

Brington CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Brington, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 5AE

Inspection dates 22–23 September 2015

Overall effectiveness **Requires improvement**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is uneven across the school.
- Secure systems for assessing pupils' learning and measuring their progress in all subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2 have not been finalised and embedded.
- In the early years, the planned activities for some children are not challenging enough to move their learning forward speedily.
- Not enough pupils make consistently strong progress from their individual starting points. Most pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 3 is lower than it should be because they did not make sufficient progress last year.
- Appropriate steps taken by leaders and governors to improve teaching and learning have not been implemented for long enough to show sufficient impact on pupils' outcomes. Teaching is improving, but timescales set for improving the performance of a few staff have not always been rapid enough in the past.
- A very small minority of parents do not share the view of most parents that the school communicates with them effectively when they raise concerns.

The school has the following strengths

- Equality of opportunity and diversity are promoted strongly through the school's ethos, teaching and learning. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The governing body demonstrates good practice in fulfilling its core functions and statutory duties.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective.
- School leaders and governors have successfully tackled issues raised in the last inspection to improve teachers' marking and the teaching of reading.
- Pupils behave well. They show that they are keen to learn and their attendance is rapidly improving.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school so that all pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - agreeing and implementing an effective system for assessing pupils' progress to support their learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 in all subjects
 - using assessment information about children's progress in Reception to plan activities that are suitably challenging for all abilities
 - ensuring that when leaders identify weaknesses in teaching they set timely deadlines to check that agreed targets for improvement are met.
- Improve communication with the very small minority of parents who feel that the school does not interact with them well enough when they raise concerns.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, with strong support from the governing body, has created a highly inclusive ethos that permeates all aspects of the school's work. They share ambition for all pupils to thrive academically and socially in a safe environment where any form of discrimination is challenged. In doing so, they have won the support of their community, including the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, who support the school in setting high expectations for all pupils to behave well and attend regularly.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of all disadvantaged pupils. The additional staff employed to teach catch-up programmes and provide extra supervision, as well as staff training and resources, ensure that individual pupils are well supported. Consequently, the majority of disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than they were last year. By the end of Year 6, gaps in their attainment, including with other pupils nationally, are narrowing.
- Governors and the headteacher know this school and its pupils inside out. Their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is entirely accurate. They know what requires improvement and, importantly, what to do to make the necessary changes so that all pupils make sustained progress to raise standards.
- Senior leaders have demonstrated their capacity to make changes that have made a difference to pupils' learning since the previous inspection. The introduction of a systematic approach to teaching phonics (letters and the sound they make), for example, has improved pupils' skills in reading and writing. Some changes, particularly in mathematics, have not been in place long enough to show significant improvement, but the changes, such as the revised calculation and marking policies, are well chosen and appropriate.
- Existing staff are motivated and keen to improve their practice, and teaching is improving strongly. Teachers benefit from opportunities to develop their skills through training that is tailored closely to their needs. Teachers new to the profession are supported well and gain ground rapidly in developing their teaching skills.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning systematically by watching teaching, talking to pupils about their learning, evaluating the quality of pupils' written work and ensuring that all staff engage in an annual cycle of review. While additional support and guidance is offered freely to help staff to improve, in a very few instances weaknesses in teaching have prevailed for too long. This is because timescales to rectify them have not been explicit.
- One parent was keen to comment on the excellent transition arrangements for pupils moving into the school from pre-school, and from the school into secondary school at the end of Year 6. The school has forged effective links with both of these providers successfully.
- The school promotes fundamental British values strongly. For example, at harvest time the pupils learnt about food shortages and the challenges governments face in Britain and worldwide in ensuring that everyone has enough to eat. In doing so, they gained understanding of how they can contribute positively to the lives of others locally and in wider society. They are now involved in a project to reduce the amount of food waste at school and at home. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are promoted effectively, preparing them positively for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum has been revised and improved to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and, importantly, to reflect pupils' interests and experiences. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and are very keen to talk about the topics they are studying.
- The school provides a good range of sporting activities and clubs beyond the school day. The PE and sport premium for primary schools is used effectively. Pupils' participation in a wide range of sporting activities and competitive sports has increased. Increasing the variety of clubs on offer to cater for other interests features in the school's development plan for this year.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective because the headteacher and governors ensure that they are implemented rigorously and staff are suitably trained in keeping pupils safe. The safeguarding policy is updated annually and the latest version, due to be launched on the school's website imminently, incorporates all of the latest government guidance. Risk assessments are undertaken for all activities that contain an extra element of risk, such as educational visits. The headteacher does not hesitate to make referrals to other professional agencies if concerns are raised about individual pupils.
- The very large majority of parents are confident that their children are safe at school. The inspector observed pupils behaving well in lessons and playing happily and safely at breaktimes. Nonetheless, a few parents disagree, mainly because they do not feel that they are well enough informed about the rigorous

work undertaken by staff to keep all pupils safe and happy.

