

Brimpton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109954
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	378019
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	George Logan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Brims
Headteacher	Carolyn Ashmore
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
School address	Brimpton Lane Brimpton Reading RG7 4TL
Telephone number	01189 712311
Fax number	01189 712311
Email address	headteacher.brimpton@westberks.org.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	26–27 April 2012
Inspection number	378019



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

George Logan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent over four hours observing nine lessons taught by five different members of staff. He held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and with staff and two groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading and looked at the school's documentation, which included records of teaching, the main improvement plan, records relating to safeguarding and extracts from the school's tracking of pupils' progress. A scrutiny of pupils' written work was also undertaken. The inspector analysed 34 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with seven questionnaires from staff and 28 from pupils.

Information about the school

Brimpton Church of England Primary School is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language, with only two at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs (including those at school action plus and with statements) has declined significantly and is now broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school meets the current government floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has gained a number of awards in recent years, including the Silver Arts Mark and the Bronze National Healthy School award. The number of pupils in each year group ranges between three and nine. They are taught in four classes in the mornings. Reception children join the Years 1 and 2 pupils in the afternoons, when there are three classes. Following an interregnum, the current headteacher took up post in September 2010.

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

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly. Pupils are making faster progress and standards are rising. The school provides well for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. It is not good overall because a few inconsistencies in achievement and teaching have yet to be resolved. Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Progress in Reception is mostly good. However, some aspects of provision, including outdoor learning opportunities, are underdeveloped. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is improving, although attainment at the end of Year 2 remains broadly average. Progress in Years 3 to 6 has, in the past, been very variable. It is now good in Years 5 and 6, but is less consistent in Years 3 and 4. With very small cohorts, attainment by the end of Year 6 has varied considerably. Currently, attainment is broadly average.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching observed. The quality of relationships is a strength. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Marking is mostly thorough and gives pupils clear guidance for improving their work. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is a little slow. Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of pupils' written work or systematically develop pupils' handwriting.
- Behaviour, safety and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. Provision for pupils' welfare is good and pupils feel very safe. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Attendance has improved and is now average.
- Many aspects of the management of performance are good, with well-established systems for evaluating pupils' progress and outcomes and for the leadership and monitoring of teaching. The drive and vision of the headteacher has been a key factor in the recent improvements. Management structures are

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

now well established. Governance is good. The restructured curriculum provides good learning experiences.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the significant improvements already made to the provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children to ensure that:
 - staff are alert to opportunities to extend children’s learning and that these are followed through promptly
 - planned developments to the outdoor learning area are implemented.
- Ensure teachers enable pupils to make consistently good progress across Years 3 to 6, by:
 - setting higher expectations for the quality of their handwriting and the presentation of their written work
 - establishing a brisk pace in lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils’ achievement is satisfactory. However, as parents and carers rightly recognise, it is improving rapidly, although some inconsistencies remain. Small cohorts, high mobility and the proportion of pupils with significant levels of need have, until recently, had a significant, often negative, impact upon overall attainment and achievement. There has been a considerable improvement in the last five terms. Achievement was good in 2011, leading to above-average attainment. Many pupils are currently making good progress, although some unevenness remains.

Children’s skills on entry to Reception are in line with age-related expectations. Although there are some minor weaknesses in provision, progress is now more rapid and outcomes at the end of Reception rose in 2011. Increasingly accurate assessment has enabled staff to focus on crucial personal, social, communication and literacy skills so that children develop confidence and become more independent. Low numbers ensure a high level of engagement with adults. Occasionally, opportunities are not seen and so are missed where the learning of Reception children could be extended. That said, children now enter Year 1 with literacy and numeracy skills above the expected level. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 is typically broadly average. There is a current focus on improving writing skills and embedding reading skills through regular reinforcement of pupils’ phonic knowledge (the linking of sounds and letters). This was observed in a briskly paced phonics session in Years 1 and 2. It ensures that pupils now have above-average reading skills by the end of Year 6.

Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, supporting broadly-average attainment in

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

literacy and mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, this is rising steadily. Expectations are highest and progress most rapid in Years 5 and 6. Progress is sometimes constrained because the subtleties of the concepts being presented have not always been thought through – as was evident in a probability lesson in Years 5 and 6, and one involving compass directions in Years 3 and 4. However, where teaching readily engages pupils, as in an imaginative writing lesson in Years 3 and 4, and in a good session on persuasive writing in Years 5 and 6, pupils' learning accelerates rapidly. Overall, rigorous tracking and a strong focus on learning are having a positive impact. However, not enough attention is given to the quality of pupils' written work. Generally good provision to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs ensures that they make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching, although improving, is satisfactory. Parents and carers, and pupils, feel that teaching is good. However, inspection evidence and the scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that the impact of teaching over time has been variable, leading to inconsistent progress. Recent efforts to raise the quality of teaching are enabling pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to make accelerated progress. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They encourage cooperative working and a readiness to share, with good opportunities for independent learning. The teaching of phonics is supported by a good range of activities accurately matched to individual needs. Likewise, a more structured approach is ensuring better progress, and higher standards, in writing. Where teaching is good, for example, in a Years 5 and 6 literacy lesson where pupils presented and filmed their persuasive writing scripts, the teacher engaged pupils' enthusiasm well, ensuring that the tasks were well matched to their needs. In other lessons, an occasionally slow pace constrains learning. There is, at times, some lack of clarity in Reception as to what children are expected to learn and missed opportunities to extend their learning. Teaching assistants are well prepared and have a positive impact upon pupils' learning.

