

# Brington CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Brington, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 5AE

## Inspection dates

27–28 September 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The senior leadership team and the governing body have secured good improvement in all aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection.
- Staff work together well under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher. They, along with the knowledgeable governing body, have a clear plan for future development based on a good understanding of the main priorities.
- In the early years, children make good progress. This is because adults know the children well and plan engaging activities that capture their imagination.
- In key stages 1 and 2, teaching meets pupils' differing needs successfully most of the time and helps them to make good progress. Just occasionally, especially in mathematics, work is too hard or too easy for some pupils.
- Leaders make good use of the school's new systems to track pupils' progress. This means that they quickly identify any pupils who are falling behind and give them extra help.
- Pupils given additional support, such as the disadvantaged or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are supported well and make good progress.
- Across the school, pupils' progress is especially rapid in reading because they read regularly and develop a love of books.
- Pupils' progress is slightly slower in writing than in reading because there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve their skills by writing at length.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe in school and show care and consideration to others. They said that there is a place for everyone in the school.
- The school is a very harmonious, respectful community, with pupils from different backgrounds supported and challenged equally well.
- The new acting headteacher is already making a concerted effort to improve pupils' attendance. Irregular attendance slows learning for a small number of pupils from differing backgrounds.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They especially like the caring and happy atmosphere and the work of the new acting headteacher.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to write at length so that they can practise and reinforce skills more frequently.
- Ensure that teachers always respond quickly if pupils are finding work too hard or too easy, especially when teaching mathematics.
- Build on recent work to improve rates of attendance by continuing to ensure that parents and pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The acting headteacher and assistant headteacher, together with the governing body, have a strong and ambitious plan for the school based on their high aspirations for all their pupils. They are determined to improve provision further and provide good leadership and management. They are having a positive impact on the work of the school, building well on initiatives started since the previous inspection. The school has been supported successfully in this process by the local authority.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies clearly what needs to be done to improve the school further. The acting headteacher is providing good challenge and support to teachers to help them improve. He observes teaching regularly and uses this to set targets and to ensure that improvement is secure and sustainable.
- The school ensures equal opportunities for all pupils whatever their background. Over the last year, the leaders have improved greatly the amount of information they have on pupils' progress. They analyse this data in detail to check that all pupils are doing well enough and to provide additional help if they are not. This includes checking that funding for disadvantaged pupils or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used to good effect. Additional support for these small groups is well targeted and ensures that they make the same good progress as others over time.
- The acting headteacher has made a start to making more use of the good skills of middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching further, but at the moment he takes on too much responsibility for this. Middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic. They have a clear picture of the next steps in their subjects, but the new plan to involve them in visiting lessons has only just started so it is too soon to see its impact.
- The curriculum helps pupils to make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Leaders have been focusing on making the curriculum more relevant to pupils and this is already reaping benefits. A focus on providing more 'Wow' moments at the start of topics has helped to bring subjects alive and is contributing well to pupils' enjoyment of school. There is a strong focus on teaching reading across the curriculum. In contrast, pupils do not write at length frequently enough in English or other subjects, slowing the pace at which writing skills improve.
- The curriculum includes good opportunities for pupils to excel in art and physical education. There is high-quality artwork on display around school. Additional government funding for primary sports and physical education is used well to provide pupils with access to specialist teaching and to improve the skills of class teachers.
- The school's focus on the values and qualities of 'Self-belief, Teamwork, Ambition and Respect' (STAR) are reflected in the pupils' good attitudes to learning and help support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Topics and assemblies successfully promote fundamental British values by addressing areas such as democracy, the rule of law and racial equality. Staff and pupils work together to stop all forms of discriminatory behaviour and prejudice. All pupils are treated equally, whatever their background.
- The school engages extremely well with parents. The vast majority of parents who

responded to Parent View are pleased with the education provided by the school. Although there has been historical dissatisfaction with the work of the school, resulting in a falling roll, this is no longer evident. Parents of current pupils are extremely positive about all aspects of the school's work. They especially like the caring and nurturing atmosphere in school and the way in which staff welcome children from different backgrounds. Parents typically make comments such as, 'The new headteacher is transforming the school for the better', 'The teaching, atmosphere and ethos are fantastic' and 'The future is definitely bright for Brington.'

## **Governance of the school**

- The knowledgeable governing body has played a key part in helping the school to improve over the last two years. Governors have worked very closely with the senior leaders to tackle weaknesses, ensuring that provision has improved quickly. There is a good understanding of the need to continue to work to build the school's standing in the local community in order to reverse the fall in roll.
- The governing body provide effective challenge and support to leaders. Governors use information from senior leaders' detailed reports to carefully check that outcomes for children are improving. They also have good systems for checking provision for themselves so that they are not over-reliant on information from the leadership team.
- Governors check that funding provides good value for money and has a good effect on pupils' learning. For example, they monitor and report on the progress of the small number of disadvantaged pupils to ensure that the pupil premium is being used suitably.
- Governors know where teaching is especially strong and how the school continues to improve it. Their systems for rewarding good teaching through performance management are thorough and well understood by teachers.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Parents are happy that their children are looked after well at school.
- Leaders have made sure that everyone understands safeguarding policies and procedures; these have become part of the school culture. Staff receive regular training updates and policies are applied rigorously. For example, all visitors to school are expected to leave mobile phones in the school office on arrival.
- Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to keep pupils safe. They are persistent in their pursuit of support for vulnerable families. They communicate well with families and are assiduous in following through any concerns.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They have established good routines, which reinforce pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes

towards learning. Teachers make good use of praise to motivate pupils to do their best.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge in English and mathematics and use appropriate technical vocabulary with precision when introducing new skills. The teaching of phonics is particularly effective. Pupils enjoy the phonics sessions, joining in enthusiastically with the sounds and actions linked to different letters. They make good progress in their early reading as a result.
- Teachers make good use of resources, including modern technology, to hold pupils' interest and to support learning. By linking subjects together, teachers make work purposeful and fun. For example, in Year 1 a hunt for a 'lost' tiger sparked good-quality work in reading and mathematics and motivated pupils to become especially engaged in their writing.
- Although there is more than one age group in each class, teachers take good account of the different starting points of pupils so that work is not repeated. They are able to do this because they know the needs of their pupils so well.
- Teachers make effective use of the school assessment systems to check pupils' progress and to identify what to teach next. They address any differences in age, maturity or ability well through their good use of questioning and by carefully planning work that takes account of different starting points. However, there are occasions, especially in mathematics, when teachers do not respond quickly enough if the most able are ready to move their learning on or the less able are finding it too difficult. This slows the pace at which skills improve.
- Teaching assistants have a good impact on learning much of the time, working well with small groups during the school day. They are well informed about school routines, but sometimes the impact of their work is hindered because the class teacher has not deployed them well enough or shared in sufficient detail what is expected of them.
- Parents are very pleased with the quality of teaching in the school. They are well informed about the progress of their children and value this feedback from the teachers.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes towards learning. They speak very positively about school life, typically making comments such as, 'I would recommend the school to anyone' and 'Teachers are fair and you get to do fun things.'
- Pupils feel safe and know how to avoid dangers both in and out of school. For example, pupils in upper key stage 2 are clear about e-safety and know, for example, how emojis can be used in both good and bad ways in texts or emails. Pupils from different backgrounds, including those from Gypsy-Roma families, feel equally well supported to stay safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the various forms of bullying and the action they can take to protect themselves from it. They report that bullying is very rare and is dealt with to their complete satisfaction.

- The school promotes pupils' good physical and emotional well-being. It does this through its calm atmosphere, its nurturing environment where problems are tackled quickly and the opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities.
- The school is becoming increasingly successful at raising pupils' aspirations. Most pupils are clear that if they work hard they can achieve anything. They keenly take responsibility, and activities such as the school council help them understand how they can influence events around them.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very clear that behaviour around school has improved over the last year and especially this term. They like the school's systems for rewarding good behaviour and feel that sanctions, when needed, are applied fairly. They particularly like the STAR awards, which they said motivate them to behave well and try hard. As one Gypsy-Roma pupil commented, 'I am proud when I take my certificate home.'
- Parents are almost unanimously positive about behaviour at the school and the way that concerns are handled. As one parent noted, 'If there are any concerns, the teachers are straight on it.'
- Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Newly arrived pupils feel well supported because, as one said, 'Everyone is so friendly.' Pupils play together happily at breaktimes, and older pupils give good support to Reception year children by trying to involve them in their games.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They take pride in their work and complete tasks with care. Occasionally, pupils' attention wanders when they have spent too long on a task and are ready to move on to a greater challenge.
- Rates of attendance, while improving, are below average. The new acting headteacher is already making a concerted effort to tackle this. Absence is followed up rigorously through a 'same day, chase' policy. Leaders are working very closely with parents to help them understand how their children make slower progress if they do not attend regularly. This continues to be a priority for school improvement.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- Pupils make good progress across the school from their different starting points. Although attainment varies from year to year because the number of pupils is so small, it is generally average or better by the end of Year 6. Pupils acquire new skills and knowledge quickly. They are well prepared both socially and academically for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils make especially rapid progress in reading. Pupils read with confidence for a range of purposes. Older pupils in key stage 2 express preferences for authors or genres and have very positive attitudes towards reading. Younger pupils quickly develop a love of reading, and one commented, 'Everyone in the school just loves reading. The books just hook you in.'

