

Brill Church of England Combined School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110418
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	378097
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2012
Lead inspector	Lynn Alexander

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	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Cayley
Headteacher	Andy Leach
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2009
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	4–5 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lynn Alexander

Additional inspector

Brian Netto

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in fifteen lessons taught by eight teachers, amounting to a total of eight hours. They also heard pupils read and observed two assemblies. In addition, meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, the headteacher and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online survey (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered the responses in 49 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 18 received from staff and 82 from pupils.

Information about the school

Brill Church of England Combined School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school had a subject survey visit on developing children's economic well-being in July 2010. The school shares a site with a privately-run, pre-school provider that offers a breakfast and after-school club. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has recently been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because pupils only make good progress, and do not always know clearly enough what they need to do to improve, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, including that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is broadly average. Attainment in reading is above average at the higher levels. However, most pupils currently in the school make good progress overall from the time they join it, and inspection evidence shows that rates of progress are improving for all pupils so that the school is on target for improved attainment in both key stages in 2012.
- Teaching is good overall. Despite results in 2011 national tests showing only average attainment for pupils at the end of Year 6, improvements in teaching since then show pupils in all classes making greatly improved progress. Teachers make lessons interesting and in the best of them there is a brisk pace and appropriate challenge for all pupils. However, teachers' marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work and they are sometimes not given time to correct it. Teachers set learning targets for pupils but they are not always monitored and pupils are not always involved enough in the process.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. There is a consistent approach to the management of behaviour that pupils understand and to which they respond well. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and to others. They speak knowledgeably about all forms of bullying and know whom to turn to if they have concerns.
- Senior leaders and governors set clear priorities for the school. Their concerted actions, including the management of teacher performance, have resulted in improvements in pupils' progress. They have introduced a curriculum that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, their plans for school improvement do not yet include enough criteria to measure improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - all lessons are good or better by July 2013, and that all teachers provide appropriate pace and challenge for all pupils
 - there is a consistent approach in all classes which involves pupils in the setting and monitoring of their learning targets
 - marking and feedback give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work and that pupils have time to respond and correct it.
- Ensure that school improvement planning includes quantifiable criteria against which the impact of improvements on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching may be measured.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skills that are expected for their age. Inspection evidence shows that the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved over time so that, by the end of the Reception Year, their skills are above those expected for their age in all areas of learning. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is above average overall. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' workbooks found that pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are making good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, in 2011, pupils attained broadly average standards in English and mathematics. However, inspectors found that as a result of improvements in teaching, pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are making consistently good or better progress in all subjects. For example, inspectors observed evidence of improvements in pupils' application of their skills in mathematics in their workbooks across the school. As a consequence, a higher proportion of pupils are on track to reach the higher levels in 2012. The school has narrowed the gap in the attainment of boys and girls and, as a result, there is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls currently in the school. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least satisfactory, and often better, progress compared with their peers nationally. Their achievement is improving as a result of effective intervention programmes. However, inspectors found that pupils' individual targets are not always linked closely enough to their learning needs and are not always reviewed regularly. Opportunities are missed to involve pupils in understanding what they need to do next to improve.

Most parents and carers think their children make good progress and inspectors agree. Rising standards across the school are the result of actions taken by school leaders to improve the quality of teaching and the impact of the curriculum on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics

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lesson, all pupils made good progress learning about mathematical patterns because there was appropriate support and challenge for each group, and pupils were encouraged to reflect and comment on the patterns they observed. Pupils' levels of attainment in reading are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2, and the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels across the school is above average in both key stages. As a result of senior leaders' strategic approach to improving the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make), children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making good or better progress in reading and writing. In the Reception class, children used phonic skills to play a 'sound lotto' game with understanding and great enthusiasm, and then demonstrated their skills by writing sentences using the words they had learned. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, most pupils confidently chose which suffix to use when adding 'ing' to verbs.

Quality of teaching

As a result of teaching that is mainly good, with some examples of outstanding teaching observed during inspection, pupils currently in the school are achieving well over time. The teaching of reading is good and improving. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they have designed a stimulating curriculum which engages and motivates pupils and helps them to develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematics. For example, in a Spanish lesson, all pupils made good progress as a result of confident and engaging teaching. The teacher encouraged pupils to speak, listen and construct sentences in both Spanish and English. In an outstanding science lesson, pupils were able to construct and evaluate a fair test as a result of the effective teaching of investigation methods and excellent questioning by the teacher.

