

Bromley Road Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101588
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	307747
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Glyn Alsworth
Headteacher	Miss Pat Goddard
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001
School address	St George's Road Beckenham BR3 5JG
Telephone number	020 8650 5246
Fax number	020 8325 1621

Age group	5-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bromley Road is an average size school. About one-third of the pupils come from backgrounds that are less favourable than usual, both socially and economically, and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. A significant number of pupils leave or join the school at intermittent times throughout the year. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high, although only a few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils with special educational needs is similar to other schools. The school has experienced a number of staffing changes. Many teachers are currently new to the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school where pupils are well cared for in a safe and happy environment. Parents are pleased with the school and one said, 'It has all the necessary elements for the well-being of our children'. Pupils enjoy school and most behave well in lessons and at play because they are encouraged to develop good social skills and show respect for others through a strong pastoral system. Pupils who join at different times of the year are welcomed and sensitively inducted into the school. Any personal needs that they might have are quickly identified. Attendance is still well below the national average and remains a serious concern for the school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils receive a sound start to their learning in Reception. Their progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 they reach average standards. Standards are not higher because the progress pupils are making is not yet monitored consistently and rigorously to detect and remedy underachievement. Marking is also variable and not always helpful in identifying how pupils can improve their work. Higher attaining pupils do not reach the levels they should because expectations of how well they can achieve are not always high enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Through their extracurricular activities and the skills they gain in literacy and numeracy pupils are acquiring sound skills for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and the curriculum provides a varied range of activities. The pace in lessons is variable and sometimes lessons are too leisurely and some pupils are not fully involved in their work. Planning includes 'special weeks' where there is an investigative approach to subjects. During the inspection, mathematical activities were planned through the school which excited the pupils and made learning fun. Cross-curricular links are developing soundly, for example, the Year 1 project on life cycles for plants and animals links many subjects including science, geography, design and technology and music.

The pastoral guidance given to pupils is good and as a result pupils feel confident that they are well cared for and valued. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and how to be aware of safety. Plenty of opportunities are planned for them to join in community events and explore the areas around their school.

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall. A long period of staff changes and the restrictions on development imposed by a deficit budget have posed major challenges for the headteacher, senior staff and governors. Both issues now seem resolved and there is a positive forward-looking ethos. The headteacher and senior management team have a clear vision for the school and have identified the key areas where improvement is most needed. They are well supported by governors who have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Reception classes offer children a safe, stimulating environment. There is a sound, themed curriculum which makes appropriate use of the outside play area. A strong emphasis is placed upon helping children develop knowledge and understanding through encouraging their independence especially in selecting activities and materials. Children enter the Reception

classes with skills which are close to those expected nationally in most areas but lower in literacy. They make satisfactory progress during the year so that they move into Year 1 with skills which mainly match national expectations. Good progress in emotional development results from the caring relationships which exist between children and staff and the many opportunities for sharing ideas and feelings with others. The new strategy for teaching reading and writing enhances literacy skills by encouraging children to build words through sound. The teaching of letter formation is under-developed so that children currently lack confidence in forming their letters even though they know the sound they wish to write. There have been improvements in the gathering of evidence for assessment but using this evidence to tailor lesson plans to meet the needs of individual children is not sufficiently developed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards through establishing higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensure that there is sufficient challenge in lessons for all pupils, especially the higher attaining.
- Improve the consistency and quality of all aspects of assessment, including marking, so that work is closely matched to pupils' needs and they always receive clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Improve attendance by strongly encouraging parents to ensure their children attend school everyday.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspection evidence indicates that a satisfactory foundation is laid in reception and pupils reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2. In 2007, standards rose particularly in reading where more pupils gained the level expected for their age. This represents an improvement on the standards achieved in 2006. The school has now focused on improving achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for higher attaining pupils because fewer pupils achieved higher levels in these areas in the 2007 tests. The school are in the process of revising and improving monitoring and assessment procedures to help identify underachievement at an early stage. The gaps between the standards attained by boys and girls in English have been narrowed although boys do rather better than girls in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language receive satisfactory support and achieve as well as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Parents are very pleased that their children enjoy school. One parent wrote, 'Our child is always happy to go to school and take part in various experiences within her class'. Pupils work well together and are encouraged to be polite and to show concern for each other. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is mostly good but sometimes in lessons they can be distracted and slow to settle to their work so valuable learning time is lost. Attendance is below the national average and despite the strenuous efforts made by the school to improve this area there are a few parents who do not regard regular and prompt attendance at school as important. Pupils understand about having a healthy lifestyle and how they can keep safe in and out of

