

Brecknock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100010
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	307272
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	322
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Smith
Headteacher	Ms Susan Ladipo
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cliff Villas London NW1 9AL
Telephone number	020 7485 6334
Fax number	020 7424 0110

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2008
Inspection number	307272

© Crown copyright 2008

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 two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Brecknock is a larger than average primary school. The school serves an area of considerable poverty and disadvantage and faces many challenges. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than normal admission or leaving times. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is well above the national average. A very high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language; a quarter of this proportion is at the early stages of learning to speak English. A significant minority are from refugee or asylum-seeker families. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, predominantly linked to difficulties in communication or behavioural, emotional or social needs, is well above the national average. There are many different ethnic groups at the school. The largest groups are Black African and Bangladeshi pupils although other ethnic groups are represented in smaller numbers. In the recent past, there has been a very high turnover of teaching staff. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2006. The school gained Healthy School status in 2008. The school provides breakfast and after school clubs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brecknock Primary is a good school. Pupils work and play together in a culturally harmonious environment. Parents praise the school and make comments such as 'Brecknock is a fantastic school. It caters for children of all abilities. It has a dedicated teaching staff who are able to teach children of all abilities. I am very happy with the school.' Parents particularly appreciate the way the school cares for their children.

The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. She has steered the school successfully through a period of turbulence with many staff changes and has gained the confidence and respect of the staff, parents, governors and pupils. The headteacher is well supported by an effective and strongly motivated leadership team, which has a clear sense of direction, and is focused on raising standards. A robust programme of continuing professional development has been established. Staff are encouraged to share good practice, which is beginning to have an impact on improving teaching. In the light of substantial changes to staffing, the leadership team take most of the responsibility for monitoring the quality of provision and standards. Middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic and take an active role in developing the skills of colleagues although their role in monitoring is not yet fully developed.

Children enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those usually expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They settle well and make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) due to the good teaching and provision they receive. In Key Stage 1, pupils of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well due to good teaching and learning. By the end of Year 2, standards are well below the national average. However, given pupils' very low starting points and the significant numbers who join the school at different times, often with weak skills in English, this represents satisfactory progress. Pupils make increasingly good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Unvalidated data in Key Stage 2 for 2008 suggest that standards overall have continued to rise with good improvements in English and mathematics and significant improvements in science. A whole-school focus to improve writing is helping standards to rise. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Teaching and learning are good. Tasks are matched well to pupils' needs, lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and teaching is clearly focused so that pupils know what they have to learn. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour skilfully and relationships between pupils and staff are good. Teaching assistants provide the pupils with good support. Teachers use interactive whiteboards confidently to motivate and engage pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils have insufficient opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills and not enough challenge is provided to ensure that more able pupils achieve higher levels.

The good care provided for pupils has a positive effect on their personal development, which is also good. Pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic learners and behave well. The school has successfully created a learning atmosphere in which pupils are confident and secure. The school has useful systems in place that help pupils understand how to improve their work, including targets in English and mathematics. However, pupils' understanding about what they need to do to improve is underdeveloped.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those usually expected for their age. This is particularly the case in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress, so that by the time they leave Reception their skills have developed very well. This good progress is because activities in the classrooms and in the outdoor areas are stimulating. A good balance of teacher led and children's independently chosen activities provides valuable opportunities to develop independent learning skills. Opportunities for extending learning, such as developing children's speaking and vocabulary skills, are planned well, particularly for those children who are learning English as an additional language. Staff consistently encourage children's literacy skills by modelling language so that they learn how to speak in sentences. Valuable links with parents, beginning with home visits, help children to settle quickly, become familiar with the routines and develop confidence. The curriculum provision both indoors and outdoors is outstanding and this gives young children a very good start to their education. For example, topics are planned in detail, and the individual needs of children are considered very carefully. Children are very well prepared for the transition to the next phase of their learning. Leadership and management in the EYFS are outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by ensuring regular opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills and by developing pupils' understanding of what they have to do to make progress.
- Ensure all middle managers contribute effectively to school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start in the Nursery with attainment which is well below that expected for their age, particularly in language, literacy and social development. Given children's lower than expected starting point, progress in the EYFS is good although their language and literacy skills continue to be weak as they join Key Stage 1. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2.

Unvalidated data in Key Stage 2 for 2008 suggest that standards overall are rising and are now in line with national averages, with good improvements in all subjects. Given pupils' starting point, this represents good progress. The school provides well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils are carefully integrated into the school and make good progress. The school's involvement for the past two years in the 'Intensifying Support Programme' and the rigorous monitoring and targeting of pupils has contributed to the good progress they make. Additional support and intervention programmes are used very effectively to overcome barriers to learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and play happily together. They say how they enjoy and are proud of their school. They are thoughtful and quick to praise others' achievements. They take responsibility seriously and are keen to help adults with jobs and to be 'buddies' for younger pupils. A few families do not send

their children to school often enough and attendance is therefore only satisfactory, despite encouragement by the school and action by outside agencies.

