

# Bramfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bridge Street, Bramfield, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HZ

**Inspection dates** 25–26 May 2016

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This is a good and improving school. Leadership is increasingly strong and has a clear impact on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching in the school.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment is in line with the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. An effective programme of continuing professional development has had a strong impact on improving the overall quality of teaching.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and well mannered. They behave very well in class and lessons are very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- The quality of early years provision is good. Children make good progress during the Reception Year and the proportion who reach a good level of development is above the national average.
- Pupils feel safe at school. There is little incidence of bullying and pupils have great faith in the ability of staff to deal with issues that arise.
- The school's work to enhance pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is particularly effective. Pupils are non-judgemental and show very positive attitudes to equality and diversity.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although they are making good progress, some pupils are not yet writing at a level that is typical of their age and ability.
- Some members of staff are not fully confident with the school's new assessment system. This means that some pupils' writing is assessed as being of a lesser quality than it actually is.
- The head of school carries a disproportionate number of responsibilities. The roles of other potential leaders in the school are underdeveloped.

## 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.

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

- Consolidate and develop the newly introduced assessment system so that it becomes thoroughly reliable, rigorous and robust.
- Improve the teaching of writing, so that more pupils make rapid progress, by:
  - developing a more systematic approach to teaching writing across the school
  - ensuring that all staff are confident in making accurate assessments of the quality of pupils' writing.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - identifying and formally recognising members of staff as middle leaders to take responsibility for key areas of the school such as English, mathematics and the early years
  - providing training and development opportunities for middle leaders to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- There have been a number of changes to the leadership of the school since the last section 5 inspection. The school has weathered these potentially stormy periods very well and this is largely due to the leadership provided by the head of school. She has provided consistency and clear leadership throughout this period, and has ensured that the focus remained firmly fixed on becoming a good school once again.
- The role of the head of school in the school's improvement cannot be overstated. Her calm and caring manner has ensured that pupils, staff and parents have all remained 'on board' throughout the school's improvement journey. In a meeting with the inspector, parents spoke movingly about how the head of school 'really cares about the children' and described her as a 'positive' and 'motivational' leader.
- The teaching and learning lead took up his post in January this year, working across the four schools in the federation. He has used his recent experience as a primary school headteacher to excellent effect in providing coaching and support for the head of school. As a result, the leadership of the school is now much stronger than it was previously. In addition, his work both with individual teachers and with the teaching staff as a whole has improved the overall quality of teaching and the quality of assessment in particular.
- The interim executive headteacher joined the school very recently but is already having a positive impact. He has taken responsibility for all the managerial processes necessary to dissolve the federation and to enable the school's academisation to go ahead. This means that the head of school has been able to maintain her focus on school improvement without being sidetracked by procedural issues necessary to becoming a sponsored academy.
- Some members of staff take on unofficial lead roles and do so well. For example, one teacher has a particular interest in mathematics and another in early years. The school does not fully utilise the interests and abilities of staff to lead school improvement.
- The local authority has supported the school well since the last section 5 inspection. The school effectiveness officer has provided continuity in her dealings with the school and has balanced support and challenge well.
- The pupil premium grant is spent effectively. The school has very few pupils who are eligible for this additional funding. It is currently used to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils in specific areas identified through termly pupil progress meetings.
- The primary physical education and sports premium is spent effectively. The school has focused its spending on improving pupils' participation in competitions by, for example, employing specialist coaches and paying for transport to venues. This is having a clear impact on sporting performance and the school recently won a handball tournament, playing against much larger schools.
- The school's curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. The school ensures that there is an appropriate emphasis on teaching English and mathematics but balances this well with the need to provide pupils with a well-rounded education. For example, science is taught regularly throughout the school and there is a strong emphasis on learning through investigation and through testing hypotheses. French is taught in key stage 2 by a specialist teacher.
- Music is a particular strength of the school. Instrumental lessons are provided by peripatetic teachers and many pupils play an instrument (for example, harp, guitar, violin, cello and drums). Some pupils play their instruments to a high standard, above and beyond what might typically be expected for their age. The school has an orchestra and provides regular opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience. During the inspection, the pupils in key stage 1 performed in front of a packed hall of peers and parents. They played simple tunes very competently and sang in two parts, maintaining the tune throughout.
- Bramfield is a very inclusive school. Every pupil is valued and is seen as an individual. The school's leaders are ambitious for every pupil and they ensure that all pupils achieve well, including those who have special educational needs or disability.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is led very well. The special educational needs coordinator is both very experienced and well qualified. She monitors pupils' progress very carefully and ensures that appropriate action is taken to meet individual pupils' needs.
- The school promotes equality and the acceptance of diversity very well. The school's Christian ethos is used effectively to promote acceptance of individual differences and the importance of valuing all people. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern British society through, for example, the weekly assembly on focusing on relevant issues.

