

# The Branston Church of England Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120516
<b>Local Authority</b>	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313648
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanne Harvey

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	130
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Huxtable
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs V Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Beech Road Valley Estate Branston Lincoln Lincolnshire LN4 1PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01522 791907
<b>Fax number</b>	01522 791907

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils achieve as well as they can in all subjects, the impact of academic guidance on achievement and standards and the impact of leadership and management since the last inspection. Evidence was gathered from discussions with senior staff and governors. In addition, there was observation of parts of several lessons, scrutiny of school information and its self-evaluation, analysis of samples of pupils' work, evaluation of parents' questionnaires, and discussions with pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. Where appropriate, these have been included in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school serving the village of Branston, its surrounding villages and a local Royal Air Force Base. Very few pupils are known to be entitled to claim free school meals. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background and no pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with a learning difficulty and/or a disability or with a statement of special educational need is below that found in most schools. The school has Silver Artsmark awards for music and drama, Basic Skills Quality Mark Awards and National Healthy Schools Status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstandingly effective school, which provides excellent value for money. Standards are high, often exceptionally so and pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make very good progress through the school. Its arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage are good.

The school's success arises from the clear vision and direction given by the headteacher and a remarkably caring and committed staff. Everyone works extremely hard as a team, in partnership with governors and with the community to achieve their mission: 'To develop all pupils to their full potential' and 'promote the Christian values of respect, caring, love and responsibility to others and their environment'. This produces a very nurturing yet challenging environment, so pupils become very well rounded individuals. As a result, all pupils achieve very well academically and personally. It is not surprising that parents are highly appreciative of the school. One wrote in relation to her son, 'In my view this is an outstanding school...It is a superb environment for him to start his schooling.' This comment represents the views of many. Pupils' echo it, as one said, 'On school days I get excited, I jump out of bed!' This tremendous enjoyment is reflected in the above average level of attendance.

Children's personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding and reflects the school's strong Christian ethos very well. Behaviour is exemplary. Children are encouraged to express their opinions and to accept responsibilities as often as possible, so they grow in confidence and independence, often beyond their years. They take pride in helping others. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe. They love to be active and have a remarkable understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices. The combination of very good literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology skills and highly developed personal skills equips pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of education and life. The outstanding care and guidance offered, includes systems for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils and safeguarding procedures that comply with requirements. Children say they feel safe and are confident that there is always someone to help them with any problems. However, they were quick to volunteer: 'We know how to sort out problems for ourselves.' Systems to provide academic guidance are based on rigorous assessment and result in clear individual targets being set for each child, mostly on a daily basis.

Teaching is outstanding. Teachers inspire children with their high levels of enthusiasm and ability to make learning interesting so that children do not realise how hard they are working. Lessons are planned daily, based on the previous day's assessments, to take pupils' learning forward from whatever level each individual has reached previously. They appeal to all children and are presented in whatever way helps individuals to learn best. Those who find learning more difficult, including those with learning difficulties, get excellent support from able teaching assistants, so these pupils achieve very well.

The outstanding curriculum ensures learning is active and highly enjoyable with lots of practical activities such as science experiments, art and design projects and drama events. They are carefully planned and resourced to much success. Visits out and visitors to school are linked to topic themes that add much interest, enjoyment and lasting memories. These give children many opportunities to practice their skills and help them to achieve very high standards. Pupils enjoy an impressive range of activities in lunchtime and after-school clubs which go beyond

the required subjects and are highly valued. A high degree of staff commitment ensures that pupils both benefit from and contribute well to their local community, for example, the wonderful mosaic they made at the church or the many celebrations and performances with which they entertain others.

The headteacher has made an outstanding contribution to ensuring that, despite there being no significant issues identified at the time of the last inspection, the school has continued to go from strength to strength and demonstrates an outstanding capacity to continue to improve. Expectations remain high and challenging targets are set and met. Leaders and managers at all levels are involved in procedures to check accurately how well the school is doing and in planning for improvement. Governors are extremely supportive and offer a high degree of challenge. From broadly average starting points pupils make outstanding progress to attain well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. There is no complacency, and leaders are keen to further refine systems for using the detailed information they collect about how well children are doing to make sure that everyone continues to do as well as they can.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children do well in the Foundation Stage. They settle quickly into the happy and stimulating environment of the Reception class, many having benefited greatly from the delightful experiences offered to them in the pre-reception class. This is because of the good support and knowledge of staff, who make children feel highly valued, secure, confident and ready to learn. Children enter with skills broadly expected for their age. They thrive and make good progress. Interesting activities are planned based on careful assessment, which contributes to good teaching and strong support from teaching assistants. These offer an increasingly appropriate balance between teacher led and child initiated activities. Consequently, by the time children enter Year 1, they achieve the goals expected of them and many surpass them. There are plans to improve the curriculum provided in the outdoor area as at present, the quality of the curriculum offered to children outdoors, though satisfactory, does not match that which they experience inside.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Bring even more rigour to whole school systems for the use of the information collected about how well children are progressing to ensure that children continue do as well as they can.

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## Annex A

## 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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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	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	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

8 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of The Branston Church of England Infant School, Branston, Lincoln LN4 1PR

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. This letter is to tell you what I found out.

I like many things about your school. Some of them are:

- you achieve higher standards and make better progress than most children
- you behave extremely well and get on very well with each other
- you really enjoy school and the school is excellent at organising interesting things for you to do
- all of the adults in your school make sure that you are extremely well cared for and looked after
- your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are highly effective at making sure that you get an outstanding education.

I agree with your parents that you go to an outstanding school. However, all of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this I think that the most important thing to do next is to make sure that everyone at the school plays their full part in making the very best use of the information they collect about how well you are doing. This will help to make sure that you all continue to do as well as you can.

I certainly enjoyed talking with you and finding out all about your school. Your singing in Mrs Smith's assembly was wonderful. Keep on working hard, doing your very best and enjoying your time at school.

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector