

Brooklands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100148
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	342815
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Madlin Sadler
Headteacher	Mary Whitehead (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2009
School address	Medebourne Close Casterbridge Road London SE3 9AB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

The inspectors observed 11 teachers during parts of 16 lessons. Formal discussions were held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, members of the parent council, separate groups of teachers, support staff and senior leaders, the link adviser from the local authority and three groups of pupils. A range of documentation was scrutinised including action plans, policies and reports. Pupils' work in books and on display was also examined.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the progress made since the last monitoring inspection towards addressing the key issues identified in the inspection in January 2009:

- raise standards and accelerate the progress made by all pupils, 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.

Information about the school

Brooklands is a one-form-entry primary school located in a culturally and socially diverse community where an average proportion of pupils speak languages other than English at home. A few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. A small minority of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average and is reducing. The school has a nursery for children from the age of three years with places for up to 25 children for each of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Since March 2009, the school has worked in partnership with a local primary school, a few miles away. The headteacher of this school is the interim headteacher of Brooklands, but is currently recuperating from an illness, and for most of this term both schools in the partnership have been led by an executive headteacher who is employed by the local authority.

In January 2009 the school was placed in special measures. Since that time, in addition to a change in headteacher, there have been changes to the membership of the governing body including a new Chair of the Governing Body. The school appointed a part-time inclusion leader as part of the senior leadership team. Other appointments to

the senior team include a phase leader for Key Stage 1 and a learning leader, whose post is currently funded by the local authority. Two new teachers and two new assistants have been appointed to the staff.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Over the past year the school has been on a journey of rapid improvement. This has been possible because of two important things; firstly, the determination, dedication and hard work of the staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils. Together they enabled the school, right from the early days of being in special measures, to take on board the findings from the inspection, look long and hard at the most important things, and to get on with what needed to be done. Secondly, the local authority facilitated the right level of support at the right time and by the right people, enabling the school to remain in control of the actions that needed to be taken. This includes changes made to senior leadership and establishing the partnership with a local primary school. This rapid improvement is exemplified by the fact that all aspects of the school's work are now at least satisfactory, including the academic and personal outcomes for the pupils. In addition, the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage has remained of good quality and has continued to improve.

Having said that all aspects of the school's work are satisfactory, this is not the whole story because the work is securely satisfactory and increasingly showing signs of good practice. But they are not quite there yet. For example, currently, the curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for systematically developing pupils' awareness of their multicultural community, their information and communication technology (ICT) skills and for them to play a greater part within the local and wider community. In addition, opportunities to improve writing skills and for more collaborative learning are not yet sufficiently well planned through the full range of subjects. Nevertheless, changes to the curriculum are now underway, in tandem with the redefined roles and responsibilities of subject leaders. Similarly, the quality of teaching has improved because lessons are planned according to sound principles. But some inconsistencies remain, particularly in relation to the opportunities for pupils to be more involved in the assessment of their learning.

The governing body has quite rightly refocused its challenge to the school on pupils' attainment and to channelling resources to where they are most needed. This governors do well. Broader aspects of their responsibilities, such as safeguarding, equal opportunities and community cohesion, previously judged to be inadequate, are now securely based on sound practice and all statutory requirements are met. While action plans across the school make suitable reference to academic attainment, less attention is given to measurable features for pupils' personal development. In addition, success criteria do not always make clear the specific difference that the initiatives will make for

