



Brindishe Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100717
Local Authority Lewisham
Inspection number 285857
Inspection date 29 November 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wantage Road
School category	Community		Lee Green
Age range of pupils	3-11		London SE12 8NA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8318 4626
Number on roll (school)	245	Fax number	020 8297 2761
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr S Elia
		Headteacher	Ms V Paterson
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Brindishe is an average sized primary school which serves an area of wide social and cultural diversity. There are 18 different ethnic groups within the school. The largest of these is the pupils of White British heritage, who comprise almost half of the number on roll. About a tenth of all pupils are at an early stage of learning to communicate in English. Almost a fifth of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school's high quality provision for the arts and the promotion of physical activity has been recognised through the Gold Artsmark and Activemark awards. The school is fully subscribed, and the premises are overcrowded.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Brindishe Primary provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their extremely positive views are entirely justified. One parent summed up the views of many when writing, 'My children are wonderfully happy, settled and stimulated. I can't imagine anywhere better than Brindishe!'

The key to the school's success is its relentless focus on developing its pupils as confident, caring, independent and thoughtful learners. The term 'a Brindishe Child', exemplifying these qualities, is part of the school's vocabulary and needs no further explanation to members of its community.

Children are given an excellent start to their education in the Foundation Stage classes. When they start in the Nursery, children typically have levels of skills that are broadly in line with those expected at this age. The exception is their ability to communicate clearly. The school has noticed a decline in children's skills in speaking and listening in recent years, and these are at a lower level than expected for their age. Pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding outstandingly well during their time at the school. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently high. The school's high expectations for all of its pupils in all areas of learning are evident, for example, in the quality of art work produced and the excellent standard of singing. Pupils' outstanding progress is the result of high quality of teaching, the wide range of stimulating and exciting activities and the close and rigorous monitoring of their performance.

A further important factor in the school's success is the excellent climate for learning evident in all classes. This stems from the outstanding personal development of the pupils. Their impeccable behaviour and real desire to learn help the school successfully to meet the challenges presented by the very cramped classroom accommodation. Pupils work effectively in a variety of small areas without the need for constant supervision. The limited indoor and outdoor facilities hamper some aspects of the school's work. For example, the school is aware of the need to further improve its already successful transition from Reception to Year 1. It has identified that, when they start in Year 1, some children would benefit from continued access to the intensely practical learning that is so successful in the Foundation Stage. In addition, older pupils lack opportunities for outdoor learning.

The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is another of the school's many excellent features appreciated by the pupils. 'People here care, and every time we come to school we feel safe,' typifies the sort of remarks made by pupils when asked to give examples of what they valued most about the school.

The driving force behind the school's success is the very high quality of leadership at all levels. In particular, the headteacher gives outstanding direction for the work of the school. She receives excellent support from the committed and highly professional staff and governors. Under her dynamic leadership, the team of staff and governors ensures that this is not a school that rests on its laurels, but is constantly looking for

ways to improve even more. The way it has maintained high standards is a clear indication of its outstanding capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the indoor accommodation and extend outdoor provision to enhance pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The achievement of pupils is excellent, and standards are high. All pupils, regardless of gender or ethnicity, make excellent progress.

When children move from Reception to Year 1, their attainment is typically above average. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average and continue to rise as pupils move through the school to Year 6. For a number of years, the performance of Year 6 pupils in the national tests has been within or very close to the top ten percent of all schools nationally. The school's exceptional performance stems from the culture for learning that is a feature of all classes. In addition, any dips in attainment are quickly identified and rigorous action is taken to remedy the slightest weakness. The screening of pupils' spelling in Years 2 to 6 showed that there were areas for improvement in Year 2. This evaluation was quickly followed by action, including staff training, a review of the way in which teaching could be improved, and additional writing opportunities. The outcome of these actions was that, when pupils were assessed at the end of the school year, almost all attained the level expected for seven-year-olds in writing, and forty per cent exceeded this level.

In 2006, the school met the challenging targets for its performance in the national tests for Year 6. The current group of pupils is on course to meet equally challenging targets in 2007.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins all aspects of school life. Particularly noteworthy is the excellent social development of pupils. For example, the work of the school council gives pupils first-hand experiences of democracy in action. All councillors are elected by their class-mates, take their responsibilities very seriously, and typify the 'Brindishe Child'. They are bright and articulate, and extremely proud of the school. As part of their work, they liaise with the Friends of Brindishe Association to take part in fundraising activities. They show prospective parents around the school, and have reported to the governors to help keep them informed.

