



East Brent Church of England First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123809
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281565
Inspection dates 22 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Helen Barter AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		East Brent
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		Highbridge, Somerset TA9 4HZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01278 760490
Number on roll	77	Fax number	01278 760168
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Heather Hector

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 22 June 2006 - 22 June 2006	Inspection number 281565
----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils in this small, three-class school come from relatively advantaged backgrounds. The proportion entitled to claim free school meals is low, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Most pupils are White British. Although there are a small number from other ethnic backgrounds, all pupils are fluent in English. There are many more boys than girls in every year group. There has been significant disruption to all classes in the past two years owing to staff illness.

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. Having come through a period of disruption to teaching, due to staff sickness, that has hampered how it improves, it is now in a good position to get to grips with what it needs to do. The school has clearly identified the right priorities for development and has an accurate view of its own overall effectiveness.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their attendance and behaviour are good because they enjoy school and learning. Parents support the school well and particularly appreciate the 'genuine family atmosphere' which helps their children to develop into confident young people.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Satisfactory provision for children in Reception enables them to meet the goals they are expected to achieve. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 4 and reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. Teaching is satisfactory in all classes. Good relationships and sensitive care give pupils confidence to learn. Pupils' progress is now carefully tracked but the information gained is not always used well to plan work which challenges pupils and enables them to achieve at the highest levels of which they are capable. Teachers are beginning to use targets in literacy and numeracy to raise standards although there is still more to do, particularly in marking, to help pupils fully understand how to improve their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is beginning to help pupils understand how subjects link together although there is scope to improve this further. Good use is made of partnerships with other schools, the community and church to broaden pupils' learning beyond the school. Subject leaders are beginning to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning but there is room for further improvement in the part they play in ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they can in everything they do. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and there is secure capacity for future improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make rigorous use of information about pupils' progress to plan work which helps them all to achieve well throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of feedback to pupils in marking so that they know what they need to do to improve and to meet their targets.
- Enhance the role of subject leaders in making sure that pupils make good progress in all subjects and gain a greater understanding of how subjects link together in the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the school with the expected level of skills. Many have good communication skills. They make satisfactory progress and

achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year. They have good social skills although their knowledge and understanding of the world are less well developed. Children's physical skills are developed well through well planned activities in the new outdoor classroom.

Standards in the current Year 2, while similar to the broadly average outcomes of recent years, are beginning to rise. For example, there are more pupils working at above average standards in mathematics because of better teaching that focuses on practical activities. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls because the school takes account of their different needs. In English, for instance, the school successfully encourages boys to read by providing a wide range of books which appeals to their interests. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4 and reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. The current Year 4 pupils have suffered from disruptions to teaching through staff absences. These pupils are now benefiting from more sustained teaching that is helping them to make up lost ground and achieve satisfactorily. More able pupils progress well and meet their challenging targets. Recently introduced additional learning programmes have ensured that pupils with learning difficulties have made satisfactory progress and will meet their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their good attendance and positive attitudes to learning reflect their enjoyment of school. They behave well, respect others and learn to share and take turns. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They understand right and wrong and learn positive social skills through group work, play and activities with other schools. Pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory although their knowledge of other cultures is limited. Pupils have good awareness of the need to be safe and healthy. They are keen participants in sport and 'wake and shake' sessions. Pupils say that they feel free from bullying and racism. They know that this is part of being safe and feel secure because of it. They are very clear about the importance of a healthy environment. In assembly, they gave great thought to how they would be 'caretakers' of the world and help their community by saving water and composting weeds. Pupils have satisfactory skills that will prepare them for life ahead. They are keen to help others through their charity efforts and they work through the school council to improve the day to day life of the school. One pupil said, 'Teachers really listen to us. We asked for a pets' service and we had one a few weeks ago!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Teachers provide activities that engage pupils' interest although they do not always make it clear to pupils what they expect them to achieve from the activities planned for them. Because teachers do not always use what they already know about pupils to plan their work, some activities are too undemanding and do not maximise pupils' progress. A new marking policy is giving teachers a better understanding of how to guide pupils to improve their work but it is not yet consistently implemented across all subjects or classes. Teaching assistants successfully support pupils with learning difficulties. They are sensibly extending their skills and starting to guide small groups of pupils through additional learning programmes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for all pupils is satisfactory. Following a review, the school plans to provide pupils with more activities which systematically develop their skills while helping them to understand how subjects link together. Although this is not yet fully developed, some good practice is evident. For example, a display of pupils' work in one class on the changing seasons creates good links between geography, science and art. Nevertheless, opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in subjects are sometimes missed. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved well since the last inspection. Good resources support teaching and learning in all subjects. The programme for personal, social and health education is good. Effective links with other providers give pupils opportunities for sport and healthy exercise which would be otherwise restricted by the small hall. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is developing well in partnership with local schools. Small teaching groups for pupils with coordination and concentration problems are an effective part of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties. The good range of extra-curricular activities, including participation in the Highbridge and Burnham Festival, contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. There is a strong Christian ethos which helps pupils to feel safe and well cared for. Pupils know that adults listen to them and sort out their concerns. Staff know pupils and families well and have good relationships with them. They listen well to parents' views and have responded positively to those who wish to help their children more at home by providing homework books

and guidance meetings. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including child protection and health and safety, are satisfactory. Teachers give pupils satisfactory support and guidance in lessons. New targets in literacy and numeracy are beginning to help pupils understand how to improve their work although some younger pupils find the language used in their targets hard to understand.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher effectively promotes the caring school ethos. Significant disruptions to teaching brought about by staff illness have hampered the rate of improvement. The disruption has now ended and the school has settled into a regular pattern of activity. This has meant more monitoring of teaching and learning and a more effective review of the curriculum. Procedures to track pupils' performance are now being used to show teachers where improvement is needed and where resources, such as teaching assistants, need to provide more support. This has already brought about improvement in the provision for pupils with learning difficulties. Subject leaders have a clearer role in leading improvements and have begun to undertake some monitoring of teaching and learning. This role is not yet fully developed in terms of ensuring pupils' good progress in all subjects. Links with a local similar-sized school are being used effectively to enable staff to broaden and develop their skills in partnership with colleagues.

The new governing body is supportive of the headteacher and committed to improving the school. It has ensured that all statutory requirements are met through a thorough review of policies. Although their role in holding the school to account for its performance is still evolving, governors are gaining a greater understanding of the school's effectiveness through newly developed links with subject leaders. Self-evaluation is now leading to accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses and driving a school development plan which is clearly focused on raising standards. Parents' views are considered well through the school development forum. The school has the capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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?	2	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	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	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?	3	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

22 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome when we came to visit your school last week. You were very polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you about your work and all the things you do in and out of school. I am writing to tell you some of the things we found out.

- You like your school very much and you come to school regularly and on time.
- You behave well because you understand the 'SMILE' rules and what happens if things go wrong.
- You know that it is important to keep safe and be healthy and have very good ideas about how you can be 'caretakers' of your environment.
- You really enjoy all the extra activities that the school organises for you. Well done on winning all those certificates at the Highbridge and Burnham Festival!
- Your teachers care about you and want to make sure that you are happy at school and well looked after.

Your headteacher and the governors have been looking at how well your school is doing and have made a plan to help you to do even better with your work. We have also asked them to do these things:

- Keep checking how well you are doing and then give you work which makes you think hard so that you all do as well as you possibly can.
- Help you to understand even better how to improve your work so that you can meet all your targets.
- Make sure that all the teachers help you to learn well in every subject and to have even more opportunities to do work which links subjects together.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen Barter Lead Inspector