

Bramfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique reference number | 124722 |
| Local authority | Suffolk |
| Inspection number | 395423 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Cathy Morgan |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–10 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 77 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Deborah Swarts |
| Headteacher | Cathryn Benefer |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 October 2006 |
| School address | Bridge Street Halesworth IP19 9HZ |
| Telephone number | 01986 784205 |
| Fax number | 01986 784205 |
| Email address | head.bramfield.p@talk21.com |

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Introduction

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed parts of six lessons from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 5, taught by four teachers. The inspector observed the out-of-school provision managed by the governing body, two school assemblies, listened to six pupils reading, held discussions with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and two groups of pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation. This included: the school's safeguarding procedures; information about the progress and attainment of pupils; school improvement planning; the school's self-evaluation, curriculum and lesson planning; a range of policies and monitoring undertaken by senior leaders and the governing body. The inspector scrutinised 61 parental and carer questionnaires and others returned by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Bramfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils joining the school after the start of the Reception Year has recently increased. The large majority of pupils are from a White British heritage. No pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, but rising. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than that seen nationally. The numbers of pupils has doubled following the change in catchment area, to include seven further villages from 2008, and Suffolk schools re-organisation. Change to all-through primary will be complete by summer 2013. A registered out-of-school club provides before- and-after school care for pupils.

Inspection judgements

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|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good and inclusive school. Attainment is consistently above that expected by the end of Year 4 and is high for pupils currently in Year 5. Pupils have excellent experiences across the curriculum, which secure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is not outstanding because pupils’ learning and achievement are not yet outstanding and leadership is in transition in preparation for the forthcoming full primary status.
- Skilled teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics) enables all pupils to develop successful strategies for reading and writing and to achieve well. Targeted support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs ensures that they make outstanding progress.
- The leadership of teaching and learning, and the management of teacher performance are effective. As a result, teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and skilled in motivating pupils’ interest in learning and the desire to do well. Teachers monitor pupils’ progress effectively but, in some mathematics lessons, pupils’ individual targets are not sufficiently explicit and older pupils are not always able to work independently.
- The school’s high expectations, a consistent approach to managing behaviour and effective use of rewards and sanctions help pupils to develop self-discipline, confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, are polite and respectful and their behaviour is outstanding.
- Strong strategic leadership and management underpin the improvements being made currently to extend the school and enable it to shortly become an all-through primary school. The inspirational headteacher has ensured that her clear vision and ambition are shared by an effective governing body and by all school staff. The innovative curriculum, rigorous monitoring of pupil performance and evaluation of teaching supported by excellent professional development opportunities, have effectively secured the good progress made by all pupils. The devolving of leadership responsibilities is in transition in anticipation of the school’s changing status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning of learning is consistently precise to accurately identify individual targets for all pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to exploit their ability to learn independently.
- Strengthen the distributed leadership across the school to secure the successful expansion to full primary status and to retain the effectiveness of the current leadership.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspection findings are endorsed by parents and carers who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, all of whom rightly believe that their children are making good progress at school. Pupils are very proud of their work and in lessons they often demonstrate a genuine enjoyment of learning which has a major and positive impact on their achievement. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were excited and inspired to write, using complex vocabulary, persuasive reasons why their peers should vote for them to be king or queen for the day.

When starting school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills and aptitudes vary from year to year but are often below expected levels. A decline in achievement at the end of this stage has now been reversed and this year's Reception group are making the usual good progress. The skilled teaching of reading and writing in the Reception Year and Key Stage 1 means that attainment in these skills is above average in Year 2 and remains ahead of that expected nationally by the end of Year 5. Pupils are confident, fluent readers. They talk with enthusiasm about the books they are reading and accurately describe what is happening in a story.

Evidence from the school's assessment data, from lesson observations and from scrutiny of work in pupils' books confirms that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 5, the more-able pupils are making excellent progress and have already reached Level 5 in English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress, as a result of the well-targeted and bespoke support which the school provides for them.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. Strong relationships between staff and pupils encourage an atmosphere of trust and a sense of fun. All parents and carers agree that their children are taught well. A typical comment is, 'My child is really happy to go to school and we like the way that learning is fun.' Teachers are highly committed to helping pupils to learn successfully and often plan imaginative approaches to

lessons to successfully engage pupils' interest.

Outstanding teaching makes learning exciting and challenges pupils to make excellent progress because activities are stimulating and matched extremely well to their needs. Highly skilled teaching assistants play a major part in these lessons, ensuring, with teachers, that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported very effectively to make excellent progress. An outstanding lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5 demonstrated all of these attributes and was imaginatively planned to integrate aspects of science and physical education. Pupils worked enthusiastically to determine the impact of exercise on their heart rates. They enjoyed working in teams and the effective support of staff enabled all pupils to participate, regardless of their ability or any disability.

School and before-and-after school staff provide extensive learning opportunities in an imaginative environment, which enable the nurturing of individual children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many children are currently exceeding what is expected for their age in all areas of learning. The focus on personalised learning successfully enables children to become independent and develop high-quality problem solving, communication and language skills. They develop their imagination in running their own garden centre and in the stimulating role play areas.

