

Brampton Abbotts CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116867
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	379317
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Mark Mumby HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Mason
Headteacher	Lynne Potter
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Mark Mumby

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes in the school, including the specialist teaching of French and music. Ten teaching sessions were observed, taught by seven teachers; on three of these observations the inspector was joined by the headteacher. The inspector spoke informally with pupils in lessons and at breaktimes. He observed the teaching of reading and listened to some pupils reading in each key stage. The inspector met with members of staff and with three members of the governing body. He took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at some of the school's documentation including that relating to pupils' learning, behaviour, safeguarding and self-evaluation. He considered the responses to questionnaires from pupils, staff and 36 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Brampton Abbotts CofE Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. Virtually all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average, although there are fewer pupils receiving additional external support or with a statement of special educational needs than found nationally. The school meets the government's floor standard for achievement.

The school has achieved Healthy School Status, Eco-schools bronze award and Football Charter Status.

There is a privately run nursery on the school site which was not included in this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress from low starting points. Their attainment in English and mathematics is in line with the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. This is the result of an engaging thematic curriculum and teaching which is consistently at least satisfactory, with much that is good or better.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall because the good and better practice is not consistent throughout the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have too few opportunities to choose activities independently and learn through exploration. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the majority of teaching is at least good, but this effective practice is not consistent because assessment is not always used well enough to ensure that activities are sufficiently challenging.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe in school. They take on a good range of responsibilities and demonstrate mature attitudes both in and out of lessons. Attendance levels have been low in the past and the school has taken action to address this. Its actions have been effective in considerably reducing absence levels due to term-time holidays and sickness. However, there are still pupils who miss out on their education because their attendance is too low.
- The school is led well by its senior leaders and an effective governing body. The recently appointed Chair of the Governing Body has introduced a renewed vigour to its work. Consequently, systems to hold the school to account and ensure pupils are safeguarded are robust. Pupils' progress is assessed accurately and interventions are used well, but the tracking of pupils' progress is insufficiently systematic.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that the learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good range of purposeful opportunities which enable children to explore and learn independently
 - planning activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage which provide a good balance between those led by adults and those initiated by the children themselves, both indoors and outside
 - making consistently effective use of assessment in Key Stages 1 and 2 to plan teaching and work that ensure that pupils are fully challenged throughout every lesson.

- Improve attendance levels to be consistently at or above the national average by
 - working with parents and carers to reduce holidays taken in term time
 - ensuring pupils are only absent from school when they are too unwell to attend or pose a risk to the health of others.

- Take a more systematic approach to tracking the progress of individual pupils to enable leaders, managers and the governing body to hold the school to account for its performance more effectively.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers have very positive views about how well the school meets their children's needs. Virtually all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire stated that they feel their children are making good progress. These views are substantiated by inspection findings. Pupils enjoy school and make good progress. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age, particularly in their language development. They make good progress during focused adult-led activities in Reception. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to learn through activities they have initiated themselves. By the end of Reception, children's learning and development remain below the national average. Their personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength and they develop secure reading skills. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' progress improves. They develop their reading skills well and attain standards in reading close to the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations by the end Key Stage 2. Pupils make consistently good progress in French and music where they benefit from specialist teaching.

Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs attain standards in line with similar pupils nationally, but below the national average for all pupils. The

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school uses a range of intervention and support strategies for these pupils which are proving to be effective in supporting learning. Some of these pupils are making rapid progress and successfully narrowing the gap between their performance and that of other pupils.

Pupils present their work well most of the time. Older pupils, in particular, show a strong sense of pride in their work. Occasionally, pupils' presentation lapses, for example when they don't always use a ruler to draw tables in their mathematics books.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is consistently at least satisfactory, with much that is good or better. This is not as good as the views expressed by parents and carers. The combination of secure teaching, an engaging curriculum and good attitudes from the pupils enables them to make good progress. Where teaching is most effective, teachers use assessment well to match activities closely to pupils' needs. Consequently, the level of challenge is high and pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve. Very good cross-curricular links through the school's thematic curriculum enable pupils to develop their basic skills across a wide range of subjects. For example, older pupils made particularly good progress in developing their writing skills through their personal, social and health education work. The learning had been developed over the week and pupils worked conscientiously to prepare pieces of writing based on their own research and with a focus on their learning targets. The pace of learning was good because the lesson got off to a brisk start, expectations were clear and the teacher provided helpful guidance and encouragement to individual pupils as the lesson progressed. This very effective style of teaching was reflected in pupils' books from the previous term when they had studied the Victorians.

Teachers' good subject knowledge is a strength seen in many lessons. For example, when teaching reading to younger pupils, the teacher used her expertise well to ensure that all of the pupils were reading and blending letter sounds accurately as they developed their skills to write difficult words such as 'photograph'. The curriculum is enriched through good quality teaching of French and music by specialists. They use their very good subject knowledge well to engage the pupils in their learning, so making lessons interesting and enabling the pupils to make good progress. Pupils demonstrated good social skills and enhanced their cultural development in a French lesson where they worked in pairs to practise asking and answering questions related to time.

