

# Brambleside Community Primary School

Cleveland Avenue, Kettering, NN16 9JG

## Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school has improved significantly since its last inspection. The school's leaders, particularly the headteacher and the highly effective governing body, do a good job.
- Pupils make good progress and enjoy learning. Their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' progress in developing reading and writing skills in Key Stage 2 is much stronger than at the time of the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching has improved to good. Teachers plan lessons effectively and most deliver them so that pupils' needs are well met and they make good progress.
- Previous inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been addressed. Teachers are no longer over-generous in their assessments.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and in other areas of the school. They feel safe in school and are courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. Their attendance has risen consistently in recent years and is well above average.
- Staff morale is high. There is strong determination among staff and the governing body to continue to improve the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Younger pupils do not make outstanding progress in developing their understanding of letters and sounds (phonics), because phonics lessons are not always matched precisely enough to their abilities.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils is less effective in mathematics than it is in English.
- Not all pupils have enough time or support to respond to teachers' comments in their books, to help develop and clarify their learning.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching in the school. Subject leaders in English and mathematics are highly skilled teachers but do not have enough opportunities to use their expertise to develop the skills of other staff.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons. Two of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, senior members of staff, representatives of the governing body including the Chair, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally to a number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors took account of the 60 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and one telephone message received from a parent. They also analysed 21 questionnaires received from staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents, as well as assessment information that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress and the school's systems to check the suitability of employees who work with children.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Spencer, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lucy Maughan

Additional Inspector

Maxine Clewlow

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- Brambleside is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in-line with average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from families in the armed services.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- At the time of the last full inspection in November 2011, the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate and the school was given a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to pupils' progress and attainment in English in Key Stage 2.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
  - making sure that daily phonics lessons are better matched to the abilities of all pupils in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - making sure that the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils is as good in mathematics as it is in English
  - making sure that all pupils have sufficient time to respond to teachers' comments in their books, particularly those who find reading and writing difficult.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure that subject leaders, particularly those in mathematics and English, have more time to use their expertise to support the development of other staff.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Most children start school with skills broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for starting Year 1. During the inspection, children in the Reception classes were observed enjoying learning in calm, orderly and stimulating classrooms and outdoor play areas.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and leave Key Stage 1 with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above average. Improved teaching in Key Stage 2 means that pupils continue to build on their solid start and make good progress. Pupils leave Year 6 with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above average. They are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- The progress that pupils make is speeding up rapidly due to significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers swiftly identify when pupils need additional challenge or support in lessons and adapt work to make sure that they make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress at least in line with their peers and their attainment is generally above that of similar pupils nationally.
- The school is successfully closing the gap in achievement for the few pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. Frequent checking of their progress enables leaders to target support to meet their needs effectively. Pupil premium funding is used well by the school to help fund additional teaching assistants. During the inspection, teaching assistants were observed providing very good support for a group of targeted pupils, while reinforcing learning that the pupils had not fully grasped in their lessons.
- Pupils have good reading skills for their age, even though phonics lessons are not always taught as effectively as they could be in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. High quality 'guided reading sessions', where teachers focus their attention on small groups of pupils to develop their reading skills, have made a significant impact on speeding up pupils' progress in reading across the school. Pupils were observed buzzing with excitement as they used their reading skills to appreciate and enjoy complex texts.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or who spoke with inspectors during the inspection, believe that their child makes good progress at the school.
- Pupils' achievement is not outstanding because they do not make outstanding progress from their starting points at the school. Pupils' progress is still noticeably stronger in some year groups than in others, particularly Year 6, because the quality of literacy and mathematics teaching in Year 6 is excellent.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Teachers and teaching assistants work hard and demonstrate great determination to continue to improve the quality of their teaching. Much has been gained by observing outstanding practice in partner schools and many new ideas have been implemented at Brambleside. As a result, weaknesses in teaching identified at the time of the last inspection have been robustly addressed.
- There are some innovative and highly effective teaching methods used by some, but not all, teachers. For example, in Year 6, pupils update personal notes about how their learning is

developing as the lesson progresses. They are then given the chance to share their new learning with others in the class. As a result, and when combined with excellent teaching, these pupils are completely focused and engaged in learning and make outstanding progress.

