

Chalkhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101526
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	307722
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sir Alan Davies Kt
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Boyd
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2006
School address	Barnhill Road Wembley HA9 9YP
Telephone number	020 8904 4508
Fax number	020 8904 1227

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2007
Inspection number	307722

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chalkhill is a large primary school. The Nursery class provides part-time education for three-year-old children. Although situated in an advantaged ward of north London, the school serves an area of significant deprivation. Nearly all the pupils come from the immediate area and an increasing number belong to asylum or refugee families that are in temporary accommodation. A large number of pupils either join or leave the school at various times during the school year. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is very high compared with most schools. Just over 34% of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD), which is well above average. The large majority of pupils are from a number of black minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being of African or Caribbean heritage. The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and a high proportion are in the early stages of learning English. The school is being managed by a consultant headteacher who is temporarily in charge while the substantive headteacher is on leave through illness. The last inspection judged that the quality of education was inadequate and the school was given a notice to improve.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Chalkhill remains an ineffective school because it has not made sufficient progress since being given a notice to improve. Pupils are not achieving as well as they should because the teaching is inadequate. Standards are, and have been for a number of years, exceptionally low. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this 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.

The teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 are satisfactory. However, in other years pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are underachieving. There remains some inadequate teaching and too little that is of good quality. Most of the work provided in lessons is not pitched at the right level to meet the wide-ranging needs of all pupils. This is because teachers are not using assessments of pupils' performance well enough to plan their lessons or to set learning targets for pupils to aim towards.

The staff are committed and caring so that pupils are safe and enjoy school. However, pupils' academic guidance is inadequate because of weaknesses in assessment. Personal development and behaviour are satisfactory. The pupils have a good understanding of healthy living through the opportunities they have to take part in physical activities such as football, swimming, dance and gymnastics. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with many opportunities for them to reflect in assemblies and to support others. There is good racial harmony and relationships are positive. Pupils respect other cultures and customs such as the recent celebrations of Hanukkah in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is satisfactory with some good enrichment that includes visits and visitors as well as a good range of after school clubs.

Some parents have expressed support for the school, although a similar proportion has rightly indicated dissatisfaction with the progress their children are making. The support provided for pupils in the early stages of learning English is inconsistent. Consequently, those who need additional support, including pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are not making enough progress towards their individual targets.

The leadership team and staff work in challenging circumstances. Consequently, the local authority (LA) has provided a considerable amount of support in recent years aimed at raising standards. The substantive headteacher and staff used this support quite well to refine assessment systems. This helps managers to track pupils' performance, including those who join the school at different times. Last year's national test results show that good teaching in Year 6 improved English standards but there remains inconsistent teaching and assessment in Years 1 to 4, so that the large majority of pupils are falling behind. The monitoring and evaluation of pupils' and teachers' performance have not focussed sharply enough on the most important priorities to deal effectively enough with underachievement. This has led to an inaccurate assessment of the school's performance so that leaders and governors do not demonstrate sufficient capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The children start with knowledge and skills that are well below those expected of three and four-year-olds. They make satisfactory progress even though the children do not reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception year. The children make good progress in their social and emotional development and satisfactory progress in language, literacy and mathematics. The staff are supportive and have established good relations with parents and carers. There is a good range of activities for children. They enjoy painting and using computers or interactive whiteboards to draw pictures or to recognise words, letters and numbers. They handle books well and share stories with others in role-play. The children explore the world around them, for example, when investigating how to make their kites fly on a windy day. Knowledgeable staff support the children well, although questioning and tasks do not always extend the children's thinking further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that teachers use assessment to plan work in lessons that is pitched at the right level for all pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and monitoring so that the most important priorities are focussed on eliminating weak teaching and underachievement.
- Provide the pupils with challenging targets that will help them understand the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards in English, mathematics and science are very low by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The majority of pupils make inadequate progress in relation to their low starting points. The high turnover of pupils makes it difficult to interpret national test results reliably. However, assessments indicate that too many make slow or no progress each year. This is most evident in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4, where there are significant weaknesses in teaching and assessment. Pupils' progress in science is also poor. Improvements to English test results in Year 6 last year reflect stronger teaching. The leadership has strengthened the teaching in Years 5 and 6, but the backlog of underachievement is too great to make up on the lost ground that pupils made in previous years. The increasing proportion of pupils joining the school with little or no English and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make inadequate progress, reflecting inconsistencies in the quality of support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are positive and behaviour is satisfactory, although pupils become restless when they are not being challenged in lessons. Pupils are aware of how to stay fit and healthy when participating enthusiastically in sports and healthy eating projects. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to stay safe and care for others, as one of the special 'blue caps' said, 'we help other children at break-times'. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on important spiritual and moral themes in assemblies. They enjoy expressing their appreciation of what the staff and others provide for them on the special 'thank you' board. Pupils feel valued and appreciated,

