

Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120428
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380020
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeremy Spencer HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neville Jackson
Headteacher	Marie Denham
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2009
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors visited nine lessons and one assembly, observing four teachers. They also held meetings with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of school documents including safeguarding arrangements, policies, minutes from meetings, data about pupils' progress, pupils' exercise books and the school's improvement plans. The inspection team also analysed responses on 61 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with 13 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is teaching good enough to secure improvement in pupils' progress and engagement across the school for different groups of pupils?
- To what extent have leaders and managers, including the governing body, been successful in embedding ambition and driving improvement?
- How successful have the school's strategies been to improve attendance?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The Early Years Foundation Stage has both a Nursery and a Reception class. The proportion of pupils known or believed to speak English as an additional language has risen sharply in recent years and is now broadly in line with the national average. There is provision for a school breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body. The school has achieved the Activemark award and has gained Healthy School status.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School provides pupils with a good education. The school has many strengths and is well respected in the community because staff have developed outstanding partnerships with parents and carers. Parents and carers feel very well supported and firmly believe that children are well cared for and make good progress. As one parent reported, 'I could not have asked for more help or understanding from the school and I will be for ever grateful for it.' The strong confidence of parents and carers supports pupils in the marked extent to which they feel very safe and secure in school. As a result, they behave well and develop strong relationships both with peers and with adults. Combined with the good teaching at the school, this enables different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are believed to speak English as an additional language, to make good progress from their starting points.

Pupils' attendance has been low for several years. Attendance is improving rapidly but the school accepts that it must work harder to ensure that families of children who are persistently absent from school bring their children more often, and arrive in time for the start of the school day.

Teachers deliver the large majority of lessons with imagination and flair and this helps to ensure that pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. Teachers ensure that lessons are carefully planned in order to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. However, as lessons progress, some teachers are not as flexible as they could be in moving away from their plans, when necessary, to re-shape learning in order to meet learners' emerging needs. All teachers explain to pupils what they are learning to do in each lesson. However, on some occasions this can be rushed and pupils do not fully understand how their learning is developing. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to discuss their learning with peers as the lesson progresses, and allow time for pupils to reflect upon their own learning. However, in other lessons, teachers place more emphasis on completing tasks than they do upon evaluating learning, meaning that valuable opportunities are missed to engage pupils in the learning process.

The leadership and management of the school, including the work of the governing body, are good. The school has been successful in addressing issues outlined in the previous inspection, particularly in increasing the proportions of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1. School self-evaluation is accurate. The strong track record of improvement led by the leadership team and a motivated and

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ambitious staff team indicate that the school has good capacity to continue to improve. All statutory policies are in place and up-to-date. However, the governing body does not have a robust system to review school policies at regular intervals and so ensure that policies do not become outdated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' levels of attainment, increase rates of progress and improve the quality of assessment, teaching and learning by:
 - working together as a whole school community to raise and maintain attendance to a minimum of 95% by December 2012, and by improving pupils' punctuality
 - developing teachers' confidence and ability to re-shape learning tasks during lessons to meet pupils' needs better
 - developing systems to ensure that pupils are given more frequent opportunities to evaluate their own learning and progress and in doing so become more engaged in the learning process.

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that the governing body establishes a systematic review of all school policies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and their achievement is good. Children begin in the Nursery with skills that are below expectations for their age. Most pupils meet their targets and make good progress from their starting points as they move through the school. They leave Year 2 with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is broadly in line with expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because their needs are carefully assessed and planned for. The school prepares for these pupils good and appropriate individual education plans which are made appealing and accessible to them, for example, through the use of pictures or stickers matched to their favourite cartoon or film characters. This ensures that pupils are motivated to achieve their targets. The plans are used well by all adults working in classrooms to support learners' needs.

All pupils spoken to during the inspection told inspectors that they feel very safe in school at all times. One pupil said, 'If ever I have a problem, the teachers are always kind and they always help me straight away.' Pupils also have an excellent understanding about what might constitute an unsafe situation. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating and the need to exercise regularly. Exercise-related after-school clubs are well attended and pupils choose to be physically active at playtimes. They make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school, for example, through the school council and a broad range of 'monitor' roles. Pupils also make good links with the wider community and have been involved in a 'Placecheck' project, organised by the local Neighbourhood Team. This involved pupils in identifying ways in which the local community could be improved and led to a

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published report. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and evident in their positive relationships with each other and in their good behaviour. They demonstrate good spiritual awareness during moments of calm in school assemblies and in some lessons. During an outstanding lesson, pupils were observed discussing ‘what calm feels like’ and made some mature and well-considered contributions. Despite these strengths, in some lessons, insufficient time is spent reflecting upon learning. Pupils are becoming increasingly aware of the cultural diversity of our society due to improvements being made in the school’s curriculum.

Although pupils’ attendance is low, it is improving rapidly. A parent support adviser has been appointed to help monitor attendance and support families whose children have low attendance. Improving attendance and pupils’ satisfactory basic skills indicate that pupils are securing satisfactory development of workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lessons, pupils made very good progress because they were completely clear about how their learning was developing, and learning was pitched at exactly the right level for them. However, this was not the case in all lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers use questioning techniques well to promote pupils’ use of extended thinking skills. The school also places a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to develop their speaking

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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and listening skills and does this well. Pupils listen to and value ideas contributed by their peers and have frequent opportunities to talk with partners and in small groups.

