

# Brackley Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	121961
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380367
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Norma Ball

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Loretta Boreham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Manor Road Brackley NN13 6EE
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<b>Fax number</b>	01280 700953
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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	12–13 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380367



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Norma Ball

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 12 lessons and a range of small teaching groups. A total of nine teachers were seen and this included all class teachers. Inspectors made visits to classes to look at displays, to observe individual pupils and groups at work, and to listen to pupils read. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers. Meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils also took place. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, and documentation relating to management, the curriculum and safeguarding children. In addition, inspectors took account of responses to questionnaires from 123 parents and carers, 18 staff and 150 pupils.

## Information about the school

Brackley is an average-sized junior school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much smaller than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and have a statement of special educational needs, is less than in most junior schools. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs. The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has achieved International School status and holds the Artsmark award. The governing body manage the breakfast club, but not the Little Oaks Nursery, which shares the school site and is subject to a separate inspection.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Brackley is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the use of assessment information is not consistently effective in guiding teachers to challenge pupils fully in their learning and raise their achievement to outstanding.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress through the school, achieve well and reach above-average standards.
- Teaching is well led and of good quality overall. In most lessons, pupils are interested and actively involved. Teachers have good subject knowledge. However, on occasions, assessment information is not fully exploited, and pupils are not closely involved in setting and monitoring their progress towards their targets in English and mathematics.
- Behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school and is based on care and respect for others. Pupils feel safe and are confident in sharing any concerns they have with the adults who care for them. Attendance is above average and closely monitored.
- The headteacher has united staff in a successful drive to improve achievement for all pupils. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, monitor all aspects of the school’s work closely and its performance is accurately evaluated and managed. Effective initiatives have been implemented to improve the achievement of all groups of pupils since the last inspection. Parents and carers receive good information about their children’s progress. The curriculum provides a rich variety of learning experiences for all groups of pupils, especially in the well-planned topics that link different subjects. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs and visits extend learning beyond the classroom and contribute well to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise achievement further by:
  - sharing existing good practice in English and mathematics and extend the use of assessment information to provide pupils of all abilities with a selection of additional challenging tasks
  - developing pupils' skills in setting and monitoring their own progress against their targets in English and mathematics.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. They make good progress from their individual starting points as shown in the school's tracking information, work in pupils' books and in lessons. Attainment has improved steadily over the past three years and at the end of Year 6 it is securely above average. Progress in English has improved as a result of a focus on selecting exciting themes and subjects for creative writing that engage and captivate pupils' imagination. Boys' as well as girls' reading skills are above average by Year 6 and have improved rapidly over the past two years because new reading books are popular and pupils' progress is closely monitored. Daily paired-reading sessions and guidance for parents and carers in how to help their children to improve reading are successful in accelerating progress. Pupils achieve well in mathematics because problem-solving exercises enable them to apply their number skills in interesting and relevant ways. In a Year 3 class, for example, robots with different numbers of legs made a problem-solving task based on division skills more fun and, consequently, all pupils made good progress in dividing by three and by two.

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute strongly to their good achievement. They settle to their tasks quickly and work with enthusiasm because they find lessons interesting and learning moves at a good pace. They are articulate and keen to share their ideas. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress from their individual starting points. They receive well-planned support based upon work that is carefully adapted for their needs. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire are justifiably pleased with the progress their children make.

### Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is typically good because it promotes good progress for all groups of pupils. Learning is made interesting and work is clearly explained. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to generate lively discussions and to question how well pupils understand the subject. Although teachers usually use assessment information well to match tasks to pupils' abilities, they do not routinely

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use assessment to plan additional tasks which challenge pupils and promote better progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils are not routinely involved in helping to set their targets in English and mathematics or in monitoring them with their teachers to see how well they have done. Consequently, some pupils are not clear about what their learning priorities are. Some pupils who responded to the questionnaire said they did not know how well they were doing.

Learning mostly proceeds at a good pace and interesting tasks add to pupils' enjoyment and progress. In a Year 4 lesson on poetry, for example, pupils took great delight in writing a nonsense poem inspired by the work of Spike Milligan. Real and made-up words were organised so that the sounds of words created an image and added to the fun of the poem. Pupils' use of vocabulary was extended and an appreciation of rhyme and structure was developed in a lively style. Reading skills are well taught and reinforced by daily paired reading sessions which pupils enjoy.

Teaching supports positive relationships which enable pupils to join in discussions and share ideas with learning partners. Their social and moral development is promoted effectively through working collaboratively. Learning-support assistants are deployed effectively in class and with small teaching groups to support the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils' independence and confidence, as well as their academic skills, develop well and they make a good contribution to class discussions. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, birthdays and the calendar were used to extend subtraction skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, contributed keenly to the class discussion, giving their birth dates and working out how many days apart they were from another birth date, carefully allowing for the different number of days in each month.

Parents, carers and pupils are appreciative of the good teaching. One pupil summed this up for others, saying, 'I really like my school because people are understanding and help with problems and the standard of teaching is really good.'

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The day begins happily in the breakfast club, where pupils of all ages mix well together. Pupils know that what they do affects others and are kind and helpful to each other and to adults. Pupils themselves revised the playground code of conduct. Incidents of bullying of any kind, such as aggressive behaviour and name calling, are very rare. Where pupils have any anxieties they know they should report them and are confident that their concerns will be dealt with quickly and fairly. School records indicate that behaviour is typically good. A few pupils can present challenging behaviour, but this is well managed by staff and any incidents are dealt with quickly. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire survey are pleased with behaviour in the school. Pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. They work with enthusiasm on their tasks, listen carefully to their teachers and treat the contributions made by their classmates with respect.

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All pupils are taught how to use the internet safely and say they feel safe in school. They are confident in those who care for them. They have a good understanding of behaving safely and sensibly out of school. The school follows up attendance issues quickly and discourages holidays during the term.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has led the school with sustained commitment and drive since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are closely monitored by senior leaders and teachers' priorities for improvement are quickly supported by additional training. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked at school and class level and this information is used to identify any areas of potential underachievement. The support provided for any pupils who are falling behind and those with disabilities or with special educational needs is well managed to ensure equal opportunity for all. Consequently, these pupils grow in confidence and make the same good progress as their classmates. Self-evaluation is accurate, never complacent and well directed to improvement. The strategies adopted to ensure better achievement in English and mathematics is increasingly successful because they are closely monitored and regularly reviewed. The progressive development of the skills of middle leaders and managers has been guided well by the headteacher and they monitor and develop their subject areas well.

The governing body provides a balance of support and challenge to the school. Through the annual programme of visits, linked to priorities identified in the school development plan, and the assigned subject areas for each member of the governing body is expanding their knowledge of the school. They are increasingly involved with the headteacher and other senior leaders and managers in strategic planning. The school is free from discrimination and all pupils are treated fairly and equally. All safeguarding requirements are met and supported by clear policies and procedures. Pupils' achievement is good, they behave well and these strengths, together with effective leadership and management, show the school is well placed for further improvement.

The curriculum is well balanced and provides imaginative opportunities for learning in lessons and in the good extra-curricular activities provided. The creative opportunities are well planned and the choir and orchestra are well regarded in the local area for their contributions to local events. Themes link subjects effectively and make learning enjoyable as well as to help pupils improve their basic skills. The curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development alongside the extension of their academic skills. In the theme based on the Romans and Celts in Britain, for example, pupils were encouraged to reflect on how the Celts must have felt to be invaded and conquered. Empathetic writing tasks followed. Quiet prayer areas around the school and little prayer books where pupils can write a prayer or reflection provide places of calm and thought. Pupils have a good understanding of and show respect for other faiths and cultures, which are extended by visits and visitors. An Indian dancer, demonstration of Sabbath ceremonies and a visit to a Sikh temple have all added to pupils' cultural awareness.

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Parents and carers are pleased with the regular information provided by the school and the valuable guidance they receive to help them support their children's learning at home. Those who spoke to inspectors or replied to the parental questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive in their views. One parent, typical of many wrote, 'The school is excellent at treating each child as an individual, allowing their strengths to shine through. This has enabled my child to develop into a well-rounded, confident, happy individual who thoroughly enjoys school.'



## 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](http://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.**



16 July 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brackley Church of England Junior School, Brackley, NN13 6EE**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed hearing the orchestra rehearsal and were most interested in the display showing how closely you are linked to Mapane School, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. We enjoyed seeing how you work in lessons, talking to you and hearing some of you read. We also read the questionnaires some of you completed. Thank you for those.

You told us that you love your school because you learn a lot and enjoy your work and find learning fun. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body work well together to make your school a happy place in which to learn. You get on together and behave well. You know a lot about being safe and healthy and you are well cared for by all adults.

Brackley provides you with a good quality of education. You do well in reading, writing and mathematics. We have suggested two things which would help to make your school even better.

To ensure that you make even better progress, we have asked your teachers to make sure they involve you in setting your targets in English and mathematics so you know what you need to learn next and how well you are doing. We have also asked that they all plan challenging extension tasks in your lessons so you can go on to learn even more.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and doing your best in your lessons. It is important that you know your targets and how well you are doing.

It was a great pleasure to visit Brackley and we wish you every success for the future

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball  
Lead inspector

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