

Brington CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110827
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	395356
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Ronald Hall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Smith
Headteacher	Kate Lund
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	26–27 April 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ronald Hall

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons or parts of lessons, taught by four teachers and spanning over three and a half hours. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including that relating to pupils' progress, school improvement, writing and attendance. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, local authority officers and with pupils. The inspector took account of the views of 81 parents and carers who returned the questionnaires sent out prior to the inspection and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is a very small school serving the village of Brington and surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the normal times is high. The proportion of the pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The school is currently led and managed by an acting headteacher who has been in post for just over a year, and a new senior leadership team has been put into place. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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. Due to good leadership and management, Brington Primary is rapidly improving following a period of falling standards. There is a strong focus on improving pupils' achievement, progress and attendance. Pupils, parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that the school has a happy, caring and family-like environment. The school is good rather than outstanding because the quality of teaching and achievement has not risen sufficiently to be outstanding overall.
- Pupils make good progress and reach above average levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in reading and mathematics is consistently good across the school. However, not all pupils are making as rapid progress in writing although most are responding well to recently introduced initiatives.
- Teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement. Good leadership, including well-targeted professional development, has improved assessment, monitoring and tracking procedures leading to more accurate lesson planning. Teachers generally use feedback well as a tool for improvement. In writing lessons across the school, presentation, structure and grammar are not consistently corrected by all staff, which slows progress for some pupils in this area. Similarly a few teachers' lack of accuracy in pronouncing the sounds of letters and words is hindering some pupils' progress in reading and spelling. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are often provided with highly tailored, effective support, leading to achievement above that of their peers nationally.
- Pupils' well-developed sense of equality reflects the school's very successful work in promoting understanding of disability and difference. Pupils' positive attitude towards others ensures that bullying is rare, pupils feel safe and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate excellent skills in managing their own behaviour and have an excellent attitude to learning.
- The relatively new school leaders use self-evaluation and performance management processes well to ensure that teaching is rapidly improving. They rigorously evaluate the impact of improvements on pupils' progress.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - improving the expertise of all staff in the teaching of reading and particularly skills in sounding letters and words
 - improving writing across the whole school by providing more opportunities for pupils to write in all subjects and ensuring that written feedback such as marking is consistently good.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development which are generally in line with expectations for their age. Reading skills develop well through constructive interaction with staff. However, adults' mispronunciation of word and letter sounds occasionally slows the progress of some children. Children are challenged well while developing their writing skills as staff provide excellent opportunities for them to write simple sentences. A wide range of excellent activities, which highly motivate the children have been the basis for exceptional improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make outstanding progress and enter Year 1 with attainment that is above average. Even though mobility in the school is high, pupils achieve well overall in Years 1 to 6. In lessons, they respond with a highly positive attitude to opportunities that allow them to be independent and work in small groups. For example, in a modern foreign language lesson for Year 6, outstanding teaching ensured pupils worked together well to explore a range of German questions and greetings. In an English lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils explored the concepts involved in play writing and eagerly enjoyed it.

Since the previous inspection, pupils' writing skills have developed more slowly than those in reading and mathematics. Recent improvements in teaching have led to better progress in lessons but pupils do not have opportunities in every subject to practise their writing, or to receive good written feedback about their work. However, the gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing is now closing rapidly, although it is too early to see the full impact of improvements on the progress made by some pupils. Inspection evidence and pupils' current work indicate that attainment in English and mathematics is above average by the end of Key Stage 2, as is attainment in reading at the end of both key stages.

Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to their peers. Pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal times make similar progress as well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. Parents and carers are rightly of the opinion that the progress their children make is good.

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Quality of teaching

Recently improved lesson planning makes increasingly good and effective use of a range of assessment information in response to focused staff training. Targets for pupils form the basis for feedback and allow pupils to assess their own learning. In the most effective lessons, teachers identify clear learning objectives and specify precisely what pupils need to do to demonstrate that the objectives have been achieved. The use of clear written feedback with examples generally aids pupils' ability to understand how to improve. In written tasks, this is not as consistent and so, although writing is improving rapidly, it is not improving as well as other core subjects. Reading is rapidly improving but staff pronunciation of letter and word sounds is not always accurate.

Teachers' enthusiastic approach takes good account of pupils' interests through appropriate and planned adaptations to the curriculum. Teachers effectively present a wide variety of tasks that suit different learning styles and engage pupils well. Purposeful links are made between subjects through activities that have strong connections with the real-life application of the skills being learned. This contributes strongly to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All lessons feature good questioning that develops learning effectively, because teachers set high expectations for pupils' responses, ensuring that time is given for developed answers. This was demonstrated well during a Year 6 mathematics lesson, when questions from pupils were reflected back to provide challenge and opportunity to think more deeply about the concepts being studied.

