

Bramford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Duckamere, Bramford, Ipswich, IP8 4AH

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards in English are above average and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils use a very wide range of reading materials, which helps them to achieve well in reading.
- Pupils apply their literacy, numeracy and communication skills well in other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both in class and around the school. They feel very safe.
- Consistently high attendance reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Teaching is good. Teachers question pupils well and pick up quickly if they are struggling to understand anything.
- The headteacher has built a strong team around him, helping the school to go from strength to strength.
- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved and standards have risen.
- Pupils find learning exciting and enjoyable. They benefit from numerous visits and visitors and plenty of music and sport.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work is sometimes too easy for more able pupils, and pupils are not always clear about how to succeed in lessons.
- Teachers are not fully aware of the outstanding practice that already goes on in the school.
- Progress in mathematics is not quite as strong as that in reading and writing, because the support programmes in mathematics are not as good as those in English.
- Pupils do not always have opportunities to respond to teachers' marking in their books.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. All teachers and support staff were seen working with the pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read from Years 1, 2, 4 and 6, attended assemblies, and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, local authority reports on the school, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, class teachers, governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke individually with several parents and carers during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Matthew Klimcke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The school has been refurbished since the last inspection, including the building of a new hall.
- Increasing numbers of pupils are joining the school from outside its catchment area, especially from Ipswich.
- The headteacher has been executive headteacher of Bramford and another local primary school since September 2011.
- The school has the Basic Skills Quality Award and Investors in People (both achieved three times).
- There is a pre-school on site that is not run by the school and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that pupils know what they need to do in lessons in order to be successful
 - ensuring that work for more able pupils is sufficiently demanding for them to make the most progress
 - sharing more widely the outstanding practice that already exists in the school.
- Improve progress in mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring pupils know how to improve their work and have opportunities to respond to teachers' marking
 - supporting pupils more effectively in developing mathematical knowledge and skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with a wide range of skills and abilities, which are often below those expected in language and communication in particular. As children increasingly come from further afield, their pre-school experiences vary considerably.
- Children achieve well in Reception because they enjoy a variety of interesting activities that are tailored to their particular needs. There are plenty of opportunities for them to develop their early writing skills, for example through a role-play post office.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The systematic teaching of the letters that sounds make enable pupils to form a strong grounding in reading.
- Progress in mathematics has not been as good as in English because there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics. They do not always respond to the advice in their books which would help them to improve, and the support for mathematics is not as effective as that for English. This is because it is not matched so exactly to pupils' needs. The school is now using booster groups to help particular pupils to catch up in mathematics, and has focused on problem-solving, an area where pupils were not doing so well, and this is beginning to help pupils to catch up.
- The school identified last year that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were not doing as well as the others, and has used pupil premium money to help close the gap. Spending on one-to-one tuition, for example, is helping disadvantaged pupils to make rapid progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, because their individual targets are well chosen and reflect where they most need help. Teaching assistants work well with these pupils.
- Pupils use and apply their basic literacy, numeracy and communication skills across different subjects in ways they find interesting and enjoyable. For example, Year 4 pupils used research skills to find out about Mexico as part of their topic on chocolate.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers deploy adults effectively from the start of lessons so that no learning time is lost.
- Pupils often learn in interesting ways that link well with their topics. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote instructions about how to build a house drawn from their knowledge of buildings and construction, and the models they had made in design and technology.
- Teachers use what they already know about pupils to plan work that is generally demanding for them and enables them to make good progress. The one exception is that the work for more able pupils is sometimes too easy and they do not achieve as well as they otherwise might.
- Learning is often practical and hands on, such as when Year 4 pupils solved the problem of finding a measurement on the body that was equal to the length of their feet. This involved all kinds of estimating and using different measures, and much mathematical discussion.

