



Brimpton Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109954
LEA West Berkshire LEA
Inspection number 278319
Inspection dates 22 May 2006 to 22 May 2006
Reporting inspector Barbara Atcheson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brimpton Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Brimpton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Reading RG7 4TL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189 712311
Number on roll	40	Fax number	01189 712311
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Patricia Brims
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs A Wheeler

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Most pupils who come to this very small, rural school are of White British heritage. They come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, frequently including traveller families. Cohorts are very small and many pupils stay in the school for a short time only. Very few are entitled to free school meals. There are two pupils who are an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school has strong links with its parish church and plays an active part in the local small schools federation.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school's judgement that its effectiveness is satisfactory is too modest. This is a good school which gives good value for money. The school provides good quality care and guidance. Consequently, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This creates a very welcoming atmosphere and so new entrants settle quickly and adopt positive attitudes to learning. Good quality, first-hand experience enriches the curriculum and makes learning exciting.

Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from good provision and make good progress. Year groups are small and each one is different because pupils move in and out of school at short notice. However, because teachers get to know their pupils so well and very quickly, all pupils make good progress given their starting points. One parent said 'our children have made an excellent transition into this new school in a new country'. Teaching is good because activities are well matched to pupils learning needs. However, with such a wide range of age and ability within each of the two classes, whole-class lesson introductions and plenaries are not always relevant to all pupils.

Effective leadership and management have been successful in creating a committed team who are ambitious for the pupils' success. The school improvement plan sets the correct agenda but lacks precision in linking its aims to pupils' achievements. There is a good track record of recent improvement, such as raising standards in mathematics, and the school demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that the success criteria in the school improvement plan are more sharply focussed on the achievements of pupils
- ensure that lesson introductions and plenaries are more closely matched to the learning needs of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school's judgement that achievement and standards are satisfactory is modest. Achievement is good and pupils of all abilities make good progress. By the time children reach Year 1, late entrants with no pre-school experience and those who are an early stage of learning English, have settled and grown in confidence to make good progress towards achieving the goals expected of five year olds. Children entering the school with average attainment make good progress and exceed those goals.

None of the four pupils currently in Year 6 were in the school when they took the national tests in Year 2. However, given their starting points all pupils make good progress in each year they are in the school and achievement is good. In the national tests in Year 6 pupils attain broadly average standards and sometimes better than this. There are no underachieving groups and pupils make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make

good progress because of the good provision and careful attention to their needs. Traveller children and other pupils who are at the school for a short time only do well because of the good assessment procedures which are used well by the teachers; there is also effective external support. This means that pupils do not lose ground when joining the school. Target-setting is difficult because of the small numbers and frequent changes. However, individual pupils do meet their own challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good and supports the achievement of all pupils. One parent writes 'My son was very shy when he started school, but his confidence has grown'. Pupils really enjoy learning and their high motivation is shown by the good attendance.

Behaviour is good. One pupil said 'this is a friendly school, we all get on, there is no bullying'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils act responsibly and this means that the teachers trust them to help decide on their classroom rules. The school council also takes its role seriously and encourages healthy eating by organising a 'Fruity Friday'. Pupils really understand about healthy living and keeping safe. One said 'Healthy food means you don't get overweight and you live longer'. A local safety centre provides an excellent chance to participate in real-life scenarios. Pupils make a good contribution to the village community. For instance, pupils give out harvest gifts and have attended baptisms. Charity fund-raising helps pupils to consider the needs of the wider world. Pupils' economic well-being is good and is enhanced by the good progress that pupils make in English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges teaching and learning to be satisfactory. The inspector judges it to be good because of the good progress made by pupils. Pupils work hard, responding enthusiastically to challenging work. Thorough planning and preparation linked to the good use of resources motivates pupils and makes learning relevant. For example, reception children eagerly counted and recorded the stock in the garden centre before using their newly learned skills in addition and subtraction to buy and sell goods.

Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the progress all pupils make, including those who are an early stage of learning English. Activities are well-tailored to cater for the needs of all pupils. However, lesson introductions and plenaries which are given to the whole class do not always cater so well for such a broad range of age and ability in one class.

More able pupils benefit from the challenges provided through grouping with the year above while other pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, have opportunities to consolidate their skills. Specialist support for traveller children

ensures that learning is well focussed. Pupils know their targets and find them challenging.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The four-year rolling programme is reviewed regularly to reflect the changes of intake. Writing has improved since the last inspection and is used well in all subjects. For example, a pupil's letter from a British Roman soldier complains 'These clothes are absolutely useless for this weather'.

Pupils' skills in numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are also used well across the curriculum. Links with a local secondary school enable older pupils to extend their skills in ICT. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a carefully planned curriculum. First-hand experiences such as making natural sculptures, together with a well-planned programme of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities such as choir, dance and French add enjoyment to learning. Personal, health and social education successfully promotes positive attitudes, helps pupils to understand that they belong to a community and ensures that pupils keep healthy and stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care for all pupils. As a result, the school is a happy and secure place where pupils thrive. Teachers know their pupils well and because of this the needs of pupils are quickly identified. One parent notes; 'My son is generally quiet but his teacher still noticed when he was falling behind in class'. Teachers carefully track and monitor the progress and personal development of each pupil. Pupils receive good feedback and know how to improve their work.

Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and all are well known to staff. Care is tailored to their needs. Vulnerable pupils and their families and traveller children, benefit from the school's close links with various agencies. Pupils who are an early stage of learning English are helped to grow in confidence. Child protection procedures are robust and risk assessment and health and safety procedures are well established.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's judgement that leadership and management are satisfactory is modest. Leadership and management are good. The drive and resolve of the head teacher and her staff team ensure that all pupils make good progress whatever their starting points. There is a strong thrust towards continuous improvement. A robust programme of monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher ensures that teaching improves consistently. Well-focussed training on important priorities such as extension activities

for more able pupils mean that teachers are now regularly planning more interesting ways to extend learning for these pupils. However, more remains to be done to ensure that lesson introductions and plenaries are more closely matched to the learning needs of all pupils.

The leadership team have an accurate view of the school. Weaknesses such as those found in mathematics have already been identified effectively and are being tackled systematically. The school improvement plan is a useful document and reflects a full analysis of pupil performance and a series of well- defined priorities for action although the success criteria could be more sharply focussed on the achievements of pupils. Financial management is good and resources are used well.

Everyone, including parents, pupils and governors feel involved and valued in the decision- making process. Governors are well informed. They evaluate their own effectiveness and play a full part in the strategic development of the school. They are actively and productively involved in the life of the school and ensure that all legal requirements are met. The school has made a full response to the issues raised by the last inspection and has good capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Thank you for the very friendly way in which you welcomed me to your school. I enjoyed talking with you during my visit, and thought you would like to know what I liked about your school and how I thought it could get even better.

I enjoyed watching you learn in lessons and looking at your books. You enjoy school and it was clear that you want to do well. You like the adults who work with you and it is clear your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to care for you, and everyone is valued. Many of you have come from other schools and all of you said that you liked being at Brimpton. You have settled in well. You behave well and know your class rules and how to keep safe and stay healthy.

I have asked your headteacher to look very carefully at how effective the school is and link this to how well you are doing and where things could be made even better. I know that you enjoy your lessons but I have asked the headteacher and teachers to also make sure that the learning at the beginning and end of lessons are interesting for everyone in your class. I hope that you will continue to do your best and wish you every success in the future.

Barbara Atcheson

Lead Inspector