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the pupils. The new initiatives are gaining momentum but there has not yet been sufficient time for the policies and practice to be evaluated in relation to sustained improvement. This is why judgements for provision and leadership and management are satisfactory rather than good at this time. Nevertheless, the governors, the interim headteacher and the executive headteacher have high aspirations for their school to be outstanding. The good progress made in a relatively short period of time, successfully reversing the catalogue of inadequacies, demonstrates that the school has good capacity to make the required improvements to reach their ambitions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- While maintaining their high expectations for improvement, leaders and managers at all levels should ensure that:
 - action plans and monitoring activities are reasonably paced to allow time for policies and practices to be evaluated and embedded
 - in addition to measurable targets for raising attainment, the success criteria to evaluate impact of actions are soundly based on good primary practice for all areas of pupils' development.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers' marking and feedback are more clearly linked to pupils' individual targets or to the learning questions
 - pupils respond to the written feedback that they get from teachers' marking of their work
 - pupils have more opportunities to develop higher-order thinking skills for solving problems and collaborative work.
- When revising the curriculum, ensure that sufficient opportunities are planned for pupils to demonstrate the following skills:
 - a breadth of understanding and appreciation of the richness of multicultural diversity reflective of local, national and global perspectives
 - a more ambitious contribution to the community by taking greater initiative and responsibility within a broad range of community contexts
 - extended pieces of writing that have a clear purpose across a range of subject areas
 - collaborative working within the classroom
 - developing pupils' ICT skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Visitors to the school cannot fail to be impressed by pupils' good behaviour, their ability to debate and the pride that the pupils have in their school. In the past, pupils have not been given sufficient opportunities to show what they are capable of and to make the

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most of their considerable talents. The well-developed personal skills developed within the Early Years Foundation Stage had not been built-upon effectively. It is still the case, although to a lesser extent now, that there is more that pupils could contribute to their school, their immediate local community and the wider world. This includes the extent to which pupils are involved in collaborative aspects of learning and assessment. Aspects of pupils' understanding of the richness of our multicultural society, although satisfactory, are not well developed.

In 2009, pupils at the end of both key stages reached standards significantly above those seen nationally for English overall, mathematics and science. Although broadly average, attainment in writing lags behind across the age range. Having declined in 2007 and 2008, the progress made by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009 was good. The proportion of those reaching Level 5 increased significantly. Over the past two terms, most pupils reached their targets, indicating that actions taken have successfully addressed underachievement across all year groups. Within this, there is less progress for those who are eligible for free school meals and for all pupils in writing across the school. However, it is noticeable that pupils see themselves as writers, as seen in a Year 1 lesson where they wrote confidently and enthusiastically about their favourite day of the week. It is also clear that the presentation of work in pupils' books, including cursive handwriting, is much improved this term.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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How effective is the provision?

As a result of improved lesson plans, which focus securely on what different groups of pupils will learn, the decline in academic attainment was quickly halted, particularly for literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 2 and for pupils who are most able. This happened because teachers were given the clear guidance that they needed to refocus their teaching plans on raising attainment. Lessons now enable pupils to be more aware of what they are learning and why they are learning it, but they are not always given sufficient opportunities to show how well they understand what they learn. Similarly, marking of work is not always best used to help pupils know how well they are doing and what to do next. Planned opportunities to use and develop ICT as a learning tool are not yet well thought through. In addition, opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces with a meaningful purpose are starting to improve writing skills, but this is not yet consolidated throughout the curriculum. This is partly because an appropriate focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills has meant less priority for other subjects. Nevertheless, the curriculum has been audited and plans are in place to make sure that things already working well are built upon effectively, such as themed weeks and the use of specialist teachers for some of the music and drama lessons.

Guidance and support in classrooms have improved as a result of additional training for teaching assistants and better lesson planning by teachers. This, together with more robust systems to assess and track pupils' attainment, means that there is a clearer understanding of the important difference between those pupils with special educational needs and those who may be underachieving. Targets for individual pupils are suitably challenging within a revised framework for expected progress, which acknowledge the necessary higher aspirations for pupils, most of who attain highly by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Recent developments to the tracking system now enable analysis of the relative progress of different groups of pupils. As a result, rates of progress have accelerated, meaning less underachievement and more appropriate support for those who need extra help with their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

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Leadership and management have been strengthened at all levels over the past year. This has made the rapid pace of change possible. Senior school leaders, managers and governors have risen to the challenge of their revised roles and responsibilities. They have made good use of support from local authority advisers and from colleagues at the partner primary school. The priorities for improvement are the right ones and the challenge presented by the governing body leaves no room for complacency. Early signs of improvement are evident, such as the improved rates of pupils' progress over the past two terms. Appropriate plans are in place for further improvement, particularly in relation to raising academic attainment. Self-evaluation is accurate and securely based on a robust set of information.

