



Brailes CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125626
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293313
Inspection date 6 February 2007
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lower Brailes
School category	Voluntary controlled		Banbury
Age range of pupils	3–11		OX15 5AP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01608 685253
Number on roll (school)	89	Fax number	01608 685253
Number on roll (day care)	13		
Number on roll (funded nursery education)	13		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Christopher Righton
		Headteacher	Sarah Plaskitt
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		
Date of previous day care inspection	18 May 2004		
Date of previous funded nursery education inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3–11	6 February 2007	293313

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brailes Church of England Primary is a small school that takes children from the immediate village and from a large area around it that includes five other villages. Nearly all pupils come from families of White British heritage. The school has an above average proportion of pupils that have learning difficulties or disabilities. The number of pupils in each age group is much smaller than average and the range of abilities is wide. When children start school in the Reception class, the range of knowledge and experiences is smaller than that expected for their age. A pre-school group and a lunch club are run by the governors of the school. The pre-school group takes children from three years to under five years and runs from 09.00 till 12.00. The lunch club is open to children attending the pre-school and takes place from 12.00 till 13.00.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Brailes Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Many aspects of its provision are good but inconsistencies in several areas result in satisfactory effectiveness overall. The newly formed senior leadership team has correctly identified many of the areas that need improvement and strategies have been employed to address them, but in many cases it is too soon to see an impact.

Standards are usually below average because of the above average number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, standards fluctuate significantly from year to year because of the small number of pupils and the variable balance of abilities in each age group. Overall achievement is satisfactory. Where teaching is good and pupils' activities are well planned to meet their needs, pupils' progress is also good, but this is not consistent through the school. Teaching overall is satisfactory because expectations for pupils' progress are not as high as they could be. The school has correctly identified that the most able pupils do not consistently achieve well and have introduced a range of additional activities and greater challenge. This is beginning to have a positive impact and pupils' progress is improving. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress in their learning because of the additional well structured activities that are provided for them.

Pupils' personal development is good. Most enjoy school and try to do well. They get on well with each other and their social and moral development is good. They do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to develop an understanding of England as a multicultural society. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory and the pastoral care provided for all pupils is good. They feel safe and secure. Children in the Reception class make a good start to their education because activities extend their knowledge and skills well. A positive aspect of the generally satisfactory school curriculum is the way staff are making positive links between subjects. This stimulates pupils' good interest and curiosity.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Many new ideas and positive initiatives have been embraced over the last few years, but not enough time has been given to ensuring that they are fully embedded and consistent before more are introduced. This has been recognised by the headteacher and school improvement is now focused on ensuring that good teaching and learning are at the heart of what they do. The tracking of pupils' work and progress is well established and is used well to identify those who are slow to improve so that support is given. The data are not yet used sufficiently as a means to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning so that weaknesses are addressed quickly. Based on the evidence of past developments, such as the better provision for information and communication technology (ICT), the capacity for improvement is judged as satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement by raising teachers' expectations for pupils' rate of progress and ensure all teachers set activities that not only build on pupils' past learning but also challenge their thinking.
- Provide opportunities that enable pupils to develop a better understanding of other cultures and faiths across Britain.
- Use data on pupils' progress to more accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and so determine the best course of action to bring improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily through the school but standards vary hugely because of the small cohorts, which makes statistical comparison unreliable. Good progress is made in the Reception class, especially in children's attitudes to work and in their speaking and listening skills. Despite this overall good progress, standards on entry to Year 1 are below those expected. In 2006, standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average and too few pupils reached the standards of which they are capable, especially the most able. Over the last three years, progress in Years 3 to 6 has improved but it remains satisfactory overall because it is inconsistent through the key stage. The best progress is in Years 4, 5 and 6 and in 2006 pupils at the end of Year 6 exceeded the challenging targets set for them in mathematics and almost met them in English. Not all of the most able pupils reached the higher standard of Level 5 in English. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress through the school because their needs are identified successfully and additional activities both in and out of class successfully focus on their individual targets for improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory with particular strengths in their social and moral development. Pupils have a good appreciation of what is right and wrong and show care for one another. Behaviour is good and the majority of pupils act sensibly. They get on well with each other, recognising each other's strengths and weaknesses. They do not have a similar awareness of people of other cultures and ethnic groups within English society. Pupils say they enjoy school and most attend regularly. Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities and carry them out well. The school council, for example, is enjoying its new responsibility for deciding how to use the Tesco vouchers. Pupils make a good contribution to improving the life of the school but do not have many opportunities to contribute to the wider community. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe and use this to make positive choices. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their next stage of education and the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory. There are examples of good teaching but it is not consistent through the school. Teachers are planning their lessons more effectively to meet the needs of their pupils but the range of abilities in each class is wide and not all staff are sufficiently effective at meeting all of their needs. In the Reception class, teaching is frequently good as it successfully extends children's learning through adult-led tasks and independent self-chosen activities. Effective teaching and learning are also evident in Years 4, 5 and 6 but generally there is insufficient challenge to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Pupils commented that they enjoy their lessons and teachers help them to understand how to make their work better. Marking and discussion support pupils' understanding of what they are doing well and targets are set for the next stages of learning, although they are not reviewed as frequently as they could. Teaching assistants are well trained and used effectively to support pupils in a variety of groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily. The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children in the Reception class are also well served by the Foundation Stage curriculum as it gives many opportunities for learning through first hand experiences. The school has reviewed its curriculum and is now making positive links between subjects, such as English and history, and this stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment. More needs to be done, however, to ensure that the curriculum provides sufficient challenge to all pupils. The provision for ICT has improved and supports pupils' learning in many subjects. The curriculum also provides pupils with a good understanding of how to make positive choices about staying healthy and safe. Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and older pupils look forward to the annual residential visit. There is a good range of after school activities, which pupils enjoy, and the school has links with other schools, which satisfactorily extend pupils' knowledge and experiences. Links with local businesses also provide pupils with a satisfactory awareness of the world of work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Although care, support and guidance are satisfactory overall, pastoral care is good. Relationships through the school are good and pupils feel safe and well cared for. One child spoken to said that 'Teachers are friendly and make you feel confident.' Another added, 'You can go to them if you're worried and they listen.' The school has made great efforts to help the pupils feel secure and responded to their ideas for keypads on the outside doors. Pupils new to the school are well supported and procedures to

introduce children into the Reception class are good. Those pupils with social and emotional difficulties are well supported. They develop more effective social skills with the help of their 'circle of friends'. There are clear expectations for good behaviour that pupils understand. The headteacher and governors ensure procedures for the safeguarding of all pupils are in place.

Academic support and guidance are satisfactory. Pupils are given targets for their future learning. They are well structured in mathematics, but more variable in English and are more supportive in some classes than in others. Targets for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are more effective because they are more focused on the individual child and reviewed more frequently.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and the new leadership team are a positive force in school improvement. They have clear roles and responsibilities that together provide a clearer view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Data from tests and the monitoring of teaching are giving them a satisfactory overview of the school. This information is beginning to be used more effectively to identify where improvement is required, for example, the headteacher had identified concerns about inconsistencies in teaching and learning. The information is not yet used well enough to pinpoint precisely where and what action is needed to bring improvement. The school improvement plan focuses appropriately on areas identified as requiring improvement. A number of strategies to bring improvement have been introduced, In many areas, it is too soon to see an impact, although those designed to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum have proved successful in raising standards.

Governors are kept well informed and provide a satisfactory sounding board for the school. Several new governors have recently joined the governing body and are keen to support the staff in their work. Parents' views are regularly sought and taken into account and the school works well with a variety of outside agencies to support pupils' development and learning.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 2

Children are well cared for. They benefit from playing and learning in a welcoming environment where they can play very safely in and out of doors. Planning shows a broad range of play activities and learning is enhanced by children suggesting what they would like to play with. The staff have created a 'handful of rules' such as 'taking turns and sharing' and as a result children behave well and make good progress in working and playing happily together. Children's well-being is maintained effectively because child protection, health and safety and risk assessment procedures are very clear and known to all staff. All required documentation concerning keeping children

safe is very thorough; all staff are well qualified and vetted before working with the children.

Staff effectively promote children's good health because they encourage children to be active and enjoy daily outdoor physical activities. Children are provided with healthy fruit snacks including a drink but are not given the opportunity to help themselves to drinks at any time during the sessions. Staff sit with the children at the lunch club, successfully encouraging them to eat a healthy packed lunch.

Since the last inspection in May 2004, there have been no complaints about the registered day care that required Ofsted or the school to take action so that the day care continued to meet the National Standards. The school is required to keep a record of complaints about the registered day care made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints about the registered day care other than those made to Ofsted.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

1) Ensure children have easy access to regular drinks of water.

Effectiveness of funded nursery education

Grade: 3

Children enjoy attending the pre-school and settle quickly because staff are kind and very interested in the children. Consequently, children's behaviour is good and they concentrate well on activities such as playing in the shoe shop or singing songs with the vicar. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff are good at engaging in interesting and purposeful play with the children and in encouraging them to develop their speaking skills and extend their vocabulary. Adults effectively ask questions to encourage children to think and use language, and they respond to children's interests. They also praise and encourage the children at all times and ensure children experience a stimulating balance of active play and relaxation. However, assessment of children's learning and progress towards the nationally expected levels is informal and does not show how much each child has achieved during his or her time in the setting. Hence, planning to meet children's various needs is also informal, although the competent and long standing staff know each child very well. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are quickly identified and receive satisfactory support so that they can take part in all the play activities.

Good relationships with parents ensure a close link between home and school which has a beneficial impact on children's progress. Parents receive good information about the pre-school via an attractive prospectus and staff are always available and happy to speak with parents before and after sessions. Staff tell parents about accidents and get parents to sign the accident record. Staff and parents are very aware of the procedures to be followed if there is a complaint. Children know how to safely evacuate the premises and fire drills are always recorded.

The environment is clean and has some beanbags and carpets where children can look at books. Resources are of a satisfactory quality but there is very little cupboard space,

which makes storage difficult and gives a somewhat cluttered appearance, hampering children's ability to select their own resources or find lost articles of clothing. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager has worked very hard to establish comprehensive policies and procedures, which is a good improvement since the last care inspection. However, there is limited monitoring and evaluation of the pre-school setting to determine its effectiveness.

Recommendations or actions to improve the funded nursery education

1) Plan and provide a suitable range of learning activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs and intellectual capabilities. 2) Devise an assessment system which clearly charts children's progress towards the expected levels. 3) Monitor and evaluate the quality of the pre-school education.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	2
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	2
How effectively is the day care organised?	2
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	Yes
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	No

The effectiveness of the funded nursery education

The quality and standards of the funded nursery education	3
How effective is the funded nursery education in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
How effective are teaching and learning?	3
How effective is the partnership with parents and carers in promoting the nursery education?	2
How effective is the funded education in helping children to make a positive contribution?	2
How effectively is the funded nursery education led and managed?	3
Does the funded nursery education meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Is the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development education fostered?	Yes
Has the nursery education improved since the last inspection?	Yes
Does the funded nursery education require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we thought about your school.

What we liked about the school

- This is a satisfactory school that has many good features.
- Most of you are happy at school and enjoy your lessons.
- You get on well with each other and the adults in the school.
- Most of you behave sensibly and are kind to each other.
- Teachers are making your work more interesting by linking subjects so that activities are more meaningful.
- Most of you try to do well in your work but you could make better progress.
- You understand how to keep healthy and safe.
- You are given opportunities to take responsibility and you do it well.
- The teachers look after you well and help you feel safe and secure.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working hard to make the school better and to help you make good progress.

What we have asked the school to do now

- Ensure that all teachers give you activities that build on what you already know and do, and challenge your thinking so you make better progress.
- For teachers to help you find out more about the range of different people who live in England and learn more about their cultures, festivals and beliefs.
- For the staff to check more effectively on how well you are getting on in your work so that, where necessary, changes can be made to the teaching so that you all learn as well as you can. Thank you again for helping us.