Attendance rates are consistently above or well above the national average, and illustrate pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes towards their school. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. When asked what they valued about the school,

one pupil from Year 6 explained, 'We come from different cultures and all blend in very well here. We respect one another.' Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase of their education and for a future as life-long learners. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, know how to keep safe, and have high levels of competence in basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The school's view that teaching and learning are very good or better was confirmed by the inspection. Teachers are extremely skilled practitioners, and a third have 'Advanced Skills Teacher' status.

Particularly noteworthy features of lessons are the attention and enjoyment shown by all pupils. This occurs because teachers are very good at making their lessons interesting. They know their pupils' learning needs very well. As a result, they pitch work at different levels or present it in different ways so that pupils of all abilities are given achievable challenges. Skilled classroom assistants work well in partnership with teachers and give good quality help to pupils.

Staff are good at sharing their expertise. The regular movement of teachers between year groups helps to give them a very good understanding of how pupils develop as learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provided for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is first-rate. Children busy themselves with a very good range of interesting activities designed to develop all the areas of learning required for the Foundation Stage. A particularly good feature is the focus on developing children's skills in communication. During an activity in which children looked at what was happening to lumps of ice as they floated in a water tray, the teacher skilfully developed the children's experience by sustaining a constant dialogue. By doing this, she helped them to learn and use new words.

One of the many features that contribute towards the excellent curriculum is the wide range of extra activities provided to enrich pupils' education. There are 17 clubs outside the school day run by professional coaches or school staff. Pupils thrive on the opportunities provided for public performances. For example, the school choir is preparing for a 'Turning of the Year' concert for schools from Greenwich and Lewisham.

The accommodation is extremely cramped. The school's success in promoting the high quality of pupils' personal development enables it to cope particularly well in these difficult circumstances. Pupils' ability to work responsibly and independently means that all other available areas can be constantly in use as overspill accommodation. To address this barrier to learning, the school has been creative in finding some space.

For example, good use is made of the former premises officer's house, known as 'The Lodge'. This is used for instrumental tuition and for mathematics lessons for groups of gifted and talented pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school now has ambitious plans to develop a high-quality outdoor area for learning and recreation.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides excellent pastoral care for its pupils. The procedures to ensure their safety and well-being are rigorous. The quality of academic guidance given to pupils is also excellent. This is based on secure assessment. To ensure this, the school's portfolios of pupils' work provide clear reference points for teachers whenever they need to check accuracy of their judgements. Pupils' progress is constantly monitored. They are given clear targets to achieve, and know precisely what they need to do next to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The performance and evaluation team, comprising the headteacher and senior members of staff, ensures that the effectiveness of the school is constantly reviewed and action taken whenever needed. The outstanding governors are well informed and successfully fulfil their role as critical friends. Throughout the school, there is a strong sense of teamwork, and an exceptionally good commitment to continuous improvement shown by managers at all levels. The school's very good response to the single issue from its previous inspection, which related to the premises, has resulted in some new building. The governing body is active in trying to attract further funding for new projects.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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 behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Thank you for helping me so much when I came to inspect your school to find out how well you are getting on. I particularly enjoyed looking at your work and talking to some of you during your lessons and at break time. I would also like to say an extra 'thank you' to the school council, who showed me just how special Brindishe children are. I agree with your parents that you go to an outstanding school.

There is so much I like about your school that I can't mention everything, so here is a list of what I think are the most important things.

- You do really well in your work, and when you leave school at the end of Year 6 your results are often among the best in the country. You should be very proud of this.
- Everyone in your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave exceptionally well and get on really well with each other.
- You learn a lot in lessons because the teaching you are given is excellent.
- The school is very good at organising lots of interesting things for you to do.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- Your headteacher and all of the other people who help run your school do an excellent job and make sure that you get the very best education.

I would also like to let you know that I really enjoyed hearing you sing in assembly and listening to the choir after school. I liked looking at your art work, and some of the pictures I saw were really great.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this I think that the most important thing to do next is to try and make even more space for you to learn in, because you don't have enough room at present. The school has already got a plan to make your outdoor areas even better, and I think that this is a good idea.

I am sure that you will continue to have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Thompson.

Lead Inspector