- Middle leadership is not yet established in the school. That is, individual staff do not have specific and official responsibility for particular subjects or areas of responsibility. Although there is no indication that this has had a negative effect on school improvement, it means that the workload carried by the head of school is disproportionate and heavier than it needs to be.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Following the last section 5 inspection, the governing body was stood down and an interim executive board (IEB) appointed in its place. The four members of the IEB provide strong strategic leadership for the school.
  - The IEB members know the school very well and visit frequently. Their significant experience in governance has provided them with the necessary knowledge and skills to hold leaders to account while also providing necessary support.
  - They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are ambitious for its continued improvement. They have secured strong leadership for the school in the medium term and are working closely with the diocesan board of education to ensure a smooth transition when the school becomes an academy, sponsored by the multi-academy trust.
  - The IEB's expectations are high and it monitors the school's progress very closely. The IEB has shown that it is quick to take advice from the local authority and to act on it in a timely fashion when necessary.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The single central record of staff checks meets statutory requirements and procedures for the safer recruitment of staff are robust. Records of concern indicate that staff are suitably vigilant and open-minded about the possibility of child protection issues arising anywhere and at any time. The designated senior lead is suitably qualified and well aware of when and how to take prompt action when necessary.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The school's leaders have provided an effective programme of continuing professional development and this has had a direct impact on improving the quality of teaching. For example, lessons are now planned far more effectively as a result of the staff training in this area.
- The school's systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress have been greatly improved. The new assessment system is now well established and is used increasingly effectively. However, there remains some uncertainty with the assessment of writing. Some teachers are, at times, a little reticent when marking pupils' work and, in some cases, judge it at a lower level than it should be. The school is aware of this and plans are in place to address the issue.
- Teachers now use their assessments of what pupils can and cannot do much better to plan lessons. For example, during the inspection, an observed lesson focused on teaching pupils to use the first and third person form in their writing, consistently and correctly. This was as a direct result of the teacher's ongoing assessment of pupils' understanding in the previous lesson.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn because teachers plan interesting things for them to learn about and to do. In a meeting with the inspector, pupils talked animatedly about the ways in which their teachers now make lessons 'more fun' through investigative mathematics work and scientific experiments.
- The quality of feedback that pupils receive about their work is now much higher. A new marking and feedback policy has been introduced and its systems are in evidence throughout the school. Pupils find the regular 'respond to marking' sessions very helpful and there is clear evidence in pupils' exercise books of where they have made better progress because of the feedback they have received about their work.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters represent) is taught effectively. Pupils use their phonics knowledge well to help them to read unfamiliar words and in their spelling.
- Relationships are very strong throughout the school. Pupils love their teachers and every classroom has a positive and supportive atmosphere. Pupils are keen to learn. They are not afraid to make mistakes because they know that this is one of the ways that people learn.
- Teachers exploit opportunities well to develop pupils' writing and mathematics skills through their work in other subjects. For example, pupils learning about the Muslim festival of Ramadan in a religious education lesson were given the opportunity to write a creative piece, imagining themselves as a Muslim girl or boy. Pupils do all of their writing in a single exercise book as the school has found this to be effective in raising standards in presentation when pupils are writing in lessons other than literacy.

- Although teaching is now clearly good overall, some remains relatively weaker. The school's leaders have a very clear and accurate understanding of where teaching is weaker and are taking clear and decisive action to improve it.

