

Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Grove Road, Brockdish, Diss, Norfolk IP21 4JP

Inspection dates

4–5 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders do not have the capacity to check the performance of the school rigorously. They have not ensured, for example, that the curriculum is broad and balanced and complies with legislation.
- The school relies heavily on, and benefits significantly from, external support, in particular that provided by the Sancroft Church Schools Trust and Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School.
- Pupils are not well enough prepared culturally for life in modern Britain.
- In the early years, activities are not always planned to meet children's needs and interests, particularly aspects of their social, emotional and personal development. As a result, they do not make the rapid progress they could.
- The school's website does not include important information required by Law.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and the head of school, fully supported by other staff and governors, have established a positive climate for learning. Parents say the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- On a day-to-day basis, the school functions well and pupils thrive.
- All pupils make good progress because teaching and learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, is good. Assessment is used well.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have very positive attitudes to school.
- Brockdish is a caring community. Pupils feel safe in school, and their parents agree.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is particularly strong.
- Governors want the best for pupils. They work closely with other school leaders to maintain good quality teaching and learning. It is with heavy hearts that they have recommended closure.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that all monitoring and evaluation activities are completed in a timely manner
 - enhancing pupils' cultural development to make sure that they are well prepared for life in a more culturally and ethnically diverse community than the one in which they live
 - making sure that statutory requirements for the school website are fulfilled.
- Improve the early years provision, by:
 - ensuring planning provides for all aspects of the areas of learning and development, particularly children's personal, social and emotional development.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- The school is going through an unsettling period as it awaits the outcome of the consultation on closure. Some management tasks, such as keeping the website regularly updated, have lapsed.
- Too much is asked of the head of school, the only permanent teacher on the staff, who is allocated no time to manage the school. Although she is doing as much as she is able, curriculum planning, for example, is not rigorously checked.
- Pupils' cultural awareness is underdeveloped. The curriculum is not preparing pupils well for later life in a society with wide cultural and ethnic diversity.
- Despite the uncertain future, governors and staff are highly focused on maintaining an orderly, purposeful and positive ethos to ensure pupils continue to do well in their personal and academic development. In particular, very positive relationships between staff and pupils promote good progress.
- The school's leadership benefits from the good support of a nearby primary school. For example, their experienced headteacher oversees the day-to-day operation of Brockdish Primary, and ensures skilled, high-quality extra help to enable pupils who have special educational needs to benefit and achieve well.
- Leaders' clear arrangements for checking on the quality of teaching accurately identify how teaching can improve. Training requirements are identified by rigorous performance management, and training is tailored to each individual's needs.
- Stimulating learning activities, particularly in the Key Stage 2 class, interest pupils and contribute well to their love of learning. Visits and additional clubs enrich learning further.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted highly effectively. Pupils celebrate one another's achievements and form a very positive community. They fully meet the school's aim to, 'Listen, care, talk, share and learn together in God's wonderful world.'
- Additional funding is used effectively to promote participation in sports. Sports coaches help to improve pupils' techniques, for example in hockey, so they achieve well. Pupils' good understanding of the importance of exercise to their health further promotes their interest and involvement. They enjoy competing in events.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used well. High-quality extra help in lessons leads to them making good progress. They also benefit from broadening their learning through access to a good range of enrichment opportunities.
- The school benefits greatly from the support provided by the trust. Pupils enjoy a wider range of opportunities, and staff benefit from sharing ideas and training.
- The school works closely with the local authority which has praised governors' management of the process the school is going through.
- Parents speak very positively about the quality of education provided by the school, and how their children thrive academically because the high ratio of staff to pupils is used productively to give each pupil a high level of attention.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors work very closely with staff to ensure pupils have a good education.
 - Very regular visits give governors a clear understanding of the school's effectiveness. This, and their thorough knowledge of assessment information, enables them to check that pupils do well, and to question and challenge if they do not.
 - Governors benefited from the review of their work and made important changes that have increased their effectiveness and efficiency.
 - Local authority advice is followed precisely to ensure that the school fulfils all its responsibilities, particularly to staff and pupils.
 - The performance of permanent staff is managed rigorously, and governors ensure that pay increases are based on a suitably broad range of challenging evidence.
 - Governors' oversight of the school finances is thorough. They check that the school achieves value for money and that additional funding is used effectively.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The policy and procedures are clear. Staff are fully informed, and training in how to keep pupils safe is up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Staff share very positive relationships with pupils and no time is lost in lessons. Pupils in the Key Stage 2 class particularly make good use of enjoyable opportunities to work together and learn from each other.
- Classrooms are a hive of activity because adults create a positive learning atmosphere. Pupils are encouraged and rewarded for their efforts and endeavours, and all feel confident to have a go as a result.
- Pupils make good progress because they enjoy learning and find lessons interesting. Adults quickly spot, and correct, any misconceptions, making good use of the very low class numbers to check each individual very regularly.
