

Bramfield Church of England Primary School

Bridge Street, Bramfield, Halesworth IP19 9HZ

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust share a clear vision for the school's development. Together they have acted decisively to secure rapid improvements.
- Effective partnerships enable leaders to gain from the good practice developed in other local schools to make improvements.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. The school's plans for further improvement are suitably prioritised.
- Actions to strengthen teaching in mathematics and reading have led to much better progress by all pupils. These new procedures are not yet fully established.
- Information gained by leaders from regular testing and rigorous assessments indicates that the outcomes achieved by pupils in both key stages will be much higher this year.
- Pupils say that the school is a safe, friendly place to be. Their behaviour and conduct are very good. They feel very safe and free from bullying.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the wide range of enjoyable enrichment activities provided for them.
- The school's caring and supportive ethos is promoted by staff and local church leaders. Pupils' understanding of British values is underdeveloped.
- Children get off to a good start in early years. A rich, supportive environment and good teaching enable them to thrive. Space for outdoor learning is new and remains underdeveloped.
- Effective teaching of early reading in the Reception class ensures that children are well prepared for Year 1. Less able readers are identified promptly and given extra support to ensure they gain a full understanding of letters and sounds.
- Improvements made to teaching this year are not matched in all subjects. Art, music and physical education (PE) are popular with pupils. Pupils' learning in science and humanities subjects is underdeveloped.
- Strong links are forged with parents and carers, and the local community.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of provision, by:
 - spreading the recent improvements made to teaching across all subjects, particularly some foundation subjects
 - ensuring that enough time is allocated to ensure that pupils learn in depth in science and humanities
 - revisiting planning of the early years curriculum in order to make full use of the new outdoor space for learning.
- Gain further consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by ensuring that the actions taken this year to strengthen teaching and raise pupils' achievement in mathematics and reading become firmly established across all classes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- A period of turbulence in the school has prevented leaders from building on the positive findings of the last inspection. Since then, trust leaders have acted decisively to strengthen the school's leadership and management and forge strong partnerships with two other local schools.
- Coherent and ambitious leadership provided by the trust has secured rapid improvement. Regular reviews, support and challenge by trust leaders have increased the accountability of school leaders and staff. Weekly training for staff has improved their understanding of teaching, learning and assessment. They realise that expectations of them are now much higher.
- The executive headteacher, ably supported by a head of school, has wasted no time in raising expectations of staff and pupils, and putting in place ambitious plans for improvement.
- Systematics checks carried out by the executive headteacher and regular reviews by the trust enable leaders to gauge the impact of their actions to increase the effectiveness of teaching and improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders scrutinise closely the quality of work in pupils' books and evaluate assessment information to measure the progress of pupils over time. They pay less attention to observing and reporting the impact of teaching on the progress made by pupils during lessons.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders recognise that this is a good school. They also realise that more work is needed to ensure that recent improvements become firmly established and day-to-day teaching is always of a high quality. Information gained from their monitoring informs suitable plans for improvement.
- Leaders have rightly prioritised securing rapid improvements in reading and mathematics. Less attention has been paid to subjects taught in the afternoons. There are clear strengths in art, music and PE, which are taught by specialist staff. Pupils' books show that learning in other areas, notably in science and geography, is too infrequent to ensure that pupils learn in enough depth.
- An experienced leader with responsibility for the small proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures that their needs are known well and that they receive the support they need to enable them to achieve as well as others do.
- Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's free-text survey during the inspection praised the school's work, particularly the safe, friendly environment it provides, the support from staff and the wide range of enrichment activities provided for pupils. A few would like better communication from school leaders, so they understand the reasons for the recent changes made.