Pupils receive comprehensive feedback in their books, which helps them to understand how to improve, particularly in English. Pupils benefit from regular daily reading sessions, imaginative reading books, and extensive library facilities. Excellent use is made of reading record books to facilitate communication with parents and carers. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and encouraged to develop their independence in lessons and individual sessions.

Teachers use the curriculum and the outside areas around the school imaginatively to promote pupils' interest in learning and stimulate their learning of environmental issues. Pupils particularly enjoy working on their archaeological dig. Pupils develop excellent social skills through planned opportunities to work together and a variety of opportunities to participate in local events, visits and competitions.

The nationally developed and standardised approach to assessing pupils' progress is used well to make judgements about the standard of pupils' work. Teachers use this effectively to plan future learning activities and target specialist support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Planning of learning is not always used well, however, to identify specific targets for those individuals who do not have a formally identified need. Sometimes older pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to exploit their ability to learn independently in lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is typically outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. All pupils show caring attitudes to each other, and are particularly kind to any pupils who have difficulties. The mutual respect between pupils and adults contributes to the school's strong, positive ethos and calm atmosphere.

Pupils work hard in lessons and show mature attitudes to their work, even when teaching is not outstanding. Partnership with staff is very strong. Pupils show a good understanding of different types of bullying behaviour and how to keep safe, particularly in relation to the use of new technology. Inspection findings were fully endorsed by parents and carers, who said that their children felt safe in school; the overwhelming majority think that pupils behave well. Pupils, themselves, express very positive views about their school experience.

Older pupils take their role as 'buddy' to younger pupils very seriously and are highly effective in monitoring the 'buddy bus stops' on the school playground. The range of interesting activities led by support staff ensures that pupils are actively engaged at playtime and during the lunch break. Consequently, incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy playing and learning outside, particularly in their secret garden and imaginative dens. Pupils have excellent opportunities to participate in thoughtful school assemblies when they sing, play instruments, dance, use Makaton signing and recite their school prayer together. Attendance is above average, and absence is almost always for illness.

Leadership and management

The thoughtful and inspirational leadership of the headteacher is demonstrated by her uncompromising and extremely successful drive to succeed with every pupil. Her leadership is strengthened further by the effective support and expertise provided by the governing body. Together they and the school staff have successfully and strategically managed the ambitious plans to expand the school as it moves to become an all-through primary school. The distributed leadership of the school is currently being strengthened to ensure that the transition to full primary status does not adversely affect the robustness of the current leadership team. This priority is acknowledged in the school's development plan.

The headteacher is tenacious and creative in her endeavour to find cost-effective solutions to enrich the impressive curriculum. There is clear evidence to demonstrate the impact of these actions on improving pupils' self-esteem, social skills, confidence and academic progress. The whole curriculum promotes, exceptionally well, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning opportunities are much appreciated by parents and carers, who say: 'The school gives the children excellent opportunities over and above their day-to-day education.'

Senior leaders and the governing body know the school well and have successfully tackled the area for improvement identified at the last inspection. Pupils now have an extensive library of books and there are regular opportunities for them to use information and communication technology to enhance their opportunities for research. A range of strategies have been identified and implemented to effect rapid improvement in children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Before-and-after school provision is helpful to children's development and well managed. Equality of opportunity is promoted by strategies to support children who do not join the school in their Reception Year, those who are particularly able and those with particular disabilities, special educational needs or behavioural difficulties. There is no discrimination in this well-ordered community.

Members of the governing body make frequent visits and observe the work of the school and the out-of-school provision with a critical eye. Staff and governor representatives have attended required safeguarding training and all are vigilant in ensuring that the school is safe. Governors respond very effectively to health and safety issues relating to the well-being of pupils, particularly those with medical needs and/or disabilities. The risk assessments undertaken by staff and governors are rigorous, and safeguarding requirements are met. Detailed records of the very few incidents of pupils' misbehaviour demonstrate effective liaison between the school, parents, carers and specialist agencies to support pupils who have behavioural or emotional difficulties.

An effective programme of professional development is provided to support all staff, who are challenged positively and constructively to sustain improvements, particularly in teaching and assessment. The school's track record of good achievement, pupils' outstanding behaviour and personal development, supported well by good and often better teaching, ensure that it has the capacity to sustain improvement further.

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.



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bramfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Halesworth IP19 9HZ

Thank you for the welcome you gave to me when I carried out my recent inspection. I enjoyed talking to you and it was very useful to have your views about your school. I was very impressed with your outstanding behaviour and how hard you were working in lessons. I particularly enjoyed your contribution to school assemblies and hearing how beautifully you recite your school prayer.

I agree with you and your parents and carers that yours is a good school. You are well taught and you achieve well. You enjoy lessons, especially those that allow you to be active and independent. You benefit greatly from the many interesting extra-curricular and lesson activities which are provided for you, especially those which enable you to explore outside. Staff look after you well and keep you safe, and so you feel secure in school. You are very kind to one another and you all know how to keep yourselves safe.

Your headteacher wants to make your school even better, so I have asked her to help you to make every lesson an excellent one by always making your targets clear to you and by giving you even more opportunities to work independently. I have also asked the school leaders to make sure that they are fully skilled to ensure you continue to learn well as the number of pupils increases during the forthcoming year.

You can help too by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

I send you and your teachers my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Morgan
Lead Inspector

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