- Reading is taught well and given good emphasis throughout the school. Staff in the Key Stage 1 class take every opportunity to ensure that pupils thoroughly practise their phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). As a result, pupils do well and standards are higher now than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught well. They are regularly referred to by staff in all writing so they remain a focus for pupils. Writing is taught effectively and pupils willingly engage in a wide range of real and relevant opportunities, such as re-writing the school's website, that enthuse and interest them. Handwriting and general presentation in work books is good – an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Mathematics is taught well – another improvement since the previous inspection. In the Key Stage 2 class, pupils are able to use their prior knowledge when approaching new problems, and to look for patterns to help them predict.
- Pupils say their teachers' marking gives them a clear understanding of what they have achieved and what they need to focus on next.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. Whether helping the least or most able, they have the necessary skills to ask appropriate questions and to help pupils to think for themselves.
- Home learning is effective. Pupils say they like the range of activities, and that they have some choice – particularly in how they respond. This benefits the quality of their work, which is good. They enjoy presenting their work to the rest of the class, and learning from one another's ideas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils contribute a great deal to their own learning. They understand how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve further. They show that they enjoy challenging work and they come to school ready to learn.
- Pupils are very respectful of staff and volunteers. They want to do well and please their teachers and teaching assistants.
- The Sancroft Church Schools Trust provides a good variety of additional opportunities to pupils. For example, pupils' aspirations are raised by the 'careers day', and their personal development is promoted by singing to approximately 600 pupils and parents in Norwich Cathedral.
- Pupils make good use of the many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school in very meaningful ways such as through the eco-council. The school council helps give them a sense of democracy. Traits such as fairness and compassion are taught in assembly, reinforcing pupils' knowledge of British values.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and their parents agree. Pupils know what bullying is and they understand that it does not necessarily apply to friends occasionally falling out. They know how to stay safe when using the internet and receive regular reminders from teachers. Pupils are confident that they can talk to someone at school if they are worried or have concerns, and they are very clear that staff will help them.
- Pupils have a good awareness of healthy behaviours because they learn about the importance of exercise in physical education lessons, and about a balanced diet and rest in science.
- Transition to high school is good. Pupils are given opportunities to work with other pupils who they will next meet at high school – particularly relevant given the very small numbers who transfer.
- The school does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to learn about other cultures. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for life in multicultural Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school is very orderly because pupils' conduct is exemplary throughout the day. Lessons flow because pupils want to learn. Pupils' pride in their school is very obvious.
- Pupils of all ages play exceptionally well together. Older pupils are very patient with those younger than themselves, look out for them and volunteer to help them.
- Attendance is above average and punctuality good. Parents say that their children want to come to school and look forward each day to the new things they are going to learn.
- Parents say that the school is a very harmonious community with a real 'family-feel'.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Due to the very small year groups, often with only one or two pupils, and at most three, published achievement information is not statistically reliable.
- The school's staff have a very clear understanding of each pupil's strengths and those areas where they need to improve. They use this information very efficiently to ensure that the work pupils are given is neither too easy nor too hard.
- Since the previous inspection, teaching has improved and a more cohesive curriculum provided. Standards in phonics and mathematics have improved as a result.
- Pupils' workbooks and the school's checks on progress show that pupils currently in the school make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. This, together with good teaching, and the very small groups which enable misunderstandings to be quickly spotted and corrected, all contributes to their good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because they receive high-quality extra help tailored to those areas in which they struggle particularly.
- The most-able pupils generally make good progress, too. They are encouraged to tackle harder work and enjoy challenging themselves. The younger most-able pupils benefit from the occasional stimulus and extra challenge of lessons with older pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress, because they also receive high-quality teaching tailored to their needs. Improved management ensures that each pupil's needs are methodically checked, so extra work is aimed in the right areas.
- Progress in other subjects is generally good, but more variable. Staff increasingly supplement learning in school with extra opportunities. For example, pupils regularly work with other trust schools and visit places of interest linked to their work.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- The shortcomings highlighted in the previous inspection report remain. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is limited. Sometimes adults do not give children enough opportunities to make choices and develop independence.
- The vast majority of children enter Reception with skills and knowledge typical for their age. Progress is generally good and they reach a good level of development. Children are well prepared for Year 1, particularly in the basic skills of reading, writing and number.
- Children demonstrate a genuine thirst for knowledge. They are curious and confident to think for themselves. When given a simple task, they sometimes extend it and challenge themselves. During the inspection, when using a ruler to say if objects were 'longer' or 'shorter', they made this more difficult for themselves by measuring the length of each object. They used the rulers carefully and achieved accurate answers.
- Staff skilfully develop children's basic skills of reading, writing and number. Every opportunity is taken, for example, to reinforce and remind children of the links between letters and the sounds they make, to form letters of the correct shape and size, and gain an understanding of number.
- Behaviour is good. Children are confident to play together and with older pupils. Children have a good and growing awareness of their own safety and that of those around them. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce safety rules.

