

Brightwalton Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110008
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	378032
Inspection dates	29 February–1 March 2012
Lead inspector	Carolyn Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Russell Kilvington
Headteacher	Susan Ball
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 October 2006
School address	Common Lane Brightwalton Newbury Berkshire RG20 7BN
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Carolyn Carnaghan

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed ten lessons taught by six teachers and held meetings with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, documents, minutes of meetings and plans. She also scrutinised the 59 responses to questionnaires from parents and carers as well as those returned by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school with lower than average proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and from minority ethnic groups. Most pupils are from a White British heritage. There are average proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; most of these have moderate learning difficulties. The school meets the government's floor standard.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where pupils enjoy their work and develop as confident, rounded individuals. Their achievement is good from the Early Years Foundation Stage until the end of Year 6. The school is not outstanding because teaching has inconsistencies and some areas of leadership and management are not as effective as they might be.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, leaving at the end of Year 6 with above-average levels of attainment. Pupils' personal development is outstanding; they are growing as independent thinkers and are highly motivated to achieve well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because their work is well targeted to their needs and they are well supported.
- Teaching is good; most lessons are good or better. The majority of lessons are well paced and provide time for reflection and conclusions. Occasionally, they do not challenge the most able. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop and exercise their skills in English, mathematics and communication.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils embrace the caring and respectful ethos of their school and express their appreciation of the learning opportunities on offer. They take responsibilities readily, and report no bullying of any kind. Their attendance is above average and they behave extremely well and safely in class and around one another.
- Leadership and management are good and the vision of the headteacher is shared and understood by most staff. However, not all play a significant role in realising it. Members of the governing body are highly supportive and provide the necessary challenge. The good leadership of teaching and learning and performance management ensure that most lessons are at least good and that teachers promote progress through an increasingly relevant curriculum. Staff encourage excellent development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure lessons always provide sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils so that those who are more able are never held back.
- Develop the capability of middle leaders and managers to support the headteacher more effectively in developing and improving teaching and the curriculum still further.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is good. They progress well from their above average starting points in Reception and leave with attainment that is securely above the national average in English and mathematics. Progress in English and mathematics is generally good across year groups although there has been some slight variation year on year. There are rarely any differences between boys' and girls' achievement and the school works effectively to ensure the gap remains closed. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make equally good progress, helped in no small measure by the support provided by the teaching assistant team who are adept at ensuring that the curriculum and tasks are adapted well to meet the individual needs of pupils.

Most lessons provide for enjoyment, challenge and good learning. Parents and carers are rightly happy with the outcomes for their children. For example, in a history lesson pupils had brought in an array of artefacts from different periods in recent history. They were investigating how these objects came into being, their uses and how they helped society. This meant that pupils worked independently, made choices about their research, shared their conclusions about life at other times and developed skills in extended writing. In a lesson in Reception, children explored how sounds make words by tracking a secretive giant who had left messages for them, including his 'lunch' and some huge footprints. Their search for clues took them outside into the well-resourced play area, where they found sounds to put together into words. Pupils achieve very well in reading at all key stages because this grounding in basic skills acquisition is so successful. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average. Pupils use mathematics and English skills across most subjects, for example by writing extensively about explorations in science. They make good progress in using information and communication technology. Pupils enjoy exploring books in the library and often take time out at lunchtime to sit quietly and read.

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Quality of teaching

Most lessons are well planned, delivered with a good pace and usually fulfil the needs of all pupils. Parents and carers correctly report that teaching is good. The best lessons put learning into a context that pupils can appreciate. Key literacy and numeracy skills are developed across subjects. The successful delivery of the planned curriculum promotes learning well. Many lessons involve independent and small-group activities and often pupils are so self-motivated that the teacher rarely has to remind anyone to stay on task. In these lessons, such as in a literacy lesson where the youngest groups in the main school were collecting words by their sounds, pupils make excellent progress. Questioning is a strength of teaching, in the main, and discussion and debate are encouraged. Where lessons deliver general tasks, without the necessary focus on the individual needs of pupils, where work is not fully tailored to pupils' interests, or where some pupils are allowed to dominate the less confident in discussion, progress slows down.