- Teachers use questioning to probe how much pupils understand and to make them think even harder. They quickly realise when pupils are making mistakes and help them to correct them promptly in lessons.
- The teaching of mathematics, while generally good, is not quite as strong as reading and writing, because pupils do not always respond to teachers' advice in their books, and the support programmes for mathematics have not been as precisely focused on pupils' needs as they have for reading and writing.
- Teachers encourage pupils to become independent in their learning. This begins in the Reception class, as children are encouraged to choose their own activities indoors and outside. In older classes, pupils use computers well to research topics of interest, such as different climate zones across the world.
- While teachers often share steps to success with pupils to help them to understand what they are learning, this is sometimes unclear. On these occasions progress slows as pupils are not always sure how to get the most out of the lesson.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well, because the staff know them as individuals and make sure that the help they receive matches their needs very closely. This enables them to make rapid progress.
- Reading is a particular strength of the school. The centrally located library is attractive and very well stocked, including a lending library for parents, and reading activities pupils can undertake using computers. Pupils read widely, building well on the basic skills they develop in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Older pupils have a good understanding of what they are reading and can talk about the different authors they enjoy.
- Pupils who receive support from pupil premium funding are taught as individuals and in small groups, and this is helping them to catch up the other pupils where they have fallen behind in the past.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are extremely enthusiastic and tackle each new challenge with gusto. Year 6 pupils spoke with great pride about their work, such as still-life drawings and accounts of a recent residential visit.
- Pupils work extremely well in teams, listening to one another and taking on specific roles. They show one another courtesy and respect, and the older pupils look after the younger ones. Pupils confirm that behaviour is outstanding, a view also supported by parents who contributed to Parent View.
- Pupils have a particularly good understanding of all types of bullying and how to tackle them, even though they say bullying is virtually unknown in school. They understand about cyber-bullying and name-calling, for example. They have every confidence in adults to sort out any problems they may have.
- Staff manage behaviour extremely well, applying the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils are mature enough to behave sensibly even when adults are not around. They willingly

take on responsibility, and help with a wide range of jobs around the school.

- Pupils say they feel totally safe at school. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and are involved in judging risk, for example before going on a visit. Pupils take an active role as junior road-safety officers, ensuring that everybody is safe coming to and going from school. They also learn about keeping safe on bikes and the dangers of some drugs, and alcohol.
- Attendance and punctuality are always high at Bramford. Pupils enjoy school so much they do not want to miss any of it.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of all staff and pupils, and leads by example, setting out his ambitions for the school. He has built an effective team who are committed to improving the school even more.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching very thoroughly and ask themselves the question, 'Is there anything the teacher is doing that is preventing the pupils from learning as much as they could?' They give clear feedback to staff about how to improve, and coach them as they put new ideas into action. As a result of this approach, teaching has improved and is now consistently good.
- Leaders use the new 'Teachers' Standards' to set ambitious targets for teachers, and link pay to performance. While there is evidence of outstanding teaching in the school, not all teachers have sufficient opportunities to learn from it.
- All staff and governors are involved in checking how well the school is doing. They write plans each term to help them improve things as quickly as they can and keep a close eye on how much they are achieving. In this way nobody takes their eye off the ball. As a result, leaders and governors have a very good idea of what the school does well and where it could do even better.
- Leaders have done much to improve literacy since the last inspection, especially by expecting pupils to write at length across different subjects, not just in English lessons. Progress in reading has come on well because of the emphasis on filling the school with high quality reading material and giving pupils a love of reading. Consequently, pupils achieve well in English.
- The school places great store in making subjects as exciting as they can for pupils, often with an international flavour. Teachers aim to launch topics spectacularly to fire pupils' curiosity. When the theme was space, learning began with the visit of a mobile planetarium. Irresistibly, Year 4 pupils were treated to a chef showing them how to make chocolate cakes at the start of a project on chocolate.
- Staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. They teach them 'values for life' which encourage perseverance and determination. Pupils of all ages mix well together and give one another a helping hand. All pupils are fully included in activities and discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils take part in competitive sports, learn musical instruments and study in depth a range of cultures and traditions from across the world.
- The school fosters good relations with parents, other agencies and with its partner school. The link with another local primary school has created opportunities for staff to take on new leadership responsibilities both in Bramford and with colleagues from the other school. Parents

are very happy with how their children are doing and rate Bramford highly. The recent appointment of a family support worker is helping the school to reach all groups of parents, especially those who come from further away.

- The local authority recognises the many strengths in Bramford, which is why the headteacher was asked to support another local school. Because Bramford is a good school, local authority support is 'light touch' and effective, but the school and local authority keep in close contact as the partnership with the other school develops.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well informed and actively involved in checking how well the school is doing and makes suggestions for how it could improve further. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. They hold leaders to account and ask searching questions about the work of the school. They manage finances efficiently, ensuring that the pupil premium money benefits the pupils for whom it is intended and that appraisal arrangements link pay to performance.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124723
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	403562

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Percy Newton
Headteacher	Jon Eden
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2008
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