

# Brookhill Nursery School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101251
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	307627
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs June Last
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lisa Clarke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 April 2002
<b>School address</b>	Brookhill Road East Barnet Barnet EN4 8SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8449 0601
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8441 7367

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-5
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	307627

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas.

- The quality and range of assessments carried out by staff to help track the performance and progress of the children.
- The improvements made since the school's last inspection to information and communication technology (ICT).
- The consistency of the teaching and activities provided throughout the Nursery, both indoors and outdoors.

He gathered evidence from parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with two governors, children, staff and a local authority adviser. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Brookhill Nursery is located in a mixed area of private and social housing, although a quarter of the children receive a free school meal. It admits three-year-olds mainly in September and January. Up to 24 full-time places are offered to families and the rest of the children are part-time. The children come from a wide range of backgrounds that represent the ethnic and cultural diversity of the local area. Just over half are of White British heritage and other children are from a wide range of backgrounds that include Black African, European, Asian and children of mixed heritage. A quarter of the children are learning English as an additional language. A small number of children who join the school have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school is staffed by teachers, nursery nurses, teaching assistants and a meal time supervisor. The headteacher joined the school in September 2007.

## 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 nursery school with many outstanding features. The children achieve well and mature into confident and extremely well behaved young people. They treat other children and adults with respect and courtesy. The school provides a good foundation for the children's future education. Regardless of background or ability, the children achieve well and develop excellent personal qualities.

Leadership and governance are good. In a very short time since joining the school, the headteacher has provided strong leadership and has earned the respect of her colleagues, parents and the children. Many parents pay tribute to the excellent communication and warm relationships that exist between families and staff. 'The teachers and assistants are always kind and respectful to the children', and 'My son enjoys nursery and looks forward to going in the morning. To me, this speaks volumes', are just two of many positive comments from parents and carers.

The large majority of children start with levels of knowledge and skills that are similar to those of most three-year-olds. Consistently good teaching and an excellent range of stimulating activities lead to a good pace of learning. This enables the children to move quickly towards the early learning goals expected for their age. Standards are above those expected by the time children leave as most are working comfortably within the foundation stage curriculum for four-year-olds.

The children's enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent attendance. It is easy to see why. As soon as they arrive each day, there is a warm welcome and the children are immediately attracted to the beautifully set out resources and work areas. They are eager to get started as they hang up their coats, 'Let's have look', says one, and holding the hand of a younger new arrival, escorts her around the nursery, discussing what is happening or what others are doing. They see children dress up as story characters, encouraging them to join in. 'I am a princess', one child says, and then goes to the writing area to write an invitation to a birthday party. Another child becomes the 'postman,' collecting the invitations, checking that they have right address on the envelope before popping them into the post box next to the role-play post office. Children congregating around the water tray ask why there are many toy boats. The mysteries of the day ahead begin to unfold as they explore further. After they are settled or tire of one activity, many choose to read a book or work with their friends in one of many role-play areas.

There has been very good progress since the last inspection in improving information and communication technology (ICT). Children use computers, digital cameras and recorders independently. They often take photographs of others and then discuss their pictures, as during an excellent session for those in the early stages of learning English, which helped them to improve their conversational English. A group used a computer to negotiate how best to manoeuvre an object up a series of ladders and platforms labelled as numbers between zero and ten, 'That's hard, are you sure you can do that?' asks one, while his classmate explains, 'You're right, it is, but look! You can get to five before seven, and then make a big jump up to nine'. Another group programmed robots to knock down numbered skittles helping the children to count out which were left standing.

The staff plan an excellent curriculum that stimulates curiosity and a thirst for learning. There is so much to do that the children are engrossed. One child happily rubbed paint all over her

arm and described how the textures felt. The science table is used very well to explore materials as children sort which ones magnets attract. Outdoor areas are used very well for active learning, even when it is raining, children eagerly put on their 'wellies' and jump about in puddles. The more adventurous plan their expedition to foreign lands as they pour over special pirate maps, before planning where to look for hidden treasure in the sand tray. Physical development is rapid and there are many opportunities for children to climb, balance and ride vehicles. Activities are challenging, such as the unusual 'ped-a-rollers', aptly described as 'caterpillars', as children skilfully coordinate each foot and adapt their body shape to steer the vehicle.

The staff are well trained to assess the children's performance. For example, as one group explored printing techniques, an adult noted their coordination, dexterity and knowledge of colours and shapes. Evaluations of the children on entry provide useful information about the children's capabilities but are not precise enough for the staff to measure the rate of children's progress in relation to their starting points.

The talented staff team ensure that the children work and play in a safe environment. Adults ensure that children are all engaged although some tend to stay on one activity for too long or dip into activities. Children feel special because their efforts are valued, and their work beautifully displayed. Racial harmony and relationships in this culturally diverse community are excellent, as is children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about the wider world through a wealth of experiences such as African art, stories and music, and when celebrating festivals from different cultures around the world, such as the recent festival of Divali. Children are fully aware of healthy food and the importance of exercise. They regularly eat fruit and enjoy naming even the most unusual, with one charming description of a 'pomegrabbit' (pomegranate). Children learn about caring for their environment when using re-cycled materials. They appreciate that they can contribute to the wider community through charitable fund-raising or when observing the natural world during Autumn or Spring walks.

Records of children's progress are monitored although the leadership team and staff do not link their assessments to systematic target setting, especially for more able children. Consequently, there is scope to improve standards further as the school is not always setting challenging targets for children of higher ability.

The school has accurately assessed its effectiveness and has been modest in some areas, reflecting the high expectations the staff set themselves and the very clear direction which all share. There are excellent partnerships with parents and other schools. Curriculum evenings for parents provide a wide range of information and involve them in their children's experiences of school and learning. The headteacher and governors demonstrate that they have good capacity to improve standards further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is covered by the Overall Effectiveness section above.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve assessment systems to generate precise entry data about the children's knowledge and skills when they start school from which to measure their progress and performance.
- Establish more effective target setting to raise standards and to help the staff identify and measure the progress of more able children.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 the learners' needs?	2
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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

29 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Brookhill Nursery School, Barnet, EN4 8SD

I think you go to a good school. You were all so nice to me when I came to see you. There are lots for you to do and I can see why you love going to school so much. Your parents like the school as well and I know this because many have written to me to say so.

Well done to you and all your teachers, nursery nurses and helpers. I wish I could have stayed longer because it really is a fun place to be. You are so lucky to have such caring people all the time you are there. I really loved looking at your beautiful work and paintings, and thank you to everyone who wrote to me to invite me to a special party. I liked your pirate adventures outside very much and you were really clever when looking for treasure.

I have asked your teachers to keep checking your work so you can do even better. I have also asked them to make sure that you all have special targets to help them check that you are all doing as well as you can.

I wish you and your parents the very best and I am so pleased to have met you all, you were all great!

Thank you so much children.

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector