

Brereton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 111332 |
| Local Authority | Cheshire |
| Inspection number | 310566 |
| Inspection date | 13 May 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Gill Jones HMI |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 113 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Kerry Gleave |
| Headteacher | Mrs Susan Langan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 2 February 2004 |
| School address | School Lane Brereton Green Sandbach Cheshire CW11 1RN |
| Telephone number | 01477 532116 |
| Fax number | 01477 533490 |

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|--------------------------|-------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: children's achievement, their personal development and well-being, the quality of care, guidance and support, and the effectiveness of the leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from observing lessons, scrutinising school documentation and questionnaires completed by parents, and discussions with children, parents, governors, staff and the headteacher.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were justified. Such assessments have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school situated at the centre of the small village of Brereton Green, in rural Cheshire. The school is larger than at the time of the last inspection. Twenty children joined in 2007. Children who attend the school are generally from families with relatively advantaged social and economic circumstances. Most live outside the village and travel to school by bus or with their parents. The majority of children are of White British heritage. A small number of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds: none of these are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average, but has doubled since the last inspection. The number of children with a statement of educational needs is above that found nationally.

The school has gained a number of awards which include: the Inclusion Mark, the Healthy Schools Award, the Sportsmark, the Activemark and Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brereton C of E Primary is a good school. It is improving rapidly. Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Parents are highly supportive of the school; they appreciate its excellent, caring ethos and family atmosphere. They say it is at the heart of the local community. The current headteacher was appointed in 2005. Following some significant disruption to staffing, she has built a strong staff team who share her vision for the school, which is founded on Christian values. Children make good progress and now reach standards at the end of Year 6 that are well above those expected for 11 year olds. They are very proud of their school.

The children at Brereton are exceptionally well behaved; they are polite, confident and articulate. Their attitudes to learning are excellent. They know how to keep healthy and enjoy the wide range of sporting activities the school provides, especially the 'golden mile' challenge. This involves running round the school track eight times to complete one mile and achieving fifty miles to win the 'golden mile' award. Children make good use of the new playground equipment, which was purchased from money raised by the very effective school council and the parents' association. Children regard it as a privilege to serve on the school council and are proud of its achievements, which include raising substantial sums for their chosen charities and helping in the selection of new teaching staff. Children, including those new to the school and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, say their school has a lovely, caring atmosphere. They liken it to one big family, where everyone is friendly, there is no bullying and they all enjoy school.

Standards have risen since the last inspection and are consistently higher at age 11 than those found nationally. The progress made by most children, including those new to the school and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Children start school with skills and abilities that are generally above those expected for 4 year olds. After 3 years in school, most now reach levels above those expected nationally for 7 year olds. Before 2007, progress and standards in the Foundation Stage (Reception) and Key Stage 1 were not good enough. The school identified the reasons for this and dealt with them effectively. The standards reached by 11 year olds are well above average. In 2007, standards in English were exceptionally high; the number of children who reached the highest level, Level 5, was over double that found nationally. The work in children's exercise books and the school's own records of progress show that most children achieve well. The school has introduced rigorous tracking of progress and target-setting. However, targets are not yet linked to overall school targets in all year groups, and there is not always sufficient challenge for the more able children.

The pastoral care the school provides is outstanding; children new to the school are assimilated well and relationships are excellent. All aspects of safeguarding children's well-being meet current requirements. The academic guidance children receive is good, overall. Marking is particularly effective in English and shows children what they have done well and what they could do better. Children know their learning targets in some classes, but this is not consistent across the school, which results in some children not knowing how well they are doing or what they need to learn next. The quality of teaching and of the curriculum is good. Children enjoy their lessons and teachers are imaginative in planning collaborative activities. Teaching is lively and engaging. Where teaching is less than good, it is because the children are not given clear enough guidance to tackle their tasks effectively, so they do not make sufficiently good progress in the lesson. The curriculum is broad and is relevant to children's needs. It places appropriate

emphasis on the basic skills and offers a wide range of enrichment activities, which includes a residential visit. The provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed well and teaching assistants provide effective support. All children are given equal opportunity to take part in all aspects of school life and special arrangements are made sensitively to include those with the most severe disabilities.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and manages the school well. She sets high expectations for children's achievement alongside maintaining the caring ethos of which parents, children and governors are so proud. Morale is high. The headteacher is well supported by the assistant headteacher and the subject leaders. Partnerships are used effectively to enhance the provision this small school provides. Middle leadership is developing well and subject leaders show extensive subject knowledge. However, they are not yet evaluating the progress made by children across the school or collecting a full range of evidence in their subjects. Governance is good. Governors visit the school regularly and take an active role in securing improvements to the building and in staffing issues. The school provides good value for money. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage (Reception) with skills and abilities that are generally above those expected for 4 year olds. They have a variety of pre-school experiences and Brereton is effective at quickly identifying individual children's needs. Children make good progress during Reception in all areas of learning and most reach levels that are well above those expected for 5 year olds. Parents say overwhelmingly that their children are happy at school. The children are confident and articulate; they play happily using all the areas of learning available to them. Teaching is good. The classroom is well organised and activities are carefully planned to capture the children's interest and to provide an appropriate level of challenge. Teaching makes good use of day-to-day assessment to inform the next steps in children's learning. However, the management of assessment is still at the early stages of development. Satisfactory opportunities exist for parents to be involved in helping their children to make progress; the school has good quality plans to improve this aspect.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve consistency in setting targets to help children to understand the next steps in their learning and to make the links to whole-school targets to identify early any underachievement.
- Further improve subject leadership by involving staff in observing lessons, evaluating children's progress across the school and sharing good practice

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| 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

Inspection of Brereton C of E Primary School, Sandbach, CW11 1RN

You may remember that I visited your school recently to carry out an inspection. Thank you for talking to me about your school. You expressed your views very clearly. I hope you will talk about this letter at one of your council meetings and share its content with all the children in the school.

I judged your school to be a good school that is improving rapidly. You told me that it has a lovely, caring atmosphere and I agree. Children in your school are exceptionally well behaved and polite; no wonder those who are new say that it is easy to settle in because 'everyone is so friendly and helpful'. Your parents told me that you are confident, happy and enjoy school. This was evident on my visit.

You know all about keeping healthy and take regular exercise. I was impressed by your enthusiasm to complete the 'golden mile' challenge. You have good attitudes to your work and are very sensible. The younger children are good at taking turns and play nicely together. You appreciate the extra-curricular activities, especially the residential visit where you practise your team-building skills.

Your work as a school council is outstanding. You take your responsibilities very seriously. The improvements you have made to the school grounds, your fundraising for charity and interviewing new teachers are evidence of your excellent work.

Mrs Langan and the staff are keen that you achieve your best; you are taught well and you say that lessons are interesting. Mrs Langan knows exactly how to continue to improve your school. She is going to make sure that you all have learning targets which tell you how to improve your work. The teachers are going to watch each other teach, so that they can share the best ways to help you make even better progress in lessons. Your challenge is to always try to reach your targets.

Thank you for making me feel so welcome, particularly to those who invited me to join them for lunch! I wish you all the very best for the future.