Governance

- Since the last inspection, Bramfield and two other local small schools within the academy trust have formed an association. They have the same shared governance, business manager and executive headteacher. Heads of school in each of the three schools work collegiately with the executive headteacher to secure improvements to teaching and to raise achievement. These arrangements and the enhanced support and challenge provided by the trust provide the school with greater capacity to improve.
- An experienced and knowledgeable chair of governors represents the school effectively at joint governor meetings and also meets with other lead governors from across the trust to share ideas and learn from their work. Minutes of meetings show that governors meet their statutory duties and provide a suitable balance of support and challenge for staff.
- Governors know the school well. They share the same ambitions for the school shown by leaders and the trust. They recognise the journey of improvement the school is on, the impact of actions taken by leaders so far, and the further actions needed to sustain the school's recent improvement.
- They monitor the use of additional funding effectively and can explain the impact the pupil premium is having on the outcomes achieved by the very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in school. They ensure that the PE and sport premium is used appropriately to train staff, employ specialist coaches and promote pupils' wider participation in physical activity and competitive sport.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record is complete. All necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children. Minor errors in recording were quickly amended during the inspection.
- Child protection records have been updated recently to ensure that actions to protect the most vulnerable pupils are recorded systematically. Suitably trained, designated leaders and other staff show a good understanding of the procedures needed to safeguard pupils.
- Links with external support agencies, the police and the local authority are firmly established. Effective communication ensures that pupils at risk of harm are known well and are kept safe.
- Training for staff in safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date.
- Leaders have assessed the risks attached to pupils' safety on the school's rural site. Measures are in place to prevent unauthorised access to school buildings, but these have not been tested fully to see if they work well enough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the appointment of the executive headteacher. Her high aspirations and added rigour in monitoring learning in lessons, coupled with regular staff training, have improved the effectiveness of teachers and support staff.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics were identified quickly and staff training and resources introduced to enable teachers to develop pupils' mastery in mathematics. A new textbook and suitable equipment to help pupils calculate are now used by all staff. Mathematical terms are explained fully and used consistently to avoid any misconceptions. These procedures are new and need more time to become firmly established.
- This year, an additional teacher has been employed to boost older pupils' understanding of mathematics and enable some of them to catch up. Leaders' monitoring shows that this has had a significant impact on increasing pupils' understanding, tackling their misconceptions and improving the progress made.
- Pupils told the inspector that mathematics is one of their favourite subjects because they are invited to come up to the board to show their working out and are given regular problems to solve and challenges to complete.
- Pupils were less enthusiastic about writing. Although results show that pupils generally make good progress in writing, they said that they would like more help in planning their work and improving the quality of their writing of stories.
- A range of strategies has been implemented to raise achievement in reading. Higher expectations of staff and additional training to show them how to teach the skills of reading more effectively are leading to improvement. Reading is popular with pupils. They feel that daily opportunities to read by themselves, and at times read to an adult, help them to read confidently and fluently.
- In key stage 1, early reading is taught effectively. Phonics teaching is well established and pupils show a firm understanding of letters and sounds. At times, not all staff check that pupils follow their instructions when practising the shapes of letters or reading short sentences. Pupils at risk of falling behind are promptly identified and given regular, additional help. Those pupils who read aloud to the inspector during the inspection knew how to decode difficult or unfamiliar words and showed increasing confidence in their early reading.
- In key stage 2, teachers plan creatively to stimulate and retain pupils' interest. For example, in an English lesson focusing on identifying characteristics of people, a member of staff appeared in costume to provoke pupils' thoughts and ideas and consolidate their understanding. This had an immediate impact and sparked pupils' interest and engagement in learning.
- Staff are well organised. Teachers and support staff forge good relations with pupils and manage their behaviour well. They encourage pupils to work by themselves and in small groups for sustained periods of time. During questioning and discussions, pupils are expected to think for themselves, and share their ideas with others.
- The quality of work in pupils' books and leaders' monitoring records confirm that the

overall quality of teaching is good. Observations carried out jointly with the executive headteacher during the inspection noted good teaching in both key stages. However, some inconsistencies were also evident. At times, long introductions prevent pupils from getting on with their work, and this slows their learning and progress. Not all teachers make regular checks of how well each pupil is doing in lessons to ensure that they understand fully and are making the progress expected of them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In this safe, nurturing environment, each pupil is known and cared for well. The school's caring and supportive ethos is shown in the positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils.
- Pupils are keen to take responsibility and serve others. They readily volunteer as fire wardens, junior road safety officers, sports leaders and equipment monitors. Selected pupils remind others of 'the smart rule' to ensure that they keep safe when using computers and social media.
- Weekly religious education lessons provide pupils with a broad understanding of the different beliefs of people from different cultural backgrounds. Assemblies are used well to celebrate diversity and consider the lives of others. Pupils feel they can share their views about the school and any personal concerns and are confident that staff will follow them up.
- Pupils enthuse about the special events, after-school clubs, off-site visits and residential experiences provided for them. Mass participation in the 'daily mile' makes a significant contribution to pupils' health and well-being, and enjoyment of school.
- Pupils value their education and are rarely absent from school. The proportion of pupils persistently absent from school is low.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and respectful and look after one another. They feel that in this small school, everyone knows each other and it's easy to make good friends. They are confident, pleasant and well mannered. They wear their uniforms with pride.
- In lessons, pupils are attentive and follow instructions carefully. They are eager to respond to questions and readily engage in discussion. When asked, pupils said that behaviour in lessons is usually good, but one or two pupils can spoil it by shouting out or misbehaving.
- Throughout the inspection, pupils' conduct around school was exceptional. Lunchtimes are pleasant, sociable occasions where pupils say grace together and sit in friendship groups to eat lunch. During playtime, they participate in small games led by staff and junior play leaders or play cooperatively together in small groups.