- The local authority provides light-touch support to the school because it judges it to be good. This does not match the school's self-evaluation judgement or this inspection's findings. In this respect, the local authority's monitoring has been ineffective. However, it keeps the school well informed of changes in legislation and statutes that affect the school. Good support has been provided to assist the school in integrating Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and raising their achievement.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors provide strong support, with an equal level of challenge, to the headteacher. Documentation used to measure the school's success in working towards its agreed goals are reviewed regularly. All governors contribute to the long-term strategic planning for school improvement.
 - The governing body monitors teaching, pupils' achievement and financial arrangements rigorously. All governors make regular visits to the school to see first-hand how well pupils are learning and behaving.
 - The governing body is reflective and seeks to improve its effectiveness continuously. For example, two experienced governors undertake an annual evaluation of the Chair of the Governing Body's leadership. The recent reconstitution of the governing body has ensured that it has the right set of skills in order to carry out its statutory duties and core functions efficiently and to a high standard.
 - Governors are entirely confident and familiar with interrogating assessment information and data. They are not reliant solely upon what the headteacher tells them.
 - The governing body is forward-looking in securing the school's future and ensuring that it remains viable and cost-effective. Governors are mindful that any decisions they take are in the best interests of pupils and the local community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable and this accounts for unevenness in the progress made by different year groups from their varying starting points in Reception to the end of Year 6. Poorer quality of teaching in the past has affected the progress of some pupils, especially those currently in Years 2 and 3.
- The current quality of teaching is much stronger across the school. At this point, however, there is insufficient evidence to show that this is enabling pupils in all classes to make accelerated progress.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning in English and mathematics is accurate. The school uses external experts to check this thoroughly.
- No formal assessment system exists to measure pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school has undertaken pilots to change practice in assessment in Key Stages 1 and 2. This has not resulted in an agreed, acceptable approach which is used by everyone in the school. Teachers do not consider that the systems they have been working on enable them to measure pupils' progress accurately. Leaders are seeking a solution, but work on this important aspect of teaching is far from complete.
- Assessment in the early years is thorough and detailed. It provides staff and parents with a very clear picture of how well each child is progressing. However, this valuable information is not always used in planning activities that are challenging enough, especially for the most-able learners. Nonetheless, the information has been used constructively to adapt the curriculum by dedicating more time to those areas of pupils' learning that were previously found to be weaker.
- Teachers use a range of methods and approaches to capture and sustain pupils' interest in lessons. In particular, they encourage pupils to talk about their learning and explain their thinking and ideas. This is helping pupils to deepen their understanding and teachers to pick up on any misconceptions.
- Practical resources, artefacts, visual images and the use of technologies support pupils' learning well. For example, Year 6 pupils study the ancient Mayan civilisation by looking at artefacts and images of objects used by the Maya people. This develops their curiosity about the past and encourages them to think, reflect, debate and discuss the past before undertaking further research.
- Teaching assistants receive regular training so that they have the right skills to deliver extra learning programmes to individuals and groups effectively. Teaching assistants are involved in planning the work, teaching it, marking it and giving pupils helpful feedback.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand how to be a successful learner. They develop this self-awareness through being actively encouraged by their teachers to take responsibility for their learning. They are self-sufficient and get on with the work without the need for frequent reminders from adults.
- Pupils take pride in the presentation of their written work.
- Pupils enjoy physical activities and sporting events. They all use the school swimming pool so that even the youngest children develop confidence in the water. Most pupils, from the youngest in the early years to the oldest pupils, choose to play active games at break and lunchtimes and do so safely.
- Pupils' emotional development is supported well through sensitive support from adults and the curriculum for personal, social and health education. As a consequence, almost all pupils develop as confident, happy learners.
- Children who have been in school less than three weeks were observed thoroughly enjoying their learning through play. In the Parent View questionnaire and at a meeting with parents, a very large majority of parents confirmed that their children are happy at this school.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet and other technologies. Pupils know that unkind name-calling, bullying incidents or racist remarks will be taken seriously. The school's records show that these are all logged conscientiously, followed up with parents and, if appropriate, reported to the local authority.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school environment is calm and purposeful and pupils are keen to learn. Learning in class is not interrupted by disruptive behaviour. The very few pupils who have momentary lapses in maintaining a good level of behaviour take time out and are taught to move away from distractions. Encouraged by the very large majority of pupils who behave well consistently, they recover quickly.
- Pupils move around the building sensibly. They know the rules and stick to them.
- Out in the playground, pupils support each other well. They look out for one another and encourage each other to make good choices in how to behave. In particular, the older pupils look after the younger ones responsibly.
- Attendance is rapidly improving from below average in 2013 to average in 2015. In order to reduce persistent absenteeism, the school is working successfully with the very few families whose children do not attend as regularly as they should. Most pupils arrive at school on time at the start of the school day.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- From their varying individual starting points, pupils across the school do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. While most make expected progress, few do better than this.
- With relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group, national data about pupils' attainment are not always reliable and can fluctuate widely from year to year, depending on the individual needs of pupils in each year group. Nonetheless, the wide variation in outcomes from year to year is because teaching over time has not been consistently good.
- Most pupils in Years 2 and 3 began this school year with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is below the expected levels for their age range. This is because they did not receive good teaching throughout the previous academic year. Teachers of these age groups are acutely aware that accelerated progress is essential this year for these pupils to make up for previous lost ground in their learning.
- In 2014, too many Year 6 pupils did not make expected progress from the end of Year 2 because the teaching in Years 3 to 5 was not consistently good in writing and mathematics. The subject leaders took effective action to make the necessary improvements in teaching and the curriculum to rectify this successfully in 2015. Achievement in all classes is rising rapidly and all groups of pupils have made a positive start with their new teachers at this stage of the new school year.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.