- Teachers expect the best of what pupils can achieve, provide clear explanations and ask well considered questions to develop pupils' thinking and clarify their understanding.
- In almost all lessons teachers manage pupils well so that behaviour is good and pupils enjoy learning. Teachers make sure that activities are varied and well matched to pupils' needs and interests. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively. Most ask good questions and use a range of practical resources well to support those who require additional help.
- Classrooms and corridors are bright and stimulating places to be because staff see that displays are of very high quality. Examples of excellent work, particularly pupils' writing, are displayed in areas of the school where they will be seen by all pupils. Displays are also used by teachers to record and support pupils' learning and progress. For example, through making reference to recent learning, key facts, and features of high quality work.
- Teachers write very useful comments in pupils' writing books to help them to understand the next steps of learning they need to take. However, some pupils, particularly those who take longer to read and write, do not always have sufficient time, or enough help, to respond to teachers' comments. This means that the comments are of little help to them. Furthermore, teachers' comments are of better quality, and make a stronger impact on learning, in pupils' writing books than in their mathematics books.
- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or who spoke with inspectors during the inspection, believe that their child is well taught at the school.
- On rare occasions, teaching is not effective enough to secure pupils' good progress in learning. For example, in phonics lessons in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, activities are exciting and enjoyable but pupils are not always challenged at an appropriate level. Consequently, phonics lessons enable them to make some progress but not as much progress as they could do.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The school offers a caring, supportive environment where pupils behave well and show respect for themselves and others. Their good behaviour and attitudes have a very positive impact on the school's warm, friendly atmosphere. Only on the odd occasion when teaching does not sustain their interest, is there any restlessness.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in attendance levels, which have risen consistently in recent years and are well-above average.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. When asked, all pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they feel safe in school. Pupils were aware of the different types of bullying but struggled to think of any bullying that they had seen in school. Pupils said they were confident that staff could deal with any problems linked to behaviour and bullying.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes strong values across every aspect of its work. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed well through school assemblies and also through frequent opportunities for pupils to take time to

reflect on their learning. A display highlighting links the school has made with other countries, including Slovakia, Poland and Turkey shows the school's effective work to promote pupils' cultural awareness.

- Pupils enjoy responsibilities and take prominent, active roles in the life of the school. For example, through the well-established Eco council and the school council.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or who spoke to inspectors during the inspection, believe that children behave well at the school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Strong leadership from the determined and focused headteacher, underpinned by effective partnership working with local schools and a highly effective governing body, has enabled the school to make rapid progress in improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- Teaching is carefully checked and actions are taken both to support and challenge teachers to improve their practice. Teachers who are consistently good are given clear steps to outline how they can become outstanding teachers. Leaders review lesson plans, carry out lesson observations and analyse information on pupils' achievement. However, the highly skilled English and mathematics subject leaders do not have enough chance to help others to improve their teaching.
- The range of subjects and activities is well planned and gives pupils opportunities to develop key skills in different areas of learning. Pupils often write at length, in different subjects, so that they can practise and develop their use of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Teachers' performance targets are linked to the quality of teaching and to pupils' achievement. Pay progression for teachers is also related to how well they perform against their targets. Leaders make sure that staff are well supported and receive training appropriate to their needs. For example, effective training has been provided to support staff in assessing pupils' work accurately.
- The school promotes equality of opportunities effectively. This is demonstrated through the school's good work to close gaps in achievement between pupils from different backgrounds and with different needs.
- The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, or who spoke to inspectors during the inspection, believe that the school is well led and managed.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school, particularly through its work to help identify appropriate partner schools in the local area and through frequent visits to the school to check that improvements are on track.
- Safeguarding requirements are met. This includes the correct checks on adults working with pupils in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body plays a very important role in driving school improvements. Governors

have developed a strong and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has been developed through frequent visits to the school, a good understanding of information about pupils' performance compared with all schools nationally, and through close, direct links with school leaders at all levels. The governing body uses the school's improvement plans methodically to hold staff to account and check the impact that actions are making on the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement. Governors and staff are very clear about which governor will be checking the school's work, when they will be checking and how they will be doing it. Challenging questions are asked by governors, who are determined that the school will improve further to become outstanding. Governors hold the headteacher to account by setting performance targets that link to pupil progress. Pay progression for the headteacher is linked to these targets. Governors also understand and oversee how teachers' good performance is rewarded and how any underperformance is tackled. They know how pupil premium funding is being spent and the impact it is having on the progress of eligible pupils.

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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130963
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	399722

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Trevor Kendrick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Danielle Warren
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 310680
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