



Brookhurst Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105018
Local Authority Wirral
Inspection number 287093
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Madeley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brookhurst Road
School category	Community		Bromborough, Wirral
Age range of pupils	4–11		Merseyside CH63 0EH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 3344348
Number on roll (school)	209	Fax number	0151 3348295
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	
		Headteacher	Mrs S Martin
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is a smaller than average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and they mostly live on an estate of owner-occupied housing. Parents of approximately one quarter of its pupils live outside this area and choose to send their children to the school. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. A below average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection the governors had not elected a chair or vice-chair.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which gives good value for money. Since the last inspection, good management has improved many aspects of school life and has raised standards in English, mathematics and science. Managers check all areas of provision. Their clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development contribute significantly to the school's good capacity to improve further. However, full account was not taken of all its strengths when, before the inspection, the school made judgements about its performance. The governing body fulfils its dual role of being supportive of the school and being its 'critical friend' well.

Children generally start the Reception year with attainment which is above national expectations. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps build children's confidence as well as enhancing their language and mathematical skills. Throughout the school, progress is good and pupils achieve well, because consistently good teaching is effective in meeting their needs. In the national tests, Year 6 pupils' results are well above average. Standards are exceptionally high. Pupils enjoy their lessons, have positive relationships with staff and are keen to answer teachers' questions. They know their individual learning targets and try hard to achieve them. Staff mostly use assessment information well to plan the next stage in pupils' learning, match tasks to their needs, and spot those who need additional support. However, the progress made by children in the Foundation Stage is not analysed thoroughly enough to quickly identify those who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Working in small groups in Years 5 and 6 for English and mathematics has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, because this allows staff to focus on individual pupils' needs more closely.

The curriculum for English, particularly reading - where parents play an important supporting role - and mathematics and science is very good. This helps pupils to do well in these key areas. Opportunities to enrich and broaden pupils' experience are not as strong as they could be and after-school clubs are connected solely with sports. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Through the school council, they have a say in how the school is run and they know that their views are listened to by staff. They are compassionate and often raise funds for charity. Good provision for health education and sport helps pupils know how to stay fit and well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enrich the curriculum and broaden the range of after-school clubs.
- Improve the use of assessment information in the Foundation Stage, to quickly identify children who may have additional learning needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

During the Reception year, children often make particularly good progress in their language skills. When they join Year 1, their attainment is generally above average.

Teachers' assessments indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are significantly above average. Pupils are challenged and they make good progress. Their reading skills are particularly strong. The school is aware that relative to these very high standards, mathematics scores are declining slightly from exceptionally high levels in 2002 and has put in place suitable measures to improve them.

Results in the Key Stage 2 national tests for English, mathematics and science are very high and have been rising steadily for the last five years. In 2006 pupils reached exceptionally high standards. All of them reached Level 4 in all three subjects and every pupil reached the higher Level 5 in reading. The pupils' results exceeded the school's very challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their happy faces and their above average attendance. They know simple ways to stay safe and can rely on the support of staff. One pupil remarked, 'If you have a problem they [staff] will always sort it out.' Pupils behave well and are both polite and well mannered. They get regular opportunities for quiet reflection in school, which contributes positively to their spiritual development. Pupils know about British history and culture but they have relatively little exposure to other cultures. This does not fully prepare them for living in a multicultural society. Pupils willingly take on a range of responsibilities. The school council is elected democratically, gets things done and is an effective voice for pupils' views of their school. Pupils work hard to raise funds for charities, often having fun themselves at the same time. They are very thoughtful about other children. For example, after raising money for playground equipment and books the school council decided that some of it should go to the local children's hospice.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and lessons are sometimes outstanding. The classroom is a place for learning in this school because staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils want to learn. Pupils know what they are expected to learn in lessons because teachers discuss this with them fully. Instructions are clear and precise and enable pupils to get started quickly on their tasks, which are well matched to their abilities. Pupils recall previous lessons and consolidate their learning, because teachers use questioning well and encourage pupils to explain their answers. Staff have made a good start at using new technology to enliven pupils' learning, though their experience across the school is variable. Learning in the Foundation Stage is well organised. Children play happily and yet are learning all the time. For instance,

they enthusiastically hook ducks from the 'pond' and identify the numerals on them, supporting both their mathematical and physical development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. However, the school recognises that whilst it covers the National Curriculum requirements it could do more to enrich the curriculum for its pupils. For instance, pupils had vivid recollections of their history visit to Croxteth Park but saw this as one of few special occasions which enlivened their learning. The use of specialist teachers for music is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and their enjoyment of school. A good range of sports clubs are offered and pupils regularly compete against those from other schools. They also benefit from some specialist teaching of physical education and specialist sports coaching. There is currently little provision for other interests, for instance choir, drama or art.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect is good and pupils are well cared for in this school. The vast majority of parents feel that their child is safe in school and the inspection agrees with their view. Provision for all aspects of pupils' welfare is good. For instance, the school makes effective use of the school nurse's skills to deliver health and sex education sessions. Parents find reports and consultation evenings informative, but pupils' reports do not give specific information on progress in religious education. However, parents are made aware of how well their children are learning and the targets they have been set, thus enabling them to help their child at home. Pupils understand their learning targets and work hard to achieve them. Teachers' marking tells pupils what they have done well but does not consistently indicate how they might improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's managers and the governing body lead the school well. They are sharply focused on maintaining very high standards and raising them further. They have been very successful in this over the last five years. Difficult financial judgements have had to be made as pupil numbers, and thus income, have fallen. The success of these decisions is seen in the maintenance of significantly above average standards in Key Stage 1 and the extremely high standards in Key Stage 2. The decision to finance smaller than average teaching groups in Years 5 and 6 has been instrumental in helping these pupils reach exceptionally high standards. Management ensures the smooth day to day running of the school and ensures that pupils are well cared for. Pupils' progress is checked rigorously by managers, though paper-based systems make it time-consuming to get an overview of each year group's progress. The majority of parents fully support the school and praise the work of the staff. The school works

hard to involve parents in its work and keep them informed about their children's education.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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

Thank you very much for making us so warmly welcome at your delightful school. We enjoyed listening to your views of the school, and those of your parents, and we used them when coming to our decisions. We agree with you that yours is a good school. The headteacher and governing body have done a good job for you. They have improved your school since the last inspection and helped make it the happy place it is. You are taught well by hard-working and experienced teachers. You work hard in your lessons and reach very high scores in the tests in Year 6. You behave well in lessons and play sensibly together in the playground.

Your school is good at providing opportunities which will help you grow as an individual. You demonstrate this by enjoying school and attending regularly. You learn to stay fit and healthy by taking part in regular exercise. For instance, the sports clubs are very well attended. There are not many schools in which the headteacher would join in the skipping at lunchtime! You know about road safety and other ways of staying safe. At lunchtime, you showed us how much you knew about healthy food choices.

Even schools that are doing well, like yours, need to continue to improve. To make your school an even better place in which to learn, we have asked the headteacher to do these things:

- identify early any children who might need additional support
- make subjects really interesting and exciting
- provide additional after-school clubs which are not related to sports.

You can play your part in improving your school by continuing to come to school ready and eager to learn.