- Attainment in phonics has improved in the last year due to changes in the way that skills are taught. In 2017, all pupils reached the expected level in the national screening check at the end of Year 1 and Year 2. Younger pupils use their good phonics knowledge well to sound out new words when reading.
- Pupils' progress is slightly slower in writing than in reading. Although pupils enjoy writing and use punctuation accurately by the end of Year 6, they do not write often enough at length so that they can practise and improve skills more quickly.
- While pupils make good progress in mathematics, there are occasions when it slows because work is too hard or too easy for some pupils. Leaders have correctly identified this as an area that requires further development.
- The school successfully ensures that all groups, including the most able and the very small number of disadvantaged pupils, make good progress over time. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support, enabling them to acquire new skills and knowledge quickly.
- There is good support for pupils from Gypsy-Roma families and they make the same good progress as others. They are well integrated into school life and are given good help both in class and through additional support outside lessons when it is needed.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Good leadership has secured rapid improvement to early years provision since the previous inspection. Leaders have focused successfully on improving children's learning and ensuring that differing needs are being met effectively.
- Children in the Reception class, including the very small number of disadvantaged children, are now making good progress. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1. They gain good levels of confidence and learn new skills quickly.
- Children make good progress because teaching meets their needs well. Adults plan engaging work both indoors and outdoors that motivates children to do well and enables them to develop skills across the curriculum. They make good use of the newly revamped outdoor area to support children's learning.
- Children behave sensibly nearly all the time and respond well to the adults. They have settled very quickly into school life in the current year because the teacher has clearly established routines for classroom management. This means that children know what is expected of them.
- Adults plan work that provides the right level of challenge most of the time, including for the most able. They use questioning to direct children's learning and to support early language development. However, there are occasions, as elsewhere in the school, when adults do not respond soon enough to move learning on when children have grasped a concept or are finding it too hard.
- The curriculum includes a strong focus on teaching reading skills and phonics and both are taught well. Phonics teaching is fun and engaging. For example, children learned about the letter 'm' by hunting for objects in the outdoor area and then attempting to write the name of the object.

- Staff give safeguarding a high priority. They regularly check provision to ensure that it is safe.
- There are good partnerships with parents. They speak highly about recent changes and how well their children have been supported when starting school. Typical comments include, 'My son has had a great year in the Reception class' and 'My daughter loves coming to school each day.'
- The school has thorough systems for assessing children's learning and adults use this information effectively to decide what to teach next. Parents are involved in their children's learning and can add their own comments to the school's online records of their child's progress.
- Leaders have greatly strengthened links with the adjoining pre-school and this means that the introduction to school life has been well managed and seamless for the new Reception class.



## School details

Unique reference number	110827
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10036255

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Card
Headteacher	Mark Farrell
Telephone number	01832 710383
Website	<a href="http://www.brington.org">www.brington.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@brington.cambs.sch.uk">office@brington.cambs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22–23 September 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a small primary school with three mixed-age classes. The number of pupils on roll has fallen sharply in the last four years.
- Children in the early years are taught in a mixed-age Reception and Year 1 class.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but a small number are from Gypsy-Roma families.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.

- The school has an acting headteacher for the whole of the current academic year. He was previously one of the school's assistant headteachers. Nearly all the teaching staff are new since the school's previous inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in lessons, most of which were observed jointly with the acting headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, a local authority adviser and members of the governing body.
- The inspector took account of the views of 33 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also read letters from parents and talked with them at the end of the school day.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, looked at their work from both this year and last year and school documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information and health and safety documentation.
- The inspector analysed responses to inspection questionnaires from six members of staff.

## Inspection team

Mike Capper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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