

# Brisley CE VA Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121109
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313878
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Nelson

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Steele
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janis Boyden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	School Road Brisley Dereham Norfolk NR20 5LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 668350
<b>Fax number</b>	01362 668648

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how the school is tackling its stated priority of improving provision in Foundation Stage; the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving spelling, punctuation and writing at Key Stage 2 and the steps being taken to improve subject leadership now that the school is back to a stable staff. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, lesson observations, discussions with staff, governors and children, by looking at children's work and information the school keeps on how well children are doing with their learning, analysing parents' questionnaire responses, and the school improvement plan. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a small rural primary school where virtually all the children are from White British backgrounds. It serves the village of Brisley and surrounding areas. Very few children qualify for free school meals. The proportion identified as needing extra help with their learning is average. The school has achieved Well Being status, Investors in People accreditation and Healthy Schools status. It gained an Active Mark in 2006. Children start school with the skills and knowledge expected of their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents and their children quite rightly consider this a good school. Many parents made very complimentary comments about the school. Typical of those comments was one that said, 'one of the great attributes of Brisley school is good behaviour and strong family values'. This echoes very closely comments the children made when they said, 'it's a community' and 'it's like one big family'. This is the result of excellent care, guidance and support which ensures that, as one parent put it, 'the school is a very positive environment for our daughter to grow and be educated in'. This high quality care leads to excellent personal development of children who grow in maturity and confidence while still retaining their charming child like qualities. For example, one group delighted in telling the inspector that they were playing inspectors at lunchtime by checking behaviour in the playground and making notes on their pad, much as they had seen him doing during the morning.

A very small number of parents expressed concerns about how happy their children were in school suggesting that they were suppressed and upset by teachers shouting at them. Despite speaking with around a quarter of the children in the school the inspector found no evidence to support these parents' views. On the contrary, children spoken to insisted; 'Our teachers never shout at us. If we do something wrong they just explain. They give us a stripe (a reduction in house points) and say forget about it and move on'. One parent summed up the school's approach by writing, 'the line between discipline and encouragement is walked majestically'.

Given the school's excellent caring ethos, firmly grounded in its church status, it is not surprising that children develop so well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour is excellent and the children say there is no bullying. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy and safe lifestyles and speak highly of how their lessons in personal, social, and health education (PSHE) help them with this. They have abundant opportunities to develop the skills they need to be able to make positive contributions to their community by taking on roles around the school. The portfolio on the playground developments records their excellent involvement in this project.

Children have excellent attitudes to learning and say they thoroughly enjoy school. This is because of the good range of interesting activities staff provide and because, 'teaching's very good at getting the message across'. Indeed this is one of the strengths of the good teaching, as staff use interactive whiteboards and challenging questions to encourage children to think things through. This was shown in a lesson on spelling and punctuation when older children demonstrated their growing understanding of these areas as they corrected a piece of writing that had several mistakes in it. This was a good example of an issue that the school had identified for improvement being tackled with vigour and with success. Teachers expect children to do well and set them challenging targets as shown in a mathematics session where a group tackled some difficult test questions in their heads. While most teaching is good, resulting in children making good progress, staffing changes in Foundation Stage and Year 1 have led to an unsettled period when teaching, learning and children's progress have been satisfactory rather than good. The school has now established a new stable staffing structure for the youngest children with plans to check that it is accelerating their learning.

Children build on the satisfactory start they make in Foundation Stage by making good progress thereafter, resulting in above average standards by Year 6 in most years. The 2007 national test results at Year 6 showed that children achieved well but that they did better in mathematics

and science than in English, where their writing let them down. This led to the current focus on spelling, punctuation and writing which is having a positive impact on children's learning. The thorough analysis of how well individuals and groups of children are doing highlights any who may need extra help with their learning. As a result, children who find learning hard benefit from extra support and make good progress. Excellent links with local schools, including the secondary school, help to enrich children's learning and prepare them well for the next stage of their education. One parent wrote, 'pupils are well prepared for transition to the high school'.

The school