Teaching assistants are deployed well to support the learning and progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This ensures that their independence is promoted during challenging learning activities. A majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well at this school. Inspection evidence supports this view overall.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have a very strong understanding of how to stay safe both generally and in relation to e-safety. Rapid improvements in the way adults approach welfare issues have resulted in pupils effectively controlling their own behaviour through a very positive attitude to learning. All pupils are very positive about behaviour. As one put it, 'Behaviour is great. We are like a lovely family.' All feel, rightly, that behaviour in lessons is excellent. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They respond very positively to opportunities to work independently and collaborate extremely well on group tasks. During the inspection, nothing but exemplary behaviour was seen across the whole school and this is said by parents, carers, pupils and staff to be typical.

Meticulously kept records show that there are only very occasional instances of

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misbehaviour, and no exclusions. There have been no recorded instances of bullying of any kind, and pupils confirm this and that recording documents are accurate.

There have been no issues relating to racism, sexist or homophobic behaviour. Pupils unanimously say that staff deal with all types of issues very well. A programme of family support is extremely well implemented by staff to help parents and carers in their efforts to improve their children's learning.

Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They take great pride in their work and try hard to do their best in lessons. As far as possible, pupils are fully involved in assessing their own performance and that of others. They are encouraged to make choices in different situations, to be focused on achieving their targets and have respect for all. Attendance is above average. Pupils and staff feel very safe and parents and carers unanimously and justifiably concur.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers at all levels, including members of the governing body, have a comprehensive understanding of what the school does well and the areas it needs to focus on to improve further. Staff work closely together and share a common vision for the school and its continued development. The systematic linking of staff teams for partnership in planning and development contributes well to continued school improvement. The improvements in teaching over time show that the school has been able to maintain good achievement for pupils and has good capacity to improve further.

Leaders and managers at all levels promote equality and tackle discrimination well. The caring school ethos and emphasis on whole-school approaches fully include disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups. School leaders and governors ensure arrangements for safeguarding pupils are managed appropriately.

Improvements in pupils' progress have been achieved following ongoing professional development, including effective mentoring, for all staff. This has been particularly successful in improving assessment practice and promoting the more effective use of questioning. While some aspects of this improved practice are having demonstrable impact, others are less well established. For example, pupils are increasingly involved in assessing the quality of their own learning and that of their peers, but the impact on pupils' progress in writing is not fully evident in Key Stage 2. This is because school leaders are not sufficiently rigorous in monitoring how well staff apply the marking policy to pupils' work. Senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning contributes well to school self-evaluation and provides opportunities to check whether previously identified areas for development have been successfully addressed.

Good curriculum planning by the senior leaders ensures that pupils have access to a broad and balanced programme with good links between subjects and extended

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chances for pupils to apply their skills to realistic situations. The curriculum is well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils and this makes it fun and interesting. This ensures it engages pupils well, promotes their enthusiasm for learning in and out of school and makes good provision for developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including a football, ballet and dance, all of which are well attended. Parents and carers comment positively about the approachability of staff at all levels and value the openness of school leaders in listening to and addressing their suggestions and concerns.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



30 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brington CofE Primary School, Huntingdon, PE28 5AE.

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently, particularly those of you who read to me or spoke to me about your work and what it is like to attend your school. Thank you, also, for responding to the questionnaire.

I am writing to tell you about the inspection.

- Your school is a good school. This is because you make good progress in lessons and treat each other exceptionally well. You told us, and your parents and carers agreed, that the school is a happy place to be.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress and pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress, especially in reading and mathematics but writing is not as strong.
- You told us that your teachers care about you. They have improved how well they assess your learning and plan lessons to make sure you make progress. They ask you challenging questions to help you learn. These things ensure teaching is good.
- You learn a lot and contribute to your school being a safe, happy and friendly place to learn. You told us that bullying is rare. Your behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding.
- The teachers who lead your school have made sure that it has continued to improve since the last inspection.

We have asked the teachers and those who lead your school to make sure that:

- you have more opportunities to write across the curriculum and teachers mark your writing more consistently
- staff are trained to pronounce letter and word sounds correctly to aid your reading and spelling skills.

You can all help by maintaining your highly positive learning attitudes.

Yours sincerely
Ronald Hall
Lead Inspector

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