value school clubs and residential trips. These contribute well to their personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching has not been effective enough over time to guarantee the rates of progress expected of all pupils. Many pupils continue to underachieve. Teachers' planning does not take account of test results or other assessment information to ensure that work is matched to pupils' abilities. Furthermore, assessment is not sufficiently accurate and lessons do not consistently demand enough of more-able pupils. Presentation is not as good as it should be. Work in books indicates that tasks are similar for all pupils, regardless of ability. Marking does not guide pupils on how to improve or what their next challenge should be. For those who find school work easy, there is little challenge. Teaching assistants and other adults are not used effectively to support learners and they are not clear about the precise nature of the support they are expected to provide. However, support for the pupils with learning difficulties is planned with greater clarity, which results in this small group of pupils making satisfactory progress. Some good teaching seen was characterised by clear instruction, probing questions and challenging tasks. In these lessons, pupils had time to explain their thinking in small groups. However, there is too little teaching of this quality to ensure that pupils make the rapid progress needed for them to reach the high standards of which they are capable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides a range of learning opportunities that promotes pupils' personal development in a satisfactory way. A good programme of activities helps them to develop a healthy lifestyle and has resulted in the Healthy School accreditation. Pupils understand how to stay safe and are considerate towards each other at playtimes. The pupils are not reaching the standards they should in English and mathematics, because curriculum plans do not ensure continuity of skills and knowledge in these subjects. Nevertheless, they receive specialist teaching of a broad curriculum in dance, music and physical education, which they enjoy. Pupils

are also taught games, gymnastics, and swimming and the school has been awarded the Activemark. Work is in progress to develop a more creative curriculum which links subjects through a number of themes; this is near completion.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Although care, guidance and support are inadequate overall, pastoral care is satisfactory. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements, but other safeguarding requirements need urgent attention. Nevertheless, pupils say they feel safe and cared for. There are too many inconsistencies in the way pupils are guided in their learning. Systems for monitoring the progress of pupils are at a very early stage of development, and teachers do not have a long-term view of what pupils are capable of achieving. The more-able pupils are frequently not identified and, as a result, are not challenged and underachieve. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are not systematically identified, and little support is put in place to enable them to achieve as well as they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

There has been unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. Senior leaders have not been able to halt the decline in standards and achievement over the last three years. They have not provided a vision for the school that is shared by all. This has led to divided loyalties and conflict among staff and governors and in some cases, low morale. Self-evaluation is weak and has not identified the key priorities for school development. As a result, the school has been too generous with its evaluation of its effectiveness. Systems for monitoring teaching are not sharp enough and do not identify the weaknesses that need improving most. Senior managers' responsibilities are not clearly linked to school improvement. There are no subject leaders and precisely who has responsibility for coordinating and implementing the latest developments and guidance is unclear. Strategic target setting has not been challenging enough. Consequently, the expectations of the senior leaders and staff are unclear and the pace of improvement too slow.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are committed to the school, and have challenged senior leaders about its performance. They are aware of the school's underperformance and have fully accepted the urgent need to meet all the current government requirements relating to safeguarding. They have supported the headteacher in working with other providers to set up before- and after-school provision. Nevertheless, given the decline in standards, in achievement and in the effectiveness of the teaching, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money, and does not demonstrate the capacity to improve.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	4
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brooklands Primary School, London, SE3 9AB

Thank you for helping us when we came to inspect your school. Your school is not performing well enough at the moment. There are some important things that need speedy actions to get it back to being a successful school again. Some other inspectors will be coming in a few months to see how your school is improving. I expect they would like to talk to you too, to find out your views about how well you are doing.

You enjoy many aspects of school life, particularly the broad curriculum in art, music and physical education. You value clubs and residential trips. These, and your good understanding of how to live healthily and keep safe, contribute well to your personal development. You behave well in many lessons. Sometimes some of you find it difficult to keep your concentration when tasks are too easy. We have asked the teachers to expect much more of you and to plan lessons that make you think hard and help you to make faster progress and reach higher standards. We also want them to keep track of how well you are doing, mark your work with comments that tell you what to do next and set you quite hard targets when you get things right. In order to bring rapid improvements, the senior leaders must make a plan of the actions they are going to take.

We hope that the school will improve quickly and that you do as well as you can.

Yours faithfully

June Woolhouse

Lead Inspector