Across the school, progress in implementing assessment strategies, including self-assessment by pupils and the use of individual targets, has been good. The marking of pupils' work is mostly thorough, identifying the next steps they need to take. While pupils' written work is carefully produced in some year groups, there are pockets of lower expectations, with the acceptance of poorer quality work and, consequently, slower progress. The school is working actively to ensure greater consistency and higher quality in pupils' written work, and of their handwriting. Overall, the planned curriculum is supporting much better progress in pupils' core skills. Outdoor learning does not yet make a significant impact on the learning of Reception children.

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

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Parents, carers and pupils rightly recognise the good quality of behaviour and safety in the school. Close relationships between adults and pupils and the wide range of extra-curricular activities engage pupils well and underpin the positive community spirit. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and are motivated, engaged learners. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is, for almost all pupils, at least good. Pupils, and most parents and carers, have few concerns about behaviour. The school has had a reputation for its success in including pupils with a wide range of needs, particularly behavioural issues. Where issues exist, although few at present, they are effectively managed. There are few recorded incidents of consequence and only isolated pockets of occasionally inappropriate behaviour, with school records confirming that pupils' behaviour over time is mostly good. There have been no exclusions in recent terms.

Almost all pupils say that they feel very safe, and virtually all parents and carers feel that their children are safe in school. There are no reports of bullying of any type. Pupils are well aware that bullying may take different forms. Good procedures are in place to manage any issues that might arise. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage behave well and conduct themselves safely. Pupils have a good understanding of risk, supported by the school's input on road safety and personal safety. Pupils understand, for example, the purpose of the school's efforts to keep them safe when using the internet. Attendance has risen steadily and has, recently, been at least average. Pupils almost always arrive at school punctually.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The significant improvements in many aspects of the school's provision, and in the outcomes for pupils, are, first and foremost, a reflection of the vision and energy of the headteacher and the renewed commitment of the governing body. The improvements achieved from an extremely low point in the school's fortunes in 2010, prior to the headteacher's arrival, have been considerable. Much improved progress, rising attainment, a revitalised curriculum, and higher demand for places are all testimony to the positive impact of the current leadership. Even so, school leaders recognise that the task of re-energising the school and securing consistency in all aspects of its work is not yet complete and that improvements are not yet fully embedded. The issues identified at the last inspection have been successfully tackled.

While many responsibilities fall to the headteacher, staff work cooperatively and readily take on additional responsibilities in order to improve provision. There is a shared vision for improvement, to which all staff subscribe. Individuals are ready to contribute their specialist skills, so enriching pupils' experience. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that the proportion of good or better teaching is increasing steadily. Many aspects of the management of performance are good. An effective programme of staff development ensures that all staff are well prepared to meet the wide range of pupils' needs. All staff benefit from good training

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

opportunities. Planning and sourcing a new building to facilitate specialist Early Years Foundation Stage provision has contributed to driving higher outcomes by the end of Reception, so providing the springboard for standards to rise further up the school. Significant improvements have been made to the curriculum and these strongly engage and motivate pupils. Given the school's record of implementing improvements, its capacity for further improvement is clearly apparent.

Parents and carers correctly recognise that school leaders and staff effectively support pupils' personal development and well-being. School leaders and governors rigorously ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all current requirements. Security arrangements are good. The school actively tackles discrimination and is committed to promoting equality, as demonstrated by the thorough new tracking system and rigorous data analysis. Arrangements for the support of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are effectively monitored.

The school, through its good extra-curricular and enrichment programme, and its commitment to the individual, is very effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. There is some support for cultural development through its active links with a school in Uganda, although, otherwise, pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is more limited. The curriculum has been significantly enriched, offering activities which not only enhance pupils' basic skills but engage their interest well – such as the recent river study in Years 5 and 6. This provides an effective framework within which to drive up standards.

School self-evaluation indicates that school leaders have an accurate view of what still needs to be done, and there is a strong impetus for change. The good governing body has appropriate specialist skills to support its work, has a realistic view of its strengths and context and actively and effectively supports the school's work.

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.

30 April 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Brimpton Church of England Primary School, Reading, RG7 4TL

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you, spending time in lessons and hearing your views. Thank you to those who completed our questionnaire. I found that while Brimpton is a satisfactory school, it is improving rapidly.

- Overall, you make satisfactory progress. However, many of you are now learning much more rapidly and making up lost ground quickly. Attainment has varied a lot by the end of Year 6, but is broadly average at present.
- The school provides well for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and for those for whom English is a new language.
- Progress in Reception has improved and more children now have above average skills in reading, writing and mathematics when they enter Year 1. The outdoor learning area has yet to be fully developed.
- Teaching is satisfactory. However, you learn well in many lessons. The quality of your written work is not always good enough. Marking mostly gives you clear guidance on how to improve your work.
- You have positive views about school, have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance has improved and is now average.
- Senior leaders have driven through lots of positive changes recently and are very clear about what remains to be done.

To help you to do better, we have asked the school to:

- continue the improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, completing the outdoor learning area and making sure every opportunity is taken to enable the children to learn something new and build on their enthusiasm
- ensure that progress is good across Years 3 to 6, supported by higher expectations of the quality of your handwriting and of all your written work.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**