Marking is generally good, particularly where teachers set up a dialogue between themselves and their pupils. Interesting homework tasks extend what pupils have achieved in lessons. Assessments are regular; their results are shared with pupils and their families who express appreciation of this. Most pupils understand their targets. Teachers are good role models and have good levels of expertise. They ensure that the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values is strong in their teaching. The support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs ensures that these groups do not miss out on the opportunities that others enjoy, so their progress remains good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' attitudes to school are extremely positive and this makes a significant contribution to the effective learning environment that wraps around the school and to ensuring that lessons consistently proceed without interruption. Pupils show very high levels of courtesy and politeness. They express their enjoyment of the kindness and respect that teachers give them and in return treat others with dignity and respect. They report no bullying of any kind and they fully understand how to keep themselves and others safe, on, for example, the internet, local roads and within the local community. Pupils show empathy with the lives of others and their own behaviour is exemplary both in class and around the school. They demonstrate high levels of self-discipline. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in their celebrations of mutual successes, their sharing of achievements in music and sports and in the many ways pupils work and collect for charities. Parents and carers express the positive influence the school's work has on their children. Parents, carers and pupils are also very positive about behaviour and safety and these views are fully supported by inspection findings.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and their punctuality and above-average attendance rates are testimony to this. Pupils are ready and willing to take on responsibilities as evidenced by tasks around the school, mentoring younger pupils

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and their contributions to the school council. Pupils have a voice that is listened to and valued. Pupils are also ready to take initiative and be creative such as when a group of pupils recently shot and made a film through the after-school film club. This piece has been shown locally in competition.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is ably supported by the governing body. Teaching has been improved through monitoring and professional training so that most lessons deliver at least good learning. Members of the governing body are highly supportive of the school, being very regular visitors there. They understand very clearly how well pupils are progressing and, as a result, they can challenge the school over their outcomes and hold it to account across all its activities. They ensure the school is a very safe place for pupils and all statutory policies are in place. The governing body is most punctilious over the reviewing and developing of its safeguarding strategies. They also support other school leaders and staff in ensuring there is no discrimination and that all pupils share equal opportunities to succeed.

The curriculum is broad and well balanced, developing towards one where skills are placed into context and learning is genuinely meaningful to pupils. It promotes good learning and a keen awareness of how to be safe in all aspects of life. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural values of the school are excellently developed so that pupils have a very strong awareness of issues that have moral and social implications and a tolerance and respect of beliefs, traditions and cultures that are different than their own. Parents and carers are keen to support the school, expressing their satisfaction with what it offers their children. Communication is close, whether it be through meeting at the school gate in the morning or through the school's new website.

The headteacher is enthusiastic in her monitoring of all the school's activities and the results of this are used to drive improvements. The middle leaders who support her are involved in some monitoring of the work of teachers. They have not, however, fully developed the capability to contribute to the whole-school vision and drive to further develop teaching and the curriculum. Overall, the school's capacity to sustain its improvements is good.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brightwalton Church of England Aided Primary School,
Brightwalton, RG20 7BN**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I recently inspected your school. You were very friendly and I enjoyed meeting so many of you, seeing you in class and hearing you read. I particularly thought that you work independently very well but that you also get on together, as a close-knit community. You are most careful to make sure everyone is cared for and happy.

Brightwalton is a good school. It makes sure you all get an equal chance to make good progress and you say that you appreciate this. You develop very well as individuals, often with strong opinions that you are not afraid to express. Well done!

I have asked the school to do a few things to make it even more successful.

- To ensure all lessons deliver maximum opportunities for you to achieve well, regardless of your ability.
- To develop the work of the middle leaders who help the headteacher run the school, so that the school can improve further.

You can help by continuing to do your best in every lesson.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Carnaghan
Lead inspector

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