

Inspection of a good school: Bramford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Duckamere, Bramford, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 4AH

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

Bramford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Bramford. They enjoy the subjects they learn and work hard to achieve the high expectations staff set for them. Pupils know and understand their 'Ace Particles'. They are motivated by being identified as 'active listeners' and for demonstrating their 'particles', such as creativity and perseverance.

Pupils mostly behave well during lessons and when playing outside. Older pupils enjoy helping younger pupils as peer mentors and buddies. They especially like setting up different games for pupils to play on the school playground. Pupils learn how to manage their feelings and emotions. Some pupils need additional support with this. Staff are consistent in their approaches to helping them to improve. Bullying is not a frequent occurrence. If it happens, staff are quick to deal with it. Pupils know that they have adults in school to talk to when they need to.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have within and outside the school curriculum. Trips to places such as Framlingham Castle help pupils to learn more about the subjects they study in school. Pupils learn about people who are different from them. They are respectful of these differences.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have planned a curriculum that sets out broadly what pupils will learn in each subject. They have considered carefully how the curriculum in early years supports children to be ready for their learning in key stage 1. Children settle into the life of the school quickly. From the outset, they learn the sounds that letters represent and apply this knowledge to both their reading and their writing. Leaders ensure that children have a secure understanding of what they have learned across different areas of the curriculum. Consequently, children are well prepared for Year 1.

In most subjects, curriculum documents identify precisely the knowledge and vocabulary pupils must remember. In these subjects, leaders have also placed this knowledge and vocabulary carefully into the order in which teachers will teach it. Pupils mostly know and remember this important knowledge. In geography, for example, pupils use subject-specific vocabulary to explain how earthquakes and volcanoes are formed. In some subject areas, curriculum planning focuses more on the activities pupils will complete and less on the knowledge they must learn and remember. In these instances, pupils remember what they have done, rather than what they have learned.

Leaders have prioritised reading. In September 2021, they introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. This approach is now well established in the school. Staff provide effective support for pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read. Where pupils have difficulties with reading, leaders identify problems quickly. Well-trained staff help these pupils to become more fluent readers. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading. Older pupils enjoy choosing books to read for pleasure from the vibrant school library.

There have been some changes to leadership roles across the school. Some leaders have not had the opportunity to support staff fully to teach the curriculum as leaders would like them to. While teachers typically have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum well, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of provision across the curriculum.

Leaders provide teachers with clear guidance on how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. Where needed, resources and adaptations to the curriculum, such as the use of technology to record learning, help pupils with SEND to learn well.

Pupils enjoy the chance to have a voice in the school through leadership opportunities, such as being green ambassadors and librarians. Elections for positions such as that of school councillor help to teach pupils about democracy. Pupils are proud to represent the school through sporting events, such as being members of the school football team. The school's values teach pupils about the importance of respect, friendship and responsibility. Pupils understand and show these values.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate how leaders help them to manage their workload and are proud to work at the school. Governors support and hold leaders to account. They understand what the school does well and what leaders are working to improve. While most parents and carers are positive about the school, there are a few who do not feel that their concerns are responded to or that they receive the right information about how well their child is doing at school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to spot the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. They raise concerns with leaders quickly and record these using the agreed procedures. Leaders take action on concerns in a timely manner. Support is provided in school for pupils who need

it. Leaders also seek support from other professionals when they need to. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe. This includes when they are online. Pupils understand what they have learned. Leaders ensure that they complete all the required checks on new adults working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, curriculum plans identify what pupils will do as opposed to what knowledge they will learn or when they will learn it. This means that some pupils remember more about the activities they have completed as opposed to what they have learned. Leaders must ensure that they are precise in identifying the important knowledge that pupils will learn and when they will learn it across all subjects. This is so that pupils secure their understanding of the key content that leaders want them to remember to achieve well.
- There are some variations in the quality of the implementation of the planned curriculum. Some curriculum leaders are new to role and have not had the opportunity yet to support staff with the teaching of the planned curriculum. Senior leaders must ensure that all leaders have the support and training they need to evaluate the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility effectively.
- Some parents would like to understand more about the quality of education their child receives and how questions they raise with leaders are dealt with. Leaders must develop their approaches to responding when concerns are reported and ensure that the approaches they take to continue to improve the curriculum and behaviour at school are well understood.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	124723
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10268465
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Clarke
Headteacher	Emma Burgess (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.bramford.bransomfederation.net
Date of previous inspection	19 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with Somersham Primary School. There is one governing body that works across both schools.
- The school currently uses alternative provision through one registered provider.
- There have been changes to the leadership structure of the school recently. The head of school and phase leaders all took up post in September 2022.
- The school's most recent inspection of its religious character under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in June 2018, and it will receive its next inspection within eight years of that date.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and

looked at samples of pupils' work. Curriculum plans in science, music and history were also considered. The inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks of adults at the school and a sample of child protection files. He also spoke with governors, the designated safeguarding lead, a deputy designated safeguarding lead and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, the family support worker, subject leaders, staff, governors and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, pupil records, attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, school improvement visit notes from the local authority, school development plans and school policies.
- The 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, were considered.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. The inspector spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- The 29 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff were considered. The inspector also spoke with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Michael Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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