## 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 have a good understanding of what bullying is, what it is not and the different forms it can take. They feel safe at school and say that there is very rarely any bullying at all. When asked about bullying at school, pupils said that it hardly ever happens because 'we're all friends' and 'everyone knows everybody'.
- Pupils have confidence that staff will deal effectively with issues when they arise. Pupils describe the 'forum box' as being a very effective way for individuals to raise any concerns anonymously. These are discussed in the weekly forum assembly and one pupil described how it encourages them to take responsibility for their actions, saying, 'It makes everyone see what they're doing wrong'.
- Pupils attend school regularly and on time. The school's rate of attendance is similar to the national average. Persistent absence is rare.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of the school's work are particularly strong. As a result, pupils know that prejudice is unacceptable. Pupils display strong anti-racist attitudes. In a discussion with the inspector, one pupil said that the school teaches them that 'you never, ever, judge someone'. The impact of this teaching is very clear throughout the school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils at Bramfield are very friendly, polite and well mannered. They are confident to speak to visitors and are keen to talk about their learning and the things that they do at school.
- Pupils behave very well both in their classrooms and in less structured parts of the day. There is very little disruption in lessons. Where teaching is weaker, low-level disruption occasionally occurs. The school's leaders are well aware of this and are taking appropriate action to address it.
- Teachers' expectations are now much higher. Pupils know that they are expected to try their hardest and to present their work neatly and carefully. As a result, pupils now take much more pride in their work. Although some inconsistencies remain, many exercise books are notably neat and well presented.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and abilities that are broadly typical of their age. Children make good progress during their time in early years and the proportion that reach a good level of development by the end of the year is above the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in learning phonics. The proportion of Year 1 pupils who reached the expected level in the phonics screening check was above the national average in 2015. Current Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve a similar result.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 fell in 2015. However, improvements that have been made to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment mean that current pupils are making good progress and all Year 2 pupils are currently working within the expected level for their age.
- Overall attainment at the end of key stage 2 rose in 2015 to be in line with the national average. Most pupils in the current Year 6 are working within age-related expectations and all are making good progress.
- The work in pupils' exercise books reflects the good progress that pupils are making across a range of subjects. There is some inconsistency between classes with some year groups making better progress than others.
- As there are very few disadvantaged pupils at Bramfield, it is difficult to report on their attainment and progress in any detail without risk of identifying individual pupils. However, disadvantaged pupils as a group make good progress and achieve well because their progress is monitored closely on an individual basis and appropriate action is taken to ensure that they achieve well.

- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress. Their individual needs are met well and the school is equally ambitious for this group of pupils as for all pupils.
- The school has not yet developed a systematic approach to teaching writing skills and so progress in writing is often slower than in other subjects.

## **Early years provision**

**is good**

- The early years provision is led and managed well. The early years teacher has good knowledge and understanding of early years practice and is committed to developing excellent provision in the school.
- The quality of teaching is good because staff work well as a team and have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. The differing demands of the early years foundation stage curriculum for the Reception children in the class and the national curriculum for the Year 1 children in the class are balanced very well.
- The early years environment is bright and attractive. Although the outdoor space is limited, staff use it well to create good learning opportunities for the children.
- Suitable activities are provided for children across the seven areas of learning and good learning activities are set up for children to explore independently. For example, a group of children used grapes to calculate subtraction sums correctly without support, eating the fruit in order to 'take away'!
- Children make good progress during their time in early years. The proportion of current Reception children who are expected to achieve a good level of development by the end of the year is above the national average.
- Children behave very well and are polite, confident and friendly. Children learn the school rules quickly and feel safe and settle well to school life.

## School details

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 124722   |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Suffolk  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10017629 |

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.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 92   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Interim executive board  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Tom Brooke   |
| <b>Interim executive headteacher</b>       | James Leese  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01986 784205   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.bmpy.suffolk.dbprimary.com">www.bmpy.suffolk.dbprimary.com</a>   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:office@bramfield.suffolk.sch.uk">office@bramfield.suffolk.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 21–22 January 2015   |

## Information about this school

- Bramfield is currently a voluntary controlled primary school governed by an interim executive board. On 1 August 2016, the school is due to become an academy, sponsored by St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust.
- The governing body was stood down following the last inspection. The local authority appointed an interim executive board (IEB) that met for the first time in July 2015. The four members of the IEB have remained the same since this time.
- The school was, until recently, part of a federation of four schools, led by an executive headteacher. The federation is currently being dissolved and the headteacher of St Mary's Church of England Primary School in Woodbridge became interim executive headteacher at Bramfield on 11 April 2016. St Mary's is also a member of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust. The school is led, on a day-to-day basis, by a head of school.
- The substantive interim executive headteacher retired at the end of the summer term 2015. An interim executive headteacher took up his post at the beginning of the new academic year but left the school in February 2016.
- Bramfield is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school has four mixed-age classes.
- Children join the Reception class in the September after their fourth birthday and attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is similar to the national average. However, a higher than average proportion have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school met floor standards in 2015. These are the minimum standards, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was scheduled as the third monitoring inspection, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, following the judgement that the school had serious weaknesses in January 2015. The inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act in response to evidence of the school's continued improvement.
- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. The inspector observed parts of eight lessons, some jointly with the interim executive headteacher and some with the teaching and learning lead.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' exercise books, listened to them read and talked to them about their work.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's assessment information, records of leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and other school documents.
- The views of parents were taken into account, including 29 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the comments made by approximately 20 parents who attended a meeting with the inspector.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, a member of the interim executive board, parents and a representative of the local authority.

## Inspection team

Wendy Varney, 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