Most parents and carers think their children are taught well and inspectors agree. As one parent commented, 'My child is inspired by, and engaged with, the teaching methods.' Pupils speak warmly about how their teachers help them, and they like the online mathematics homework. However, a few pockets of weak teaching mean that pupils do not always make the progress they should. For example, in a mathematics lesson about exchange rates, linked to holidays abroad, the teacher gave pupils too long to talk about what they would need to plan for the holiday. As a result, the lesson lacked pace and appropriate challenge because pupils did not get started on their calculations quickly enough. Teachers regularly ask questions that encourage pupils to explain their answers and they deal promptly and effectively with any misconceptions during lessons. However, their written feedback does not always provide pupils with enough guidance or challenge them about how to improve their work. Sometimes pupils are not given enough chance to correct their work and so avoid the repetition of errors. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' workbooks showed that there is an inconsistent approach to target setting and the monitoring of progress across the school; discussions with pupils confirmed that they are not always involved in this process.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils, parents and carers think that behaviour is good and that pupils are safe in school and inspectors agree. Pupils demonstrate the impact of the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in their attitudes to each other and to adults. Consequently, the school is an inclusive, cohesive, and orderly learning community. This reflects the school's systematic approach to managing behaviour. Pupils speak with compassion and understanding about how they can support their peers who have disabilities. The very youngest children play and work together harmoniously indoors and outside. Pupils are polite and welcoming and enjoy learning. This is demonstrated by their above average attendance and good punctuality. Good relationships between adults and pupils are evident in lessons and around school. Most pupils demonstrate a responsible and mature approach in their lessons, for example in paired and group discussions. Behaviour is at its best in lessons when the quality of teaching is consistently good or better and where adults' expectations are clear.

Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and name calling, and talk with confidence about how to deal with them. They say that incidents of bullying are rare. Most parents and carers think the school deals with any incidents well. Pupils know who to talk to if they have concerns and they are confident that adults will support them. The curriculum supports pupils in understanding the risks they face and how to keep themselves safe in school and outside, for example through visits from the local community police officer. Pupils have a good understanding of internet safety.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has instilled a sense of ambition and drive to improve the work of the school. School leaders demonstrate high expectations of the accountability of teachers through rigorous performance management that has tackled underperformance. They provide effective professional development for teachers, for example by commissioning a mathematics audit and providing specialist training. These factors, together with support and challenge from the knowledgeable and committed governing body and effective partnership with the church, the local authority and other schools, contribute to pupils' improving achievement and the school's capacity to improve further.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school. The curriculum includes a wide range of activities including a Forest School, sport, music, modern foreign languages and educational visits that contribute to the development of pupils' skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality well through its effective evaluation of intervention programmes put in place to improve the

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achievement of groups of pupils. Senior leaders' priorities for improvement are accurate, but self-evaluation and school improvement planning do not include enough quantifiable criteria by which progress towards objectives might be measured.

Most parents and carers have a positive view of how the school helps them to support their children's learning, responds to their concerns, for example through the parents' council, and keeps them informed. Inspectors agree with their views. As one parent commented, 'Our daughter loves school and is doing well. We can ask for no more than that.'

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.



6 July 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brill Church of England Combined School, Aylesbury
HP18 9RY**

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work and play. We enjoyed your special assembly too. We liked hearing you read and coming to see your lessons. Your parents and carers are pleased with the school. This letter is to tell you that we found that Brill Church of England Combined is a good school.

Here are some of the things that make it good.

- You behave well and you are helpful and polite.
- You work hard and make good progress all the way through school.
- You enjoy your lessons and your curriculum topics are interesting.
- You have good school leaders and teachers who make sure you are safe.

To help your school to be even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- make sure you learn as much as you can and work as hard as you can in each lesson
- help you understand more clearly what you need to do to improve your work and give you time to correct it
- talk to you about your learning targets and make sure you know if you have achieved them.

You can help your teachers by continuing your good work at Brill.

Yours sincerely,

Lynn Alexander
Lead inspector

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