Pupils know it is important to keep safe and be healthy. Many walk to school and the majority take the opportunity to be involved in the various clubs and physical activities. Pupils particularly enjoy events such as the 'international evenings' where they can celebrate one another's cultures through dance displays and the sharing of food. There is a strong sense of community in the school and pupils have raised funds for others. The school council has brought about changes to the school uniform, redecoration of the toilets and the design of the rooftop playground. Through good team working, the development of social and personal skills and good progress in basic skills, pupils are prepared well for the next phase in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is a good learning atmosphere in all classes. Pupils enjoy discussions, respond to questions confidently and work with enthusiasm alone or in small groups. Most lessons provide a variety of tasks so pupils remain attentive and involved in their work. Teachers are rapidly improving their skills at using assessment information to monitor pupils' progress. This helps to identify speedily those at risk of falling behind and to deploy effective support. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not readily adapt tasks if pupils do not respond as expected. In particular, in these lessons, teachers spend too much time talking, allowing insufficient time for pupils to explore issues for themselves, consolidate their understanding and reflect on what they have learned. Learning support assistants are well trained and work in a strong partnership with teachers. They provide good support for pupils who need additional help with their learning or are at the early stages of speaking English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good across the school. It is broad, balanced and flexible in responding to pupils' needs. Pupils learn well because they are presented with a range of different experiences. The school has introduced a blocked approach to subjects such as art, music and drama and is beginning to develop some useful links between subjects. Pupils enjoy the practical side of this approach, although it is too early to see the impact that this approach is having on pupils' progress. Information and communication technology (ICT) supports learning in a range of subjects and helps to make learning stimulating. Cooperation and collaboration are encouraged and a range of visitors and visits enriches pupils' understanding of the wider world. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and enquiry skills, particularly in science. The school has a well-planned personal, social and health education programme. This, together with involvement in the Young Enterprise Programme and talks to the Year 6 pupils about future aspirations, prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents praise the pastoral care that the school gives. One parent whose child entered mid-year said, 'A potentially difficult time was made a pleasure'. Care for the many refugees and asylum

seekers and their families is good. Pupils are welcomed into the school and their needs are identified quickly. Parents praise the information and training the school offers them.

Attendance is in line with the national average despite the school's efforts to reward pupils and support those families with poor attendance. Punctuality has improved. Good relationships, consistent behaviour management, and a change of emphasis to internal exclusions, has meant that fewer pupils are excluded from school and miss their education. Safeguarding procedures are fully in place.

The school has a useful system for tracking pupils' progress, and identifying where they can improve. From this information teachers set appropriate individual targets. However, pupils do not always know or understand their targets. Marking is regular and supportive although it does not guide pupils in what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have resulted in a school with a strong ethos within which pupils develop well personally and academically. The leadership provided by the headteacher, complemented by her senior leadership team, is very strong and provides clear direction and purpose. The headteacher has united staff in her drive to promote improvement and raise standards. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and analysis of performance data is thorough. The areas identified in the school development plan are clear and pertinent, with a strong emphasis on improving achievement and standards. Inspection evidence indicates standards in Key Stage 1 are beginning to rise because senior leaders have focused on improving writing and ensured more detailed attention to tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The governing body is well led, challenging when necessary, and fully supportive of the school's development as shown by governors' close monitoring of achievement and standards and their determination to improve the school premises. Middle management is satisfactory, and is beginning to contribute to the improvements in standards. The school acknowledges more work needs to be done in this area. The school has addressed the issues identified in the last inspection. School leaders are not complacent and there is a good capacity to improve further.

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?	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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

02 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brecknock Primary School, London, NW1 9AL

You may remember that three inspectors visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and everyone else who works in the school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming because you made our visit very enjoyable.

Your school gives you a good standard of education.

These are the things we liked most about your school.

- It is a very happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other.
- You behave well and work and play together happily.
- You know how to stay safe and healthy, and you enjoy taking lots of exercise.
- Your teachers keep a good check on your progress, make most of your lessons interesting and help you to enjoy your learning.
- The school is well led by your headteacher and her team. They want the very best for you and are determined that you should make as much progress as you can in lessons.
- You and your parents and carers are rightly very proud of your school.

We have asked your school to improve two things to make it even better:

- help you to do even better in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the age of 11, by making sure that you are involved in the setting of your targets and understand what you have to do to achieve them
- fully involve all the teachers who lead subjects in improving your school.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful to us.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector