

Brabourne Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118663
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326865
Inspection date	14 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Janet Simms

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	103
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bruce Claridge
Headteacher	Glyn Jones
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Brabourne Ashford TN25 5LQ
Telephone number	01303 813276

Age group	4–11
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01303 813276

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following:

- whether more able pupils are doing as well as they should be at both key stages, especially in English
- progress in writing and whether pupils are on track to achieve better standards than in the 2008 test results
- how effective the current provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is, including how good pupils' achievement is and how well ICT is used by pupils across the curriculum
- whether the EYFS provides the outstanding start to children's education claimed.

Inspectors gathered evidence on the day from discussions with staff, pupils, governors and others. A range of school documentation was examined and first-hand evidence was gathered from observing pupils in lessons and at play. Parents' views were gathered from questionnaires completed prior to the inspection, and through talking to some at the start of the day.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a rural school serving several villages on the outskirts of Ashford. There is a separate, small Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Reception class and three other mixed year-group classes for Years 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6. All pupils come from White British backgrounds and the proportion of families claiming free school meals is very low. The school holds an Activemark for sport and the Financial Management in Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has some outstanding aspects which include pupils' excellent personal development and well-being, which results from the exceptionally strong pastoral care and support. These are features the parents value very highly indeed. Inspection findings confirm the views of a parent whose comments summarise many others, in saying about the headteacher and staff, 'their care and love for this school spreads outwards and downwards to the parents and pupils, who are all proud to be a part of Brabourne School'. Pupils achieve well academically, but it is this valuable balance of personal and academic development which creates the school's 'friendly, helpful and effective' atmosphere, in the words of another parent. Pupils feel happy and safe here, showing an outstanding level of enjoyment in learning. They become confident, well-rounded young people as they move through the school. Attendance is good because they love coming to school. Understanding of healthy lifestyles is excellent and pupils use the extensive range of opportunities in the curriculum, at play and in extra-curricular events to interact together very actively. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils are polite and courteous. Many described eloquently to inspectors their very positive experiences and how pupils themselves contribute to running and organising the school day-to-day.

Numbers are small and standards vary somewhat, but from an average start, pupils progress well, reaching above average standards by the end of Year 6. Achievement in mathematics is a particular strength, contributing effectively to good levels of key skills to equip pupils for their future education and economic well-being. Writing has improved, but disappointing Year 6 test results in 2008 did not match the previous standards of accurately assessed work. The school and its partners have analysed this in depth and good systems are now in place to avert recurrence. Pupils achieve well in subjects such as music, physical education and art, all of which enhance enjoyment significantly.

Changes in Years 1 and 2 have greatly improved the performance of more able pupils, resolving a key issue from the previous report. Standards here are also above average and Year 2's test results in 2008 showed significant improvement in writing, which now matches the school's historically high standards in reading. The school recognises the challenge this will present in maintaining the momentum of good achievement for more able pupils throughout the school. While lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities show good, steady progress across all years, the school accurately identifies that the progress of some more able pupils slows down at the start of Key Stage 2, accelerating again in Year 5. Plans to resolve this have begun and current pupils' achievement in English, including writing, is good.

Teaching is good and inspection evidence confirms the school's judgements of some outstanding practice. Good curriculum planning ensures an exciting balance of activities which stimulate good learning and enjoyment. The school has significantly improved the provision of computers and other ICT equipment since the previous report. Together with improved staff confidence, this has created good standards in the subject and pupils confirm their extensive use of ICT across the curriculum. An outstanding range of extra-curricular opportunities, particularly in sport, drama and music, further enrich provision. Younger pupils discuss targets sensibly with staff and are beginning to understand them well, but formalised academic guidance, for instance through focused advice in marking, is inconsistent. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have formal targets and generally know how to help themselves to achieve them. Although Years 3 and 4 have targets, most are not focused well enough to challenge more able pupils. Safeguarding procedures are excellent so pupils feel safe, with an acute sense of hazards such as those arising

from icy surfaces on the day of inspection. Staff know pupils exceptionally well, so are constantly vigilant and responsive to individuals' changing personal circumstances.

The school's good leadership and management are the subject of many parents' appreciative comments. This has sustained good standards and achievement for their children, without compromising their happiness and strong social and moral development. Through good self-evaluation, the school meets its challenging targets and has good capacity to improve further. Well-focused plans ensure that effective improvement happens, particularly in the short term, and longer-term plans are satisfactory. Staff have rightly prioritised the need to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, and to extend the school's very positive contribution to community cohesion at the local level to include stronger national and international dimensions. Good governance supports the school well and provides increasing levels of challenge, for instance about areas such as writing. Excellent collaboration with schools and other local partners provides great benefits, for example in curriculum and extra-curricular developments. Pupils and their parents comment positively on their good preparation for the range of different schools they access after Year 6, being confident that they settle there quickly and do well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in EYFS is good, with some outstanding features. Children enter school with skills which are typical for their age and make good progress to reach levels above those expected by the end of Reception. Children settle very happily and quickly into school routines. Very good procedures enable staff to get to know children before they start school and important information is shared in advance to promote children's good, rapid development. A wide range of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities and equipment ensure good learning in a safe, well-planned environment.

Outstanding care results in excellent personal and social development, so children form good relationships with adults and other children and speak very confidently about what they are doing. Parents value EYFS provision highly and liaison with families is a strong feature, resulting in children enjoying school from the start. Thorough assessment procedures are based on systematic observation and shared discussion. These inform staff well in guiding children expertly towards their next steps in learning. Leadership and management of this phase are good and the school is aware of the need to strengthen elements such as action planning. Under good direction from the EYFS leader, the strong team creates a happy, stimulating environment where children are safe and secure and in which they thrive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils maintain good progress through all years.
- Provide more focused marking and academic guidance so that pupils in all year groups understand clear targets for improvement.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

27 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brabourne C of E Primary School, Ashford TN25 5LQ

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school when we came for the inspection. We had a very interesting day there and I am writing to tell you what we found out.

- Yours is a good school and there are some outstanding things about it.
- Children get a good start in Reception. They are starting to develop good attitudes, confidence and independence in learning.
- Your personal development is outstanding and we were impressed by your behaviour and enthusiasm. We agree with your parents, who particularly value these things about the school.
- Your progress in English and mathematics is good, but you do well in subjects like art, music and PE too, which helps you to enjoy your learning.
- Teaching is good so you learn well. Progress has improved for pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially in writing.
- Your use of ICT has improved and your standards in mathematics are very good by Year 6.
- The head and other staff manage the school well, making sure you are safe, happy and enjoying school, but also organising things so that you progress well.

Even in a good school like yours, there are things which would make it better. We have agreed with the headteacher that the school should do the following things and we feel sure you will help where you can.

- Make sure that pupils who learn faster continue to progress well in all years across the school.
- Give you more useful guidance, through teachers' marking for instance, about how all of you can improve and meet your targets.

Thank you again.

Yours faithfully

Janet Simms

Lead inspector