The key to improved confidence among staff and governors is the way that leaders and managers now identify and tackle weaknesses. They suggest ways forward having carefully researched the possibilities, then provide relevant training and support before actions are implemented. This is exemplified by the establishment of a parent council and establishing a framework for assessing and tracking attainment in a range of National Curriculum subjects. Policies that reflect broader aspects of safeguarding pupils and promoting a cohesive community have been established but their effectiveness is yet to be evaluated and their place within the curriculum not yet sufficiently detailed. The work of the phase leaders is now well established and successfully driving improvement through shared professional dialogue and decision making. The work of subject leaders is at an early stage. Now that most pupils are making the progress that they should, inequality of opportunity has been successfully addressed. So, having lost their way in recent years, staff and governors have embraced the changes wholeheartedly and in unison, they have grown in confidence and are well placed to move forward with confidence to improve the effectiveness of their school further.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage staff have been completely involved in the priorities for whole school improvements over the past year. Alongside this, good leadership of a stable group of well-trained staff has ensured that the provision and outcomes for this key stage have continued to improve. This is particularly the case in relation to assessment. Lesson plans are regularly revised in the light of what staff have learned about how well children respond to the activities on offer. This in turn leads to a richer range of assessments to inform attainment and progress. In addition, children's families are informed about what staff are looking for each week on a particular aspect of learning and are invited to write down what their child can do at home in that respect. Children attain highly in most areas of the curriculum and this represents good progress from a range of different starting points on admission. There are some weaker areas of number work, but in general children are well prepared for Key Stage 1 provision. In the Nursery, children learn to get along well with one another from an early age. A carefully planned series of activities are not only framed around what staff find out about children's interests but also to encourage children to try new things. This was demonstrated during a morning session that culminated in all the children sitting together sharing the porridge that some had made, with the bananas that they had chopped up by themselves. In the Reception class, children develop confidence in sounding out words and writing them down, as was shown in their ability to research information from reference books and write labels about parts of a worm.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. However, the school recently commissioned an independent company to canvas the views of parents and carers. Results from their survey, responded to by approximately one third of parents and carers, generally reflect the findings from this inspection and sit well with the things that the school has already

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identified as priority areas. Discussions with parents and carers indicate that they want to know, as a matter of increasing urgency, about whether or not the partnership with a local school will continue and this is a reasonable request given the amount of time that has passed since the temporary arrangement was put in place.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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12 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brooklands Primary School, London SE3 9AB

It is with great pleasure that I write to tell you that your school no longer requires special measures because it is now giving you a satisfactory standard of education. Not only that ' things are getting better all the time.

I know that you have been fully involved in talking with staff about the things that needed to improve after the inspection in January 2009. I also know that over the past year you have played your part well. You can be quite rightly proud of your school and the good work that pupils and their families have done towards this improvement. Mrs Whitehead, Mr Carpenter and Mrs Sadler have worked very hard to lead the school forward and have made these improvements in quite a short period of time.

The right things are now in place for the school to improve further and I have asked them to think about the following things that should help.

- Senior staff and governors should make sure that their plans look at your personal skills as well as your academic achievements.
- Ensure that you make good progress in all lessons by involving you more in what you are learning, including marking your work so that you know how well you have done towards the learning questions and your personal targets.
- Include more opportunities in all subjects for you to develop a greater understanding of what it means to live in a multicultural society, how to play a greater part in school and community life, have more responsibilities and make better use of your ICT skills.

I know that you will continue to help with the further work that needs to be done and that your actions, together with those of staff and governors, can make your school even better. You can find more details of the judgements that we made in my report and I hope that some of you will read it in full yourselves, or with the help of your families.

Thank you for all the kindness and views that you have given to the inspectors and me on our three visits. We all wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector

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