Although much of the teaching is good, a minority is less effective because the intended learning lacks clarity, or activities are insufficiently challenging. For example, pupils are expected to complete repetitive mathematical calculations. Teachers occasionally miss opportunities to use assessment well enough to assess learning during lessons and move pupils on in their learning quickly enough.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adult-led activities are effective in helping the

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children to learn. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to initiate their own learning. This is because the learning environment has not been organised to include sufficient stimulating resources, indoors and outside, such as role-play areas, places to explore mark-making and early writing, resources to stimulate vocabulary development or activities which encourage cooperative play and exploration.

The school has implemented a marking policy which has brought about improvements since the previous inspection. Teachers' marking of pupils' work shows them how well they have done. In many cases it also provides clear guidance for improvement enabling pupils to learn quickly. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils are also set targets to help them understand the next steps in their learning but these targets are not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' individual needs.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Questionnaire responses indicate that the majority of pupils, parents and carers feel that behaviour is good in the school. This was confirmed through discussions with pupils, one of whom said, 'behaviour is brilliant most of the time'. There are incidents of unacceptable behaviour from time to time and these are recorded in the school's log. Inspection evidence indicates that the school deals with these incidents effectively. Pupils agree that this is the case. The school's strategies for supporting pupils with challenging behaviour are effective. As a result, the school provides a calm and purposeful learning environment where pupils are courteous, relate well to each other and to adults and play well together.

The majority of parents and carers feel that the school deals with bullying effectively, although a few expressed concern about this. The school takes a pro-active approach to minimising bullying. For example, it raises awareness through an annual anti-bullying week. As a result, pupils have a good understanding about different types of bullying. They say that it does occur from time to time but is dealt with effectively. This view is reflected in the school's records.

Pupils have good opportunities to take on a wide range of responsibilities including team captains, young leaders, school ambassadors, junior road safety officers and helping younger pupils with reading. These provide excellent experiences for pupils to develop their social skills as well as contributing to the learning and development of others. For example, two junior road safety officers led an assembly during the inspection. They modelled excellent teaching as they helped the whole school to develop their understanding about the emergency services.

The school has taken the low attendance of pupils seriously. It has been considered at governing body meetings and the school has taken action to address two specific issues; high levels of sickness absence and absence due to pupils taking holidays during term time. The school's actions have been successful with a considerable reduction in absence for these reasons from autumn 2010 to autumn 2011.

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Leadership and management

The senior leaders and the governing body have high expectations and a clear vision for the improvement of the school. They have planned well to address issues raised at the previous inspection and have made improvements based on their own evaluation. School development planning is clearly focused on appropriate priorities. It has been used effectively to drive improvements, such as improving the marking of pupils' work and the effectiveness of governance. As a result, the quality of marking has improved and pupils have a greater understanding about how to improve their work which is enabling them to progress more rapidly in their learning. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

The governing body has good systems in place to evaluate the work of the school and, consequently, understands the school well. It receives appropriately detailed information from the school's leaders and has a good understanding of performance data. The governing body challenges the school effectively through questioning the headteacher at meetings and its contribution to the school's improvement is effective. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including recruitment processes and staff training, are robust. The school's work to improve attendance is being very successful.

The school has implemented a thematic curriculum which meets the needs of the pupils well. It is enriched through visits out of school which have been planned to add interest and excitement to pupils' learning as well as develop their cultural understanding. Extra-curricular clubs have been carefully organised to ensure that there is something for everyone from Reception to Year 6. Clubs are wide-ranging including sporting, music and the eco-committee.

The school evaluates its work well and there are good links between improvement planning and the management of teachers' performance. Teachers speak highly of the support they receive for their own professional development. The school uses assessments well to ensure that intervention work is targeted accurately to those pupils who need it. Consequently, all pupils are given equal opportunity to succeed and no pupils are allowed to fall behind in their learning. Although the school has a rigorous approach to assessment, its tracking processes are not systematic enough to enable leaders and governors to monitor the impact of its work efficiently.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brampton Abbotts CofE Primary School, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7DE

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school this week. I enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons. I particularly enjoyed meeting so many of you who have different responsibilities in school. The junior road safety officers did an excellent job of taking assembly on Thursday.

Your achievement is good, but your school is satisfactory overall. This is because the teaching is not even throughout the school. In some lessons the teaching is good or even better, but in others it is only satisfactory. This is mainly because the work in these lessons is not challenging enough to help you to learn as quickly as you could. The children in Reception do not get enough opportunities to choose activities for themselves because there are not enough exciting things for them to play and learn with in the classroom and outside. I have asked the school to make sure that all of your lessons are good or better and to provide more activities for Reception children to choose for themselves.

One of you told me that, 'behaviour is good most of the time'. You are absolutely right, and when someone does something wrong the adults deal with this well. You told me that you feel safe in school. This is because the adults look after you well. It is good that the school has helped many of you to attend school more regularly, but attendance levels are only just getting as high as they should be. Please try to come to school every day because it is important that you don't miss out on your education.

I wish you all well for the future and hope that you will always do your best and help your school to get even better.

Yours sincerely

Mark Mumby
Her Majesty's Inspector

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