including celebrations of their work, for example, pupils in Year 6 spontaneously applauded the efforts of one child in a good mathematics lesson. Pupils play together well and maintain good friendships. They have a good understanding of other customs and faiths through the celebration of festivals. Weaknesses in the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics hampers their future education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The teaching is inconsistent resulting in patchy and inadequate rates of learning. Teachers usually share learning objectives with pupils but the tasks provided are not always challenging enough. In some lessons, expectations are too low because of a lack of understanding of the subject or because assessments are not being used to establish the right level of work. The quality of support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is inconsistent. In many lessons, over-long class discussions result in the pupils being too passive for long periods and behaviour deteriorates. In some good lessons, teachers use their marking and assessments well to provide challenging tasks. This is more evident in Years 5 and 6 as lessons build on what pupils have already learned to extend them further. However, this is not typical, as assessments are not being used to plan tasks that are matched closely enough to the needs of all pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers plan their work to ensure that pupils experience a balanced programme of all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, there are inconsistencies in the challenges presented so that many pupils do not get enough opportunities to write independently or to engage in problem solving and investigative work in mathematics and science. This slows their progress in reading, writing and mathematics and accounts for the inconsistent quality of pupils' recorded work. Pupils enjoy a good range of visits and visitors, including the involvement of resident artists and specialist teachers or consultants from other schools and organisations, as well as specialist football coaching and music tuition. These are successful in improving the pupils' personal, social and physical development. Music and the arts as well as a good range of sports and activities support pupils' cultural development. The staff are improving the school's satisfactory use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Procedures to safeguard pupils are well organised and effective. Pupils are provided with good pastoral support and care, including initiatives such as 'the place 2B' where those who find it difficult to settle or behave well can improve their social and emotional development. Many parents have expressed their confidence in the care and welfare provided for their children. A small but significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality and range of information they receive about their children's work and progress. This stems from weaknesses in assessment as the staff are not using data about pupils' performance well enough to set challenging targets for pupils to work towards. Teachers' marking is of inconsistent quality, some of which is not providing helpful pointers for improvement or clear learning targets. There

are too few opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning and their targets are not always clear to them, which slows their progress over time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Despite the significant involvement of the LA through its intensive support programme, there have been only marginal improvements to the quality of teaching. To some extent, the school has been hampered by high staff turnover and absence, but improvement planning and monitoring have not focussed on the most important priorities. The leadership team has improved some aspects of assessment but teachers are not yet confident or able enough to use assessment information. The consultant headteacher has maintained staff morale and has introduced some good measures that have improved behaviour and staff stability. He has inherited a challenging set of issues because the school has not developed its capacity to measure its own performance accurately. The governors are committed and work hard to review the work of the school. However, the impact of monitoring by senior staff and governors has not led to weak teaching being eradicated so that significant numbers of pupils are still making inadequate progress in many year groups.

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.

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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well 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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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

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.

Annex A

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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
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	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chalkhill Primary School, Wembley, HA9 9YP

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspectors to your school. You and the staff were all friendly and helpful. Your school needs extra help because we think that you could achieve a lot more. The inspectors have decided that your school needs 'special measures' to help it to improve. This means that other inspectors will be making regular visits to see how you are getting on.

These are the things we found out about your school:

- You try hard and told the inspectors that you like coming to school.
- Many of you told us that you like the extra things the staff provide for you like sports, music, dance and special visits.
- The staff take good care of you and you like to help other pupils as well. Well done to the 'blue caps', the 'health council' and the 'school council', because you are helping your teachers to improve the school.
- The 'thank you' board is full of your lovely comments so we know that you feel that everyone is trying their best to help you.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to:

- Make sure that all lessons help you to do better in English, mathematics and science.
- Keep checking how well you are doing and use this information to plan work that will build on what you already know and can do.
- Check the quality of lessons and your work often and list the most important things that need improving so that your school helps you all to do much better.
- Provide you all with targets that are clear and help you to understand what you have to do next to reach higher levels of work.

Thank you all again and I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector