

Braunston Church of England Primary School

Braunston, Daventry, NN11 7HF

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| 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 | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have worked very effectively to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' subsequent achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2. Both are now consistently good.
- Teaching is particularly strong in the Reception year and Year 1. It gives pupils a really firm base for future learning.
- Better teaching in older classes over the last year means that pupils are now building much more effectively on this good start.
- Pupils' progress is checked carefully, and any at risk of falling behind are given effective help to catch up.
- Teachers provide interesting activities for pupils, so they enjoy learning and concentrate well in lessons.
- Lessons are orderly, and pupils respond positively to teachers' consistently high expectations of work and behaviour.
- Pupils get on well with each other and with staff, and they behave well. They feel very safe in school and have great confidence in how the adults will look after them.
- Attendance is consistently above average.
- Pupils work hard and take pride in their success. Their collaborative skills are good and strongly support their progress in lessons.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work for pupils of high ability is not always challenging enough and they do not make fast enough progress. They often spend too much time on the easier tasks set for their classmates before going on to tackle harder work.
- The high-quality marking of pupils' work in some books is not consistent between classes or subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to consolidate their good writing skills by writing at length, particularly in subjects other than English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher, and paid brief visits to observe the teaching of reading.
- Formal discussions were held with several groups of pupils, and many others were spoken with informally around the school. Inspectors heard several pupils read.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined.
- The inspectors checked a range of documentation, particularly that related to keeping pupils safe, and analysed data about the progress that pupils have made.
- Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body and, by telephone, with a representative of the local authority.
- The views of 84 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. Inspectors also looked at the results of the school's own parental questionnaire. Responses to a questionnaire by 24 staff were also analysed.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Booth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than average for a primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few from a range of other ethnic heritages. None of the current pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is extra government funding to support the education of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority, and those who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion of such pupils supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation set for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so more is outstanding and hence increase pupils' rate of progress by:-
 - making sure that the work given to the most-able pupils is always sufficiently challenging, and that they do not spend time tackling work that is too easy for them before going on to more difficult tasks
 - build on the excellent practice seen in some books to make the marking of pupils' written work more consistent, especially in showing pupils more clearly how to do better in future.
- Give pupils more opportunities to write at length and to use their good writing skills to support their learning in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress in this class and go into Year 1 with attainment that is generally above average.
- Younger pupils make good progress in learning phonics (how the sounds of words relate to how the words are written) and use their knowledge well in their reading and their writing. Results of the national check of phonics skills in Year 1 last year were above average.
- The progress of pupils in the rest of the school had varied too much until about eighteen months ago. Progress was good in Key Stage 1. However, pupils often made less progress than average between Year 2 and Year 6. The results of national assessments at the end of each key stage were often confused by inconsistencies in assessment practice, distorting the overall picture.
- In the last two years, better teaching and much more accurate assessment have led to greater consistency in progress. Almost all pupils in Key Stage 2 made the progress expected of them nationally over the two years from September 2011. Progress has accelerated and, in the last twelve months, pupils in Key Stage 2 made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although pupils' progress has been consistently good over the last year, previous inconsistencies mean that standards at the end of Year 6 have not always been above average. In 2013, for example, attainment in writing was above average, but overall standards were only average. This is because of some inadequate progress in previous years, despite the group having made good progress in their last year at school.
- Work in pupils' books, the school's records of individuals' achievement and the progress seen in lessons confirm that current progress is good. However, although the most-able pupils make the progress expected of them, few exceed this. This is because the tasks they are set are not always challenging enough for pupils to make consistently rapid progress. As a consequence, few are on track to reach the very high Level 6 in national tests.
- Pupils who are supported through the pupil premium make the same good progress as others. Their attainment, when compared to that of their classmates, varies in each year group because of small numbers and different proportions of pupils with special educational needs. In last year's Year 6, for example, these pupils' attainment was about two terms behind that of their classmates and similar to the difference found nationally. In Year 2, on the other hand, the standards reached by these pupils matched those of their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. This is because their specific needs are carefully met, with extra help tailored to help them learn better. A good balance is drawn between giving them support to cope, and insisting they are challenged to do the best they can so they can learn well independently without perpetual reliance on an adult.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are firm about their high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and establish clear routines. Pupils like and respect their teachers and consequently try hard to conform. They settle quickly and happily to learning. Lessons are orderly and purposeful, so pupils accomplish a lot in the time available.

- Pupils find lessons interesting and become fully involved. This is because teachers use a variety of techniques that successfully hold pupils' attention and concentration. They present information in a lively way, often using practical demonstrations to show just what is wanted. Pupils in Year 1 were greatly amused by the teacher's many deliberate mistakes in modelling a measuring task, but also knew exactly what to do by the time she had finished. They made excellent gains in their skills as a result.
- Teachers and other adults keep a careful eye on how everyone is getting on during the lesson. They quickly spot anyone who is going astray and help them back on the right track. They also challenge those who are successful to refine their work and to aim higher. This is a big factor in the good progress made in nearly all lessons.
- In the Reception class, there is an excellent balance between activities led by adults and those children chose for themselves, both indoors and out. The adults are particularly skilled in joining in children's play to extend their thinking, or talking with them about what they are doing to help them develop their skills and their vocabulary.
- A major strength in lessons throughout the school is the use of discussion between pupils. This helps them all to feel fully involved and maintains their concentration, as well as helping them sort out their ideas. They have very good speaking and listening skills, and show very effective cooperation when they work together on a task.
- Teachers give pupils a good understanding of how well they are getting on with their work. Older pupils know just which level of the National Curriculum they have reached, and just what they need to do to get to the next level.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) starting from the Reception class. As a result, they have good skills and use them well to support learning in different subjects. A group in Year 6, for example, greatly enjoyed honing their calculation skills when using an online train timetable to work out the fastest and cheapest routes between London and Exeter.
- Homework is used effectively to complement and extend work in class. There is a good variety, including consolidating skills by practising spellings and arithmetic, as well as more extensive projects that help develop pupils' creative thinking and perseverance.
- Teachers are generally successful in preparing work that is neither too easy nor too hard for different pupils. As a result, they enjoy the challenge and make good progress. However, at times, most pupils work at the same task, with extra adult help for those who might otherwise struggle. In these lessons the most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and coast for a while doing work that is too easy, so they do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- The marking of pupils' written work varies. There are some excellent examples, for instance in one class's mathematics books. Here they are shown just how to improve their work and given extra examples to put the advice into practice, which consolidates their understanding. However, this is not consistent, and work is not marked as regularly or thoroughly in all classes and subjects.

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are friendly, polite and cheerful around the school and in class. They get on well together and follow the school's rules sensibly. They accept that sometimes there are quarrels between pupils and occasional silliness, but say these are quickly dealt with by teachers so that learning is not interrupted.
- Pupils are eager to learn. They concentrate well in class, listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, and collaborate very effectively. They show perseverance in the face of difficulties and take a pride in what they accomplish. This pride does not always extend to the presentation of their work, which for some pupils can be rather scruffy. The school is tackling this as a whole-school priority this term.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and give a number of reasons why. In particular, they value how the adults look after them. They know about how to stay safe through their learning about fire safety and road safety, for example. Pupils in Year 6 are looking forward to a 'bikeability' course on staying safe this year.
- Pupils in Year 6 take their own responsibilities to others seriously, particularly in making sure that younger children are safe and happy when they share a playground. Parents share their children's positive views about behaviour and safety.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in different forms, such as cyber bullying, and regularly take part in anti-bullying week, for example. They understand the difference between bullying and other misbehaviour, and say bullying is very rare. The last example that a group of pupils in Year 6 could think of took place when they were in Key Stage 1.
- Consistently above-average attendance reflects pupils' great enjoyment of both social and academic aspects of school.

The leadership and management are good

- Over the last two years, the headteacher has led staff in improving their teaching so that pupils make better progress. Much improved use of assessment systems, and greater accuracy in making assessments, have been central to this success. The school keeps a close watch on how individuals are doing, and quickly takes action to challenge or support any who are not making the progress they should.
- The headteacher has set increasingly high expectations of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. All staff and the governing body share this common vision and work effectively to raise expectations within their own areas of responsibility, and are continually and successfully looking to make improvements.
- Along with better assessment, regular checking of the quality of teaching with clear feedback has helped teachers improve their practice. A programme of extra training for staff has helped them to address issues within their own teaching as well as to tackle priorities for the whole school. A focus last year on improving writing was reflected in pupils' good progress and the above-average standards reached in 2013 by pupils in Year 6.
- The management of teachers' performance is well-established, with targets set that reflect school and individual priorities for each teacher. Targets have a close link to the progress of pupils, and extra training helps teachers to meet them. A closer link between teachers' movement up the pay scales and success in meeting targets has been established in the last year.

- The pupil premium funding has been spent for the most part on academic support for eligible pupils, sometimes sensibly combining this with the school's own funding when there are non-eligible pupils with similar needs. Other funding is spent to enable all pupils to take a full part in different aspects of school life, such as visits and residential trips. The monitoring of particular interventions, and the progress of these pupils, which matches that of their classmates, show that the spending has been effective.
- The local authority has provided minimal support to the school recently, partly because of its very limited resources, and because it identified that the school leaders were making good progress in tackling issues. Some good support has been mediated by working with other local schools to share expertise.
- The curriculum is wide ranging and leads to high levels of enjoyment from pupils. They do particularly well in ICT because of the many chances they have to use this in other subjects. However, the opportunities for pupils to practise writing in other subjects are more limited, and restrict their progress in practising differing genres and consolidating what they learn in English lessons. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school has made good progress in preparing to implement the new requirements of the National Curriculum from September 2014.
- New funding to support primary school sports and physical education has been used to extend the range of activities that pupils can take part in, bringing in a good range of outside expertise. Pupils greatly enjoyed recent opportunities for street-dancing, for example. The emphasis is sensibly on providing this alongside training for the school's own teachers, so that they can continue with the expanded programme when the funding is finished. The school undertook an audit of its starting points in physical education, and will use a parallel audit later in the year to evaluate the effectiveness of its spending.
- All staff with a leadership role play a full part in making improvements. There are good opportunities for subject leaders to check on how teaching and learning are going in their areas of responsibility and to contribute to their colleagues' development. Staff work closely together, sharing expertise and having a common vision focused on improving pupils' achievement whilst giving them an enjoyable and wide-ranging education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has good systems to see how well the school is doing. Governors have a good understanding of pupils' progress based on a good range of data, both national figures and the school's own internal information. This has enabled them to challenge the school about issues, but also to understand how well the school has made improvements in the last year. They have a similarly clear view of the quality of teaching, and its improvement, because they have a good understanding of how teachers' performance is monitored and supported. They have recently made tighter links between pay increases and teachers' success in achieving their targets. The governing body has a good understanding of safeguarding requirements and has worked with staff to ensure that these are met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 121963 |
| Local authority | Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 432160 |

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

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| 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 | Richard Ansell |
| Headteacher | Sue Rigby |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 October 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01788 890494 |
| Fax number | 01788 890494 |
| Email address | bursar@braunston.northants-ecl.gov.uk |

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