Teachers mark pupils work carefully and ensure that pupils receive clear guidance as to how they can improve their work. Younger pupils, who are often in the early stages of learning to read, are given clear guidance through verbal feedback.

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum. Topic themes are planned imaginatively and maintain a sharp focus on the development of pupils’ key skills as they move through the school. A range of trips organised by the school supports the curriculum well. For example, pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about a visit they had made to a farm. A broad range of extra-curricular clubs, including dance, choir and film, are well-attended by pupils.

The school makes good provision for pupils’ care, guidance and support, including pupils who attend the school’s breakfast club, which operates in a safe and caring environment. Strong links with external agencies ensure that pupils receive prompt access to specialist services at times of need. Individual case studies indicate that those pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable are cared for well by the school and make good progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff demonstrate a clear determination to continue to improve and they feel proud to be a part of this small school. The headteacher has established a calm and well-organised environment and has effectively directed the work of the staff team, many of whom carry out a number of leadership roles. Priorities have been clearly communicated and expectations are high across the school. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the school’s current priorities and effective systems are in place to ensure good communication with the school. The governing body provides both challenge and support to the headteacher and other leaders in equal measure. This has resulted in good outcomes for pupils and means that the school provides good value for money. Although all statutory policies are in place, the school acknowledges that a clear cycle of review needs to be re-established to ensure that all policies continue to be reviewed systematically.

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The school listens well to the views of parents and carers, which accounts for the very good level of satisfaction expressed in responses to the inspection questionnaires. There is a commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity and there are no reported cases of discrimination at the school in recent years. The school’s contribution to community cohesion is good. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for development in this respect, following an effective audit of the school’s provision. Pupils show a high degree of tolerance and understanding for others in the school who come from backgrounds different to their own.

Good partnership working enables the school to access opportunities that would not be possible if they were working alone. For example, the school works as part of a well-established ‘learning network’ with other local schools and, in order to minimise costs, staff have shared training with other local schools covering themes including able, gifted and talented pupils and the development of pupils’ reading skills. Effective links with other local schools ensure pupils’ smooth transition to the next phase of their education.

Nationally required safeguarding checks have been undertaken by the school and child protection arrangements are secure and robust. Staff and members of the governing body demonstrate a good understanding of child protection processes and procedures. Carefully considered risk assessments are in place for all school activities and resources.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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School information shows that children enter the Nursery with skills that are below expectations for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the development of their personal and social skills and speaking and listening skills. They enter Year 1 at levels below expectations for their age but, due to good teaching, most children make good progress in closing the gap between themselves and their peers nationally.

Children are happy and confident because they feel very safe and well cared for. They thoroughly enjoy taking part in the stimulating activities inside and outside the classroom. Learning areas are well organised and are made appealing to children. Teachers and teaching assistants have good observation and assessment procedures that ensure activities are tailored to meet the needs of individuals. Parents and carers also contribute to the school’s assessment systems well; for example, they have access to children’s learning journals and also make notes about their children’s progress against current targets on a corridor display.

Leadership is strong and this is reflected particularly well in the consistency of the school’s systems to engage and support parents and carers in making a good contribution to their children’s learning. Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas requiring further development in the Nursery and Reception classes.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The views of parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive. All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire reported they were happy with their children’s overall experience at the school. One parent commented, ‘The school feels like a little family rather than a school and both my children run up the street to school as they are excited to come here.’ Other parents and carers made similar comments. A very small minority of parents and carers raised individual concerns and these were carefully considered during the inspection by the team and discussed with the headteacher, while preserving anonymity.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	74	16	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	72	17	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	64	22	36	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	66	21	34	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	74	15	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	41	67	20	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	66	20	33	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	36	59	21	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	39	64	21	34	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	56	26	43	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	61	19	31	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	77	13	21	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	46	75	15	25	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bracebridge Infant and Nursery School, Lincoln, LN5 8QG

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed by your friendliness and really enjoyed talking to you.

You are lucky because you go to a good school. Many things about your school are good and some are excellent. Here are some of the best things.

- You all told us that you feel very safe and happy in school and your parents and carers told us the same.
- The school and your parents and carers work really hard together to try to help you to learn as well as you can.
- Your teachers make sure that your classrooms and outdoor play areas are exciting places for you to be in. They also make sure that learning is fun and this helps you to make good progress while you are at school.

There are some things that can make your school even better. Here are some of the most important things.

- Everybody needs to work together to make sure that you all come to school as often as possible and arrive in time for the start of lessons.
- Your teachers need to get even better at checking your work in lessons, so that they can change your work to something easier or harder if you need it. They also need to give you more chances and time to think about how much you are learning during lessons, so that you can get even better at it.
- The people who are responsible for your school need to make sure that they check the school's policies regularly and carefully, to make sure that they are all still working. (Policies are things that explain the rules and tell people how they should do things properly.)

You can all help too by trying hard in lessons and coming to school as often as possible. Thank you once again for your help. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector

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