- Leaders' monitoring records confirm that very few incidents of misbehaviour occur. Furthermore, hardly any bullying takes place. Pupils who met with the inspector said that bullying doesn't happen and they feel very safe.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In recent years, overall outcomes achieved by pupils have been too low. Pupils have not made enough progress in reading and mathematics.
- Decisive action taken by trust leaders and governors last year has led to rapid improvements in the progress made by pupils. The impact of the executive headteacher in raising expectations and aspirations is clearly evident in pupils' work.
- Better teaching, intensive interventions to boost pupils' learning, regular testing and systematic assessment of how well pupils are doing have all contributed to this rapid improvement. Assessment is much more rigorous and accurate than in the past. Leaders have a clear overview of which pupils are doing well and which ones need additional help to prevent them from underachieving.
- Based on the latest assessment information, leaders are confident that overall outcomes in both key stages will be much higher this year. Most pupils in Year 1 are expected to pass the national screening check in phonics this year. Those who will not be known to have SEND and have been allocated extra support to develop their reading further.
- By the end of key stage 1, recent assessments indicate that a higher than average proportion of Year 2 pupils will meet the expected standard in reading and mathematics this year. In key stage 2, a higher than average proportion of Year 6 pupils should meet the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, a much higher proportion of them are likely to exceed expectations compared with previous years. Leaders feel that these assessments are robust because they have worked with other schools in the association to validate their judgements.
- Very few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. Similarly, very few pupils have SEND. These small numbers make comparisons between them and other pupils nationally unreliable. The school's small size means that each one of them is known well by staff, and additional resources are used appropriately to enable them to make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- Observations during the inspection, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of assessment information confirmed the views of leaders that most pupils are making the progress expected of them. Pupils' books show good coverage in mathematics. Regular tasks are set to develop their fluency in arithmetic and understanding of calculation. Most lessons include tasks to enable pupils to practise what they have learned, and to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Writing and topic books show a wide range of styles of writing. Leaders have implemented revised procedures to provide feedback on pupils' work. This includes requiring pupils to respond to any comments made by staff. This provides helpful guidance to pupils about how to improve their work, but these procedures are not applied consistently by all staff.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders ensure that children get off to a good start in the Reception class. They are provided with a rich, nurturing environment in which to learn.
- Experienced staff ensure that children have good experiences of teacher-led learning and child-initiated play. Daily planning makes good use of the resources and equipment available. Staff find out about what interests children and use their ideas and suggestions to inform learning and play.
- Free flow between the classroom and outdoor learning area is well established. However, space for outdoor play is limited. A new outdoor space currently under construction is almost ready for use. Leaders acknowledge that this provides an ideal opportunity to revise current planning to ensure that use of this new area is maximised to broaden children's experiences of the outdoors.
- Phonics is taught systematically. Teachers plan a range of practical activities to promote early reading through play and cooperative games. Small numbers enable staff to group the most able children with others in Year 1 to provide them with extra challenges to extend their learning. Less able children are quickly identified and supported so that no one gets left behind. Not all staff check that during group activities, every child copies the letters and sounds they want them to learn accurately.
- Established procedures are in place to carefully monitor children's progress. Daily observations and regular assessments inform views about how well each child is doing. Staff encourage children to use their 'mark-making' books to record their early writing, drawing and use of number.
- Cohorts are small. This makes comparisons of the achievement of children from year to year unreliable. However, in general, most children attain a good level of development by the end of Reception and are suitably prepared for their next stage of education.
- Staff forge good links with parents and carers. They welcome them into school to find out about their children's learning and how they can support them at home. Learning journals and electronic records are maintained and shared with parents to keep them informed of their child's progress.
- Leadership has changed this year. An experienced and effective teacher leads the key stage. These arrangements are new and need more time to become firmly established.

School details

Unique reference number	143050
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10088637

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Rod Kay
Executive Headteacher	Vicky Allen
Telephone number	01986 784205
Website	www.bmpy-suffolk.secure-dbprimary.com
Email address	office.bramfield@greatwoodsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average. A smaller than average proportion of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The school has strong links with St Andrew's Church in the village.
- The school is part of the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich). It is also part of an association of three local small schools, all of which are part of the academy trust. The three schools share the same governing body and an executive headteacher.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in 2017. A new head of school was appointed in 2018.

- The school's most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) was on 18 May 2017 and it received a judgement of good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all four classes. All observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils, the chair and another member of the governing body, and two representatives of the academy trust.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He looked at safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work. He considered 22 free texts sent by parents and carers during the inspection, 29 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 18 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. The survey of pupils' views was not used by leaders on this inspection.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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