

Brancaster Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Market Lane, Brancaster, King's Lynn, PE31 8AB

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Teaching is good and enables pupils from all groups, including those who find learning harder and more-able pupils, to make good and sometimes exceptional progress. The gap in learning between different groups is being effectively closed.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do well, especially in developing their early reading and writing skills.
- Parents are very happy with the school and all who responded during the inspection said they would recommend the school to other parents.
- Behaviour is good; pupils are outgoing and friendly towards each other and visitors. Pupils are confident that any incidents of unpleasant behaviour are dealt with effectively. They feel safe in school.
- The headteacher has a clear and determined vision for school improvement with a detailed knowledge of the pupils' needs. She has the support of an actively involved governing body and experienced staff who work together effectively. Consequently, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some older pupils are given too few opportunities to work independently and tackle challenges without intervention from adults.
- Pupils who find reading difficult do not always get the right type of support to ensure they make the progress they should. As a result, their progress is sometimes slower than it should be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes, visiting 10 lessons and part lessons, and observing all teachers, including the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and other staff, as well as representatives of the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- A number of pupils read to the inspector.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents including the school's development plan, records of the governing body meetings, safeguarding arrangements and work in pupils' books.
- Parents and carers spoke to the inspector to share their views; the responses to the 10 who contributed to the online Parent View survey were analysed.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brancaster Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in two classes of mixed ages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of such pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to other schools nationally. This is additional funding to support particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a small number of pupils on roll who speak English as an additional language.
- The school has too few pupils in Year 6 to make meaningful comparisons to the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide better opportunities for older pupils to work independently by:
 - making sure work challenges pupils to think for themselves
 - providing clear guidance to adults supporting in class so that pupils can take responsibility for their own learning
 - ensuring no time is wasted with long lesson introductions so that that pupils actively work for longer.
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress, particularly for pupils who find reading difficult, by:
 - consolidating the additional support which is focussed on the pupils' specific needs
 - ensuring these pupils have books to read which are well matched to their abilities
 - giving pupils opportunities to read independently across the curriculum
 - using the school's best practice of phonics teaching for all pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age; because the number of admissions fluctuates from year to year this does vary. They settle into school quickly and confidently adapt to the mixed age class because they have had good opportunities to visit and participate in school events before they start in the reception class.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress, particularly with their early reading and writing. They are keen to practise their handwriting, form their letters correctly and show a confident ability to sound out words to read and spell. In the Year 1 national phonic screening, pupils' scores were above those found nationally.
- The high quality of teaching for the younger pupils has ensured that they develop good learning attitudes early on and, consequently, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. More-able pupils are now doing well, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- As year groups are small, attainment at the end of Year 6 varies from year to year. Overall, pupils achieve in line with the national average and make good progress. Pupils' progress in writing has improved as a result of the school's focus on this aspect of the curriculum. Observations of lessons and the school's own data show that pupils make good progress during the time they are in Key Stage 2. Some pupils' progress is accelerated so that able pupils are working with pupils in a higher age group on more demanding work. There is good evidence in lessons and pupils' books that more pupils are now achieving higher levels in English and mathematics.
- The achievements of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are similar to those of their classmates. There are now detailed learning plans and targeted support to help meet the needs of these pupils and this has been effective in helping them make better progress in mathematics and writing, but their progress in reading is weaker.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium receive support in class and in small groups out of class. Across different year groups, in both English and mathematics, they make similar progress to other pupils in the school. No judgement is made about the attainment of these pupils in Year 6, to avoid identifying individuals.
- Pupils enjoy reading, even those who find it hard and are not making as much progress as their classmates. Most pupils are able to apply their skills of linking letters with sounds (phonics) to read unfamiliar words. They also use a range of reading skills in order to get meaning from what they read. Older pupils are able to discuss why they choose particular kinds of book and which authors they like.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good and this is reflected in the progress pupils make over time. Teachers in all year groups plan to make sure that the subject matter of lessons engages the interest of pupils. For example, investigating and mapping out the length of a dinosaur on the playground. As a result, pupils have a positive approach to learning. The teaching of phonics to the younger pupils is a particular strength and this results in good progress for these pupils.
- Homework for the oldest pupils is well linked to the curriculum and provides interesting and engaging tasks, such as finding out foreign exchange rates; information they were keen to share when working out money problems in euros during a mathematics lesson.

- Teachers' marking is better in writing than in mathematics, although teachers' feedback is often given to pupils verbally. Pupils are expected, with guidance, to edit and improve their written work and this they do with confidence. They show a good understanding of grammar, correcting tenses and adding punctuation and they enjoy substituting words with similes such as, '...their heart felt like a tumbling rock.'
- Pupils have good opportunities to read and they enjoy doing so. Those who find it more difficult say they have found the additional support helpful in gaining confidence as readers. A few pupils had books which were too challenging and sometimes adults were too quick to read things for pupils rather than encourage them to apply their reading skills, for example when as following instructions for a mathematics task.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Where classroom support is planned well, this helps to motivate and engage pupils so they make good progress. In some cases, this support is not planned effectively and this makes pupils over dependent. Adults spend too much time introducing a subject and explaining things and do not respond rapidly enough to adjust their teaching so that it moves learning on swiftly and pupils get longer time to work independently.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium work on individual programmes. Pupils say they find this helpful 'We can revise stuff we forget and if we find something we don't know (the teaching assistant) explains it.' Each pupil has a detailed plan of their learning needs and this has helped to focus the support accurately and has enabled pupils to make good progress, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good despite the constraints imposed by limited outside activity space. There is a good balance between structured teaching and child-initiated play. Children have access to well-labelled resources and respond well to the routines and high expectations of the adults working with them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly and confident, showing good manners and courtesy to others. They have positive attitudes to learning and this is reflected in the improved attendance since the school's last inspection. Last year it was average for the first time in several years. It is currently above average.
- Pupils know what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Records show that incidents of unpleasant behaviour are rare but, when they do occur, these are taken seriously and pupils are confident that issues are dealt with.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying including prejudiced 'name calling.' They have a good understanding of how to use the internet safely. Every parent who responded to Parent View believes that the pupils' behaviour is good and that there is no bullying at the school.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils follow instructions willingly and enjoy the opportunities to solve problems independently. They are proud of their achievements, are keen to do their homework and work well together in groups. However, sometimes the chance to develop this life skill is impeded by intervention from adults.
- Boys and girls from all groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs

or those who are new to the school, are fully included in all school activities.

- Pupils' spiritual awareness is well fostered through opportunities for reflection, particularly during collective worship. This makes a good contribution to their sense of care and responsibility for the school and local community.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership with a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. This is extensively documented and shared with staff and governors, so that everyone has a clear understanding of the school's priorities.
- Subject leaders have been effective in improving pupils' achievements in writing. All teaching staff are involved in carrying out lesson observations to judge the quality of teaching and performance management is used to reward good teaching and identify professional development.
- Safeguarding requirements are met and appropriate risk assessments for activities on and off the school site are in place.
- The curriculum is well planned with a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills which meets the needs of most pupils. Extra learning opportunities, such as visitors to school and trips out, for example to a mosque in Norwich, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The additional funding allocated to increase sporting opportunities has further enhanced the quality and breadth of sporting provision and improving staff expertise. Pupils are proud of their school which they describe as 'sporty.' They are keen to share their successes such as winning the water polo tournament and competing with other schools, celebrating the fact that they have taken part even though they don't always win.
- Pupil premium funding and resources available to support pupils who find learning difficult or those with special educational needs are combined efficiently. The small number of pupils who are supported this way are helped to make good progress.
- The headteacher communicates well with outside agencies and has established a good relationship with parents and carers. She has been effective in seeking support through partnership working and external consultancy to help the school improve.
- The local authority has responded quickly when the school has requested advice and guidance, which the school has found helpful. The local authority has communicated its judgements about the school based on an analysis of data. This information has sometimes contained conflicting information in providing the school with a useful and accurate view of itself.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is actively involved in the school, and focused on the needs of the community. Governors are fully informed about how the school is performing and provide effective challenge because of the clarity of information available. They have a detailed knowledge of how pupils are achieving, based on available data. As a consequence, they support and challenge the headteacher about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They receive appropriate information about the management of teachers' performance and see that teachers' pay rises are appropriately linked to pupils' achievements. They manage the school's finances well and are

considering options to ensure the school is sustainable in the future. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent, and the impact this has on the achievement of eligible pupils. Governors ensure that the school meets national requirements for safeguarding children. Policies are regularly reviewed to ensure that children are kept safe and free from harm.

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	121131
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	425282

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sophie DeWinton
Headteacher	Sarah Bocking
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2011
Telephone number	01485 210246
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