



Brenzett Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118703
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280376
Inspection dates 11 May 2006 to 12 May 2006
Reporting inspector Melvyn Hemmings AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brenzett
School category	Voluntary controlled		Romney Marsh
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent TN29 9UA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01797 344335
Number on roll	142	Fax number	01797 344637
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Christopher Pike
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr Howard Fisher

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 11 May 2006 - 12 May 2006	Inspection number 280376
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brenzett Church of England Primary School is smaller than average. The attainment of most children on entry is average. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. All pupils speak English as their first language and there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. During the last six years the school has had four headteachers and has lost some key staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and inspectors agree with the school's view of its effectiveness. It is an improving school because of the initiative and drive of the headteacher, appointed in September 2005. However some recent initiatives, although good, have not been in operation long enough to have had maximum impact and currently leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school's self-evaluation is mainly accurate. The school has recognised that achievement in writing needs to be improved. However, it has not recognised that boys are doing better than girls throughout the school. The school is well supported by parents and has good community links. It gives satisfactory value for money and is well placed to move forward.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress overall and in the Reception class. As a result, by the end of Year 6 most pupils reach broadly average standards. In some lessons, there is insufficient challenge, especially for more able pupils. Progress in information and communication technology is limited by insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills in other subjects across the curriculum. Subject leaders are not focused enough on monitoring pupils' progress. There is a satisfactory curriculum, though it lacks balance and variety because it does not develop sufficiently pupils' creative talents. The school takes good care of its pupils, who have positive attitudes to their work. Pupils' personal development is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenging work for all pupils, particularly in writing, and especially for the more able pupils.
- Develop further the role of senior managers and subject leaders to monitor more rigorously pupils' progress so that all pupils, especially the girls, meet their challenging targets.
- Improve the curriculum to develop pupils' creative talents more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. From average standards on entry to the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception class and reach expected standards on entering Year 1. In the national tests in 2005, pupils in Year 2 reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although writing was the relatively weaker aspect. Over the last year, pupils' progress has improved and is now satisfactory because staffing has been more stable. Most pupils are currently on course to meet their suitably challenging targets.

Pupils in Year 6 reached broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science in the 2005 national tests. These pupils made satisfactory progress in English, good progress in mathematics but progress in science was less than occurred nationally.

Pupils in the current Year 6 group are achieving similar standards. Throughout the school, weaker aspects of pupils' performance in core subjects are in writing in English, problem solving in mathematics and investigative skills in science. As shown in national tests and current work, boys are performing better than girls.

The school acknowledges the need to provide more challenging work for all pupils, particularly in writing and especially for the more able, and it is beginning to do that effectively. Progress in information and communication technology is limited by pupils not having enough chance to practise skills, learned in the computer suite, when in the classroom.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities or who are vulnerable make satisfactory progress. This is a result of the close support they receive from teaching assistants as well as teachers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good throughout the school. Pupils show positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy their lessons. Good relationships, clear rewards along with sanctions and high expectations ensure that their behaviour is good. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils are knowledgeable about their own cultural heritage, but less so of other cultures.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for. The few instances of bullying are swiftly addressed. The new school council has given pupils a strong voice and they know that their views are valued. Pupils lead a range of successful fund raising efforts and take on a variety of responsibilities. They involve themselves well in the life of the school, making a positive contribution to their community. They also make an effective contribution to the wider community of Brenzett. This is shown by the close involvement with the local church and the way they effectively support local charities.

Pupils demonstrate a clear awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet and regular exercise. They are aware of the dangers associated with drug abuse. Attendance is in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence exceeds the national average, but there are now good systems in place to tackle this. The school is enabling pupils to develop their economic well-being in a satisfactory manner.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school has worked successfully over the last year to ensure pupils in Year 2 have greater continuity in the teaching they receive. This has improved the progress they make. All teachers explain activities clearly so pupils know what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Questioning

is used appropriately to probe and then develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are managed well so that pupils are free from distractions and so maintain their concentration. Marking is satisfactory, showing pupils how they could improve their work. Pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science is suitably extended by the homework they are set, in line with teachers' commitment to raise standards. In some lessons there is insufficient challenge, especially for more able pupils and there is some inequality of opportunity and lower expectations for girls. For instance, teachers allow boys more opportunity to express their opinions than girls.

Throughout the school teachers have good relations with pupils. This contributes positively to the friendly working atmosphere evident in all classrooms. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, being well behaved and showing enjoyment in their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory but not sufficiently balanced, with some subjects, such as music, having limited coverage. This leads to a lack of variety in the curriculum, with not enough emphasis being placed on developing pupils' creative skills.

There is satisfactory provision for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Curriculum enrichment is good. For instance, learning French is an integral and enjoyable part of school life. In addition, pupils are able to have individual instrumental music lessons. A variety of educational visits and visitors are a feature of the curriculum and links with other organisations, such as a school in Boulogne, enhance provision. There is a good range of after-school activities. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, successfully enabling pupils in the mixed-age classes to make satisfactory progress. The eco-friendly building and its outside learning areas provide a stimulating learning environment. For instance, the greatly improved outside area for children in the Reception class has provided an exciting extra dimension to their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. All staff are committed to ensuring their well-being, health and safety. Child protection arrangements are comprehensive and regularly reviewed. Thorough risk assessments are in place to ensure pupils' safety on educational visits and when they are in school. Pupils said they 'feel safe and secure in school'. The 'nurture room', which is a recent innovation, is a good example of how the school helps pupils who are experiencing emotional problems. It enables them to have time out of class to calm down, where necessary, and talk through their difficulties with staff.

Recent improvements to the procedures for tracking pupils' academic development mean these are now satisfactory. The information collected is beginning to be used more effectively to show pupils how to improve their performance. There is effective

liaison with parents and outside agencies to support those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are vulnerable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

After a period of major disruption to staffing, the headteacher has quickly established a feeling of stability amongst staff. He is a good leader, whose vision and aspirations are leading to improvements in many aspects of school life. The effectiveness of senior managers and subject leaders is being developed well and is satisfactory, as are leadership and management overall. However, their monitoring of pupil progress and setting challenging targets for improvement, although much better are not yet rigorous enough. The school's self-evaluation is mainly accurate. As a result, the priority areas for improvement have been correctly identified. These include raising standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 in particular, and also highlighting the need to improve attainment in writing and science in Year 6. It has not picked up the issue of boys outperforming girls, which is a particular weakness.

Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning and identifying areas for development are satisfactory and improving. The governing body is supportive of the school and is moving forward in developing its role as a critical friend of the school. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, particularly under the leadership of the current headteacher. Consequently, the capacity for improvement is now secure.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Dear Pupils,

Thank you very much for your warm welcome to your school this week. We really enjoyed talking to you and finding out about all the things that you do. Your friendliness, good behaviour and the way that you work so well with one another is a credit to you all. We would like to let you know what we thought about your school.

What we liked about your school:

- All adults really care for you and look after you very well.
- You have such a lovely eco-friendly school building in which to learn and play.
- Your behaviour is good and you work very hard in lessons.
- You have told us that you enjoy coming to school and that you like the chance to join the clubs your school provides.
- You help the village of Brenzett to be an even better place in which to live.

How we think your school could make things even better for you:

- Give all of you harder work so that you make better progress, particularly in writing.
- Teachers should keep a closer check on how well you are doing and how you can do better.
- Improve how well some subjects, such as music, are covered so that you develop your creative skills more effectively.

Best Wishes,

Melvyn Hemmings Lead inspector