- Pupils read enthusiastically and with pleasure. The systematic teaching of phonics has made a significant difference to pupils' skills in breaking words down into separate sounds so that they can read them. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the national phonics check in Year 1 rose significantly in 2015 as a result of effective daily phonics teaching from the beginning of Reception. Nonetheless, the school has identified that the oldest pupils, who have not had the advantage of this teaching from an early age, have some difficulties in spelling words correctly. The leader of English has ensured that this deficit is being tackled earnestly by teachers.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Teaching in Reception is improving strongly. The full range of areas for learning are catered for in the Reception class. However, some of the activities do not provide enough scope and depth to meet the needs of all children. For example, sometimes there is not enough challenge for the most able children to stretch them.
- Staff record and track children's learning very carefully in the learning journey books. Although these books contain a wealth of valuable information, it is not always used advantageously to plan the next set of experiences for each child to help them to move on quickly in their learning.
- The school takes steps to ensure that children coming to school for the first time have a happy and positive experience. Rightly, the school makes every effort to work closely with the on-site privately run pre-school to convey its expectations for children starting school. As a consequence, children's personal, social and emotional development is improving steadily.
- Children quickly learn how to work alongside each other. Children in the current Reception class have already begun to learn the routines. Staff are alert and ready to step in and help children to learn how to share toys and take turns amicably.
- Phonics is taught regularly from day one in Reception. Children learn quickly how to listen to sounds and repeat them. The current children in Reception enjoy visiting the reading corner to look at books and write messages to their parents on postcards before posting them.
- The teaching of numbers has equal emphasis and adults are expert at weaving counting practice into their continuous interaction with children. During this inspection, children were encouraged to count the number of wellington boots they had on before setting off on an outdoor treasure hunt, and later counted their finds.
- In 2015, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was in line with the national average, and this prepares the majority of children well for work in Year 1.
- Leaders are accurate in pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in children's learning. They make regular checks and act on their findings. For example, last year, writing was identified as an area of weakness. Currently, children in Reception are immersed in a wide range of activities to ignite their interest in writing and develop their skills. Staff receive helpful training and support to develop their professional skills and this is improving provision in the early years strongly.
- Children learn in a safe environment and are taught how to play safely. Children's statutory welfare, safeguarding and safety needs are met fully. Staff are trained to the correct level for first aid.

School details

Unique reference number	110827
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10005666

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gemma Gray
Headteacher	Tracey Reid
Telephone number	01832 710383
Website	www.brington.org
Email address	office@brington.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 April 2012

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The area that the school serves includes a permanent site for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families.
- Around three quarters of pupils attending are White British; a quarter are from minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils from GRT families is above average at 15%.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils to whom the pupil premium (additional government funding) applies is below average.
- The percentage of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher has changed since the previous inspection in 2012.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection began as a short, section 8, one-day inspection and was converted to a full section 5 inspection before the end of the day. Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) returned to complete the inspection the following day.
- A range of evidence was gathered to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included: seven observations of parts of lessons taught by teachers and teaching assistants (some seen jointly with the headteacher); the headteacher's records and evaluation of the quality of teaching; an examination of pupils' past and current written work and discussions with leaders about the school's most recent assessment information.
- A few pupils in Years 2, 3 and 6 read to the inspector and talked about their books. The inspector also watched children in Reception learning to recognise and repeat the sounds that letters make (phonics).
- The inspector talked to a very wide range of pupils informally in classrooms and in the playground. The school selected a group of eight pupils from Key Stage 2 to give a guided tour of the school at lunchtime and talk about what it is like in school on a typical day.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, two senior leaders, seven governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, the school's self-evaluation and plans for future improvement.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff, arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media) and risk assessments undertaken for educational visits.
- The views of 32 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account. The HMI also contacted one parent by telephone, met with a representative group of 13 parents and had separate conversations with parents from five families and two parents whose children have left the school.

Inspection team

Linda Killman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