school. They have responsible jobs to do in class and around the school and carry out their responsibilities keenly. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is satisfactory. Pupils show respect and have a good understanding of the many cultures within their school. They make a good contribution to the wider community. For instance, they participate in local events and enjoy exploring the area around their school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers use 'I can' statements to explain well the focus of a lesson so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. This positive approach to learning raises pupil self esteem and encourages them to try harder. Teachers are beginning to make greater use of assessment data to help plan more interesting lessons and identify those pupils who require additional support. Use of monitoring information is at an early stage, however, and there are still inconsistencies in its use. For instance, teachers vary in their effectiveness to provide challenging work to more able pupils. Consequently, some of these pupils do not do as well as they should. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English are well supported and make sound progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school offers pupils a varied curriculum, which is appropriately based upon learning through first-hand experiences and exploring the diversity of their backgrounds and cultures. The focus upon the arts makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. It helps build confidence and pride through performing to the public and their peers. Pupils have good opportunities to demonstrate their skills in music, dance and drama. Recent changes to the teaching of reading and writing and the introduction of a more investigative approach to learning mathematics are improving pupils' basic skills. For example, around the school are interactive maths challenges which invite pupils to use their estimating and counting skills. Information communication technology (ICT) is well linked to classroom studies and ICT skills are developing soundly for all pupils. The school is justifiably proud of the good additional opportunities it provides to extend and enrich the curriculum. Very creative use is made of a wealth of cultural, natural and historic venues locally and in London to extend classroom learning. The many extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school are well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

An extensive range of valuable links have been forged with outside agencies to extend the good care provided in school. This is especially apparent for pupils who may be vulnerable. Safety and safeguarding procedures are well managed. Pupils feel their views are listened to and are confident that they can share any problems or worries they have with adults. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils' academic progress is now more carefully tracked in order to ensure that they make the progress they should but this is still at an early stage of development. Additional help is arranged for those who need it. The use of individual targets for improvement, along with and;quot;marking for improvementand;quot; is in the early stage of implementation and not yet fully effective and so pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

Plans to introduce children into the Reception classes are well structured and also help foster supportive links with parents. The same careful planning is evident in the transition to Year 1. Through the good links forged with the Junior school, pupils move confidently to the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has provided supportive leadership and managed constructively the many staff changes that have characterised recent years. A new and enthusiastic senior team has been recently formed. All leaders have identified clearly the areas for development within the school and are setting in place a number of new initiatives to help promote higher standards. These initiatives are still in the early developmental phase so cannot be fully evaluated to judge their effectiveness. Middle managers are also new but are now developing their roles and are keen to promote their subject areas to full potential. Newly qualified teachers are ably supported by senior staff mentors.

Resources are well deployed to achieve value for money especially given that there were difficulties arising from a period of deficit budget. The headteacher has wisely repositioned experienced staff so they will have best impact in school. Free from the restrictions imposed by a deficit budget there is now a strong focus on helping staff to gain increased confidence and improve their skills through professional development. Governors are supportive of the school and have an efficient committee structure. They are well informed and offer sound challenge to the school.

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
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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?	3
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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	3
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

19 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bromley Road Infant School, Beckenham, BR3 5JG

You may remember that two inspectors came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and other people who work in the school. Thank you for being so friendly and making us feel welcome.

Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. That means there are good things about your school and some things that could be better. One of the best things about Bromley Road Infant School is how well adults look after and care for you. You get on well with each other and like your teachers. You told us that adults are always there to help you when you need advice. You all know about healthy eating and the importance of exercise and how to keep safe. You have a lot of chances to go on visits and you enjoy doing things in your local community like singing on special occasions and showing your art work. You also have lots of clubs and after school activities such as cookery and art club.

There are some things that we think would make your school an even better place to be. Your teachers make most of your lessons interesting and help you to enjoy your learning. We have asked them always to give you work that is not too easy or too hard. This will help you think more and do even better work. Adults do keep a check on your progress but we have asked them to carry out these checks more often and then they will be able to help those of you who need a little extra support.

The school work very hard to try and make sure that you attend regularly and on time. We would like your parents to help them with this and make sure that you come to school every day in term time. It is very important that you don't miss time in your lessons and you do as well as you can while you are at school.

Thank you again for being so friendly and we send you our very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Norma Ball

Lead Inspector