



Brooke Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary

School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121096
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 292006
Inspection dates 10–11 October 2006
Reporting inspector Ruth Frith

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Green
School category	Voluntary controlled		Brooke, Brooke
Age range of pupils	4–11		Norwich, Norfolk NR15 1HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01508 550419
Number on roll (school)	137	Fax number	01508 558754
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs D Tucker
		Headteacher	Ms C Cook
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2000		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 10–11 October 2006	Inspection number 292006
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average size village school. There are five classes, three of which have children from different year groups. Most pupils live in the village of Brooke or in nearby villages. The socio-economic background of pupils is generally favourable. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is below average and a few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where the desire to do the best for each individual child lies at the heart of its work. Pupils do well within this friendly and supportive environment. As one younger child clearly said, 'I like learning here It's comfortable You can be yourself'. After a lengthy unsettled period in the school's history where frequent changes in headteacher restricted pupil achievement and school development, the school is now back on course. The very good leadership of the new headteacher has been a key feature of recent improvements. She has quickly established very good relationships within the school, church and local community and her enthusiasm and commitment have 'put excitement back into the school'. As one parent stated, 'The appointment of the headteacher was an inspired choice'. The school's focus on improving teaching and learning is beginning to pay off and this, together with the introduction of a new system which tracks pupils' progress over time, has been instrumental in raising standards. It is now easier to identify where additional support is required for those who find learning difficult and also where to provide more challenge so all pupils do as well as they can. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve well. In the 2006 national assessments for Year 6 pupils, the school met its targets with high results in English, mathematics and science. However, to some extent, the overall high standards in English masked the difference in achievement between reading and writing. Despite several attempts by the school to improve writing standards they remain stubbornly average compared to the very high reading standards. Recent improvements to the curriculum have made learning more creative and exciting. Because pupils thoroughly enjoy what they are doing they behave well and develop good attitudes to learning. The curriculum for the youngest children is satisfactory but it does not fully reflect the national guidance as the accommodation and resources restrict opportunities to work and play outside and to develop children's independence. Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. Children settle well and quickly become part of the school community. Relationships are very good because adults show interest and concern for their pupils and, in turn, pupils care for others. Pastoral care is particularly good. Pupils develop into thoughtful, mature learners and are well prepared for their next stage of schooling. Academic guidance is only satisfactory because pupils are not yet fully involved in the way their work is assessed and targets set. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, especially over the last two years. Staff and governors have a very clear understanding of the school and their accurate and insightful self-evaluation has helped the school to reflect on how well it is doing and what it needs to do next. The school's judgements match closely with the inspection's findings. The enthusiasm and commitment of staff and governors, together with the headteacher's very good leadership, indicate that the school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that pupils have sufficient time to write independently, to practise their writing across all areas of learning and provide appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Develop the curriculum for the

youngest children by improving facilities so they have opportunities to work and play outside more frequently and develop greater independence. - Develop pupils' understanding of how their work is assessed and involve them more in the setting of their academic targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From above average starting points, children make good progress and achieve well. On entry to Year 1 they have at least reached the goals set nationally for all areas of learning and in many cases have progressed further. The results of the 2006 national assessments for pupils in Year 2 showed improvement from the previous year apart from in reading. However, results for these pupils were still above average in reading, writing and mathematics. There was a significant improvement in mathematics, where nearly half of the pupils gained a level above that expected for their age. In the Year 6 assessments, pupils achieved high standards in English, mathematics and science with nearly three-quarters gaining the higher Level 5 in science. There was quite a significant difference in the reading and writing results, with a much smaller number gaining the higher level in writing. Different groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The good school ethos, together with very good support from families and governors, creates a school where pupils feel happy and do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and the headteacher has created excellent opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness through assemblies. Pupils really enjoy school as can be seen from their above average attendance and very good attitudes. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to live healthy lives and feel safe because of the way they are encouraged to look after each other. Pupils like working on the school and class councils which give them the opportunity to influence the school's development. They make excellent contributions to the wider community, for example, through the very popular carnival. Pupils develop particularly good basic skills and learn to work well with others. This prepares them very well for the next phase of their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because staff have high expectations of what pupils can do and in turn, they respond positively to the challenges set for them. Planning is good because it ensures that learning builds systematically over time and the work

set matches pupils' capabilities. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team sharing their expertise to ensure that the work motivates pupils and makes their day at school interesting. The good use of interactive whiteboards has widened the range of teaching styles and helps pupils to concentrate. Teachers have begun to use target setting effectively as a way to drive up standards but still have more to do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy what they do because activities are interesting and they feel they can succeed. Recent developments to make the curriculum more creative and exciting have proved very effective. Teachers plan a range of activities around a topic so that pupils' skills are reinforced and knowledge and understanding gained in one area are applied to another. Visits to local places of interest add another dimension to the pupils' learning as they receive a practical 'hands on' experience, for example when studying Victorian Britain through dressing up and acting in role. The youngest children take part in a range of activities either as a separate group or when working with Year 1. This helps them to settle quickly. Their curriculum is restricted, however, as facilities and resources for work outside are inadequate and they do not have sufficient opportunity to develop a full range of skills to help them learn independently. Staff are making particularly good use of information and communication technology and this is helping to motivate pupils and enhance their progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel very safe and happy in school and this reflects the good quality of care, guidance and support offered by staff. They like the small size of the school because 'everybody knows you and if you are new they help you'. Individual support programmes and sensitive approaches by staff are particularly successful in helping children who find learning difficult. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils and help them to make good progress. The needs of pupils are well safeguarded because effective procedures are in place covering health and safety and child protection issues. Staff are still developing the way in which they check what pupils have achieved and use this information to set academic targets. Although a good start has been made, the pupils are not fully involved in this process so are not always clear about how they could improve their work, for example, in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are clearly focused on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher has been particularly effective at developing a common sense of purpose amongst the school staff so that all share her vision for the future development of the school. Staff morale is high. The English, mathematics and science subject leaders fulfil their roles well and give good support

to the headteacher's work. Other subject leaders are now ready to follow this lead. There are very effective systems for checking how well the school is doing and identifying what it could do better. Actions taken by the school are well targeted and have a very positive impact on the school's development. The effective governing body acts as a critical friend and monitors the work of the school well. The strong leadership of the chair of governors has been instrumental in supporting the school when there was no permanent headteacher. The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school and what it offers their children.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 October 2006 Dear Children Brooke Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School, High Green, Brooke, Norwich, Norfolk, NR15 1HP Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I recently visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about the work you have done. I was pleased to hear that you enjoy school and could talk enthusiastically about all the good things that happen there. I know lots of you really like the changes that have been made to improve the playground. These are some of the best things about your school: - You work hard and do well in English, mathematics and science. You are interested in technology and particularly like using the interactive whiteboards. - You like school and your attendance is good. - All the staff work very well together as a team. They enjoy working with you and teaching is good. - You behave well, look after each other and work and play together well. - The activities you do and the things you study are interesting which helps to make lessons fun. - The work you do in the school council and class councils is particularly good and helps you to understand how to improve the school and local community. Your involvement with the church and local community is also very good. It sounds as if the carnival was great fun. - Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. I was pleased to hear that you would talk to a member of staff if you had problems. Ms Cook leads and manages the school well and staff and governors give her lots of help. Many things have improved recently but she is keen to make the school even better. We agreed that staff will try to help you to achieve as well in your writing as you do in your reading, and involve you more in the setting of your targets. We also think that the youngest children would benefit from spending more time learning outside so we are hoping that the area next to their classroom can be improved. I left your school confident that it will continue to improve and wish you all well in the future. Ms R E Frith Lead inspector