- Children benefit from learning with and from older pupils. They watch and listen and quickly pick things up from those older than themselves. They concentrate and persevere well.
- Leadership of the early years is improving because staff are supported by an experienced leader with appropriate skills and expertise. Staff work closely with early years colleagues from within the trust to share good practice and develop their skills.
- Children's safety and well-being are seen as paramount. Staff check regularly to ensure both the classroom and outdoor area are safe and secure.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to initial assessments of their children's starting points and play a full and active part in their children's learning. They say that staff work closely with them and keep them well informed of their children's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	121028
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10001890

This inspection 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	12
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wayne Hart
Headteacher	Joel Crawley (executive headteacher, one day a week)
Head of School	Jacqui Sydney
Telephone number	01379 668284
Website	www.brockdishprimaryschool.com
Email address	office@brockdish.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 December 2013

Information about this school

- The school is very small when compared to the average-sized primary school.
- In August 2015 the last substantive headteacher left the school. Since then, the school has been run by a head of school supported one day a week by the headteacher of Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School.
- In September 2015 the governing body announced its decision to go into formal consultation regarding the possible closure of the school. This consultation ends in February 2016 and a decision is expected in April 2016.
- In January 2016 the school became part of the Sancroft Church Schools Trust comprising Archbishop Sancroft Church of England High School and its catchment primary schools; Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary School, Brockdish Church of England Primary School, Harleston Church of England Primary School and Pulham Church of England Primary School. Archbishop Sancroft and Harleston are aided schools and the remainder voluntary controlled.
- Pupils are taught in two classes; the early years and Key Stage 1 in one class, and Key Stage 2 in the other. Currently the youngest class is taught by two temporary teachers.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- All pupils are White British. Currently there are no pupils from minority ethnic groups, and none speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- There are not enough pupils to publish whether the school meets the government's floor standards that set the minimum expectation of pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils learning in seven lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were visited jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector attended an assembly and observed pupils as they moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, other leaders, teachers, and governors. The inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with pupils to discuss their experiences at school.
- The inspector held informal discussions with parents. The inspector also took account of the views of four staff who completed an Ofsted survey.
- The inspector looked at a range of school documents and information including the school development plan, checks on the quality of teaching, curriculum plans, minutes of governors' meetings, and behaviour and attendance records. The inspector also looked at arrangements and records for safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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