

Brinscall St John's CE and Methodist Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119705
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379874
Inspection dates	19–20 April 2012
Lead inspector	Stephen Wall

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	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hall
Headteacher	Annette Cupit
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Stephen Wall
Christine Potter

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in eleven lessons taught by seven teachers. Inspectors also observed teaching of reading skills in Key Stage 1 and they scrutinised a selection of pupils' workbooks. The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's evaluation of its effectiveness; the school development plan; records of attendance and behaviour; and minutes of meetings of the governing body. The inspectors analysed 141 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized, rural primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly lower than the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and only a very few speak English as an additional language. There are no disabled pupils currently attending the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is well below average. The school meets the current floor standards that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has been an accredited Eco-school for several years.

Privately managed child care is provided before the start and at the end of the school day. This provision is not managed by the governing body and is inspected and reported on separately by Ofsted.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is an outstanding school. Pupils flourish in the school's exceptionally happy and caring environment. They develop into mature, articulate and confident young people with exceptionally positive attitudes to learning by the time they leave. While teaching is outstanding, occasionally, some pupils find work too easy or too difficult. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in valuing all aspects of the school's work very highly.
- Pupils achieve outstandingly well. They make outstanding progress in all key stages, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage where provision is exemplary. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outstanding teaching is at the root of the very rapid progress pupils make and their outstanding achievement. Teaching has a sharp focus on pupils' learning and progress. Assessment is used astutely in most classes to match tasks closely to pupils' needs and abilities. Most teaching is conducted at a fast pace, although sometimes pupils spend too long listening to the teacher when they are ready and eager to get on with things by themselves.
- Pupils feel exceptionally safe in school. The excellent curriculum captures their interest, motivates them to want to learn and promotes outstandingly positive attitudes to learning and behaviour. Relationships throughout the school are of the highest order. Pupils' enjoy being in school as seen in their above average attendance.
- The school's success hinges on the excellence of leadership and management at all levels, including the governing body. Making sure that each pupil achieves to his or her potential so that they get off to the very best start is central to leadership's thinking and actions. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly and rigorously. The outcomes are used astutely to improve its quality and impact. Performance management is used expertly to drive improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all teaching is outstanding and thus raise attainment even further by:
 - always allowing pupils to get on with learning independently as soon as they are ready
 - making sure that pupils are always given tasks that are appropriate to their needs and abilities.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

In lessons pupils in all key stages show exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They always strive to give of their best. They welcome challenge and show excellent perseverance in solving challenging problems. They are adept at applying their well honed basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across a wide range of subjects. They enjoy working independently. Occasionally however, some pupils spend too long listening to explanations when they are ready and eager to tackle tasks on their own and this slows progress somewhat. Pupils work extremely well together in groups and pairs to share ideas and support each other's' learning. Pupils show a genuine thirst for knowledge. They take exceptional pride in the presentation of their work.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally in line with age-related expectations, although this varies from one cohort to another. They make excellent progress because the quality of provision and the quality of leadership and management are exemplary. Pupils continue to make excellent progress in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, attainment is consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to build impressively on the excellent foundations that have been laid. They continue to make outstanding progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is well above average in English and mathematics with a high proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in end of Key Stage 2 national tests. Pupils who have special educational needs also make outstanding progress because of the excellent support they receive.

The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) is of outstanding quality. As a result, attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 is well above average. Pupils say not only that they read a great deal but also how much they enjoy reading. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have maintained their love of reading and attainment is also well above average.

Questionnaires returned by parents and carers are unanimous in showing high levels of satisfaction with the progress children are making. Inspectors agree with their views.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is never less than good and much is outstanding in all key stages. Parents and carers are unanimous in expressing their strong satisfaction with the quality of teaching. Pupils also say how highly they value the teaching they receive. 'Our teachers expect us to work hard but they make it fun at the same time', is a typical pupil comment.

Teaching uses a wide variety of techniques to harness pupils' enthusiasm and deepen its impact on their learning and progress. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage the use of 'Talking Tubs' sets children off on voyages of discovery with only minimal intervention or guidance from the teacher. Also, a Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson combined mathematics with physical education outside on the school playground where pupils took part in challenges on the theme of decimals and whole numbers. Because of these innovative techniques, pupils not only make great strides in their learning but their enjoyment is also of the highest order. Teaching and the curriculum encourage pupils to work independently very effectively. For example, study topics are set as homework tasks to complete over a period of time. Pupils say how much they enjoy researching their topics in their own time. The resulting learning logs produced by pupils are highly impressive and show pupils applying and developing their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT with great aplomb across a range of subjects. Most teaching is exceptionally challenging. It uses assessment to match challenging tasks to pupils' different needs and abilities. For example, a Key Stage 2 numeracy lesson set pupils the task of completing and explaining magic squares to reinforce the relationships between different sets of numbers. Pupils found the task exceptionally challenging but persevered relentlessly until they had come up with a way of solving the problem. However, occasionally, the level of task is too demanding or too easy for some pupils and acts as a light brake on their progress and achievement. Classroom relationships between adults and pupils are extremely strong. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and nurture successfully a 'can do', positive attitude in their pupils. A team of very dedicated and able teaching assistants support pupils' learning and assist effectively in ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress.

Above all, teaching inspires pupils' inquisitiveness and confidence. It sets high expectations and lays exceptionally solid foundations for pupils' future successful personal and academic development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say how very safe they feel in school. Parents and carers are unanimous in feeling that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the dangers inherent in using the internet. They understand fully what constitute potentially dangerous situations and how to avoid them or to deal with them sensibly. Pupils behave exceptionally well and with outstanding levels of respect for others. Returned questionnaires show that almost all parents and carers believe that behaviour is good. A very few parents and carers expressed some concern that the school does not deal effectively with bullying. Inspectors looked closely at this and were satisfied that the school has appropriate and tight procedures in place to respond to instances of bullying. Pupils told inspectors that bullying of any kind was not a problem and that, should isolated incidents occur, adults are quick to nip them in the bud. School records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are extremely rare, as are incidents of bullying of any kind, including racist incidents. During the inspection pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school was exemplary. Pupils are unfailingly polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils are exceptionally respectful to each other and the adults working with them. The excellence and maturity of pupils' behaviour make an outstanding contribution to their excellent learning and to the highly positive atmosphere that pervades lessons and play-times. The few pupils who join the school at other than normal times are welcomed by staff and pupils so that they quickly settle into school routines and respond positively to the high expectations that are set. Pupils who have special educational needs are treated with unerring respect, patience and understanding.

The school has very comprehensive procedures in place to check on and promote attendance. As a result, and because of pupils' very positive attitudes towards school, attendance levels are consistently above average.

Leadership and management

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have driven the school strongly and successfully forward so that it is now outstanding in all aspects of its work. This demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity for improvement. Outstanding leadership and management at all levels provide the school with a razor sharp focus on improvement. Self-evaluation is highly accurate. The outcomes are used astutely to identify areas where the school could do even better. They underpin the high quality school improvement plan and are at the core of highly successful and focused management of performance and development of the quality of teaching. Teamwork in pursuit of raising achievement further is exceptionally strong across the school. The highly knowledgeable governing body is very supportive of the school's work. It provides outstanding levels of challenge to hold the school rigorously to account. The governing body and the school's leaders and managers are meticulous in ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures fully meet requirements. Leaders and managers have forged excellent relationships with parents and carers who are exceptionally supportive of the school. The outstanding achievement of all groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs, testifies to the school's highly effective promotion of equality of opportunity.

The curriculum is led and managed with great expertise and enthusiasm. The outstanding curriculum provides pupils with a wealth of memorable experiences both in what is taught and in the extensive range of very popular extra-curricular activities provided. For example, over 30 pupils play in the school musical ensemble. These activities play a pivotal role in promoting pupils' excellent personal development. They ensure the outstanding quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is seen in the excellence of their behaviour, their very high levels of respect for others and in the deep understanding and tolerance they show for those who are different by circumstance, ability, culture or religion.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



23 April 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brinscall St John's CE and Methodist Primary School,
Brinscall, PR6 8PT**

Thank you for the warmth of your welcome to the team when your school was inspected recently.

Your school is outstanding. It was very pleasing to see how proud of it you are and this is reflected in your excellent behaviour. You told us how much you enjoy being at school and this is obvious from your high levels of attendance - well done! Your parents and carers are also very pleased with the education your school provides for you. The adults working with you provide you with outstanding care and support, with the result that you feel exceptionally safe in school. You make excellent progress in your learning as you move up through the school and achieve outstandingly well. Your school provides you with a wealth of interesting things to do in lessons and at other times. For example, it was a real treat for the inspectors to listen to the very impressive school music ensemble during an assembly.

The teaching your teachers provide for you is outstanding. Nevertheless, to make it even better and help you make even better progress, I am asking your teachers to make sure that:

- you are always allowed to get on with your work on your own as soon as you are ready
- the tasks you are set in lessons are never too hard or too easy according to how easy or difficult you find learning.

I am confident you will continue to work hard to make sure your school stays as successful as it is now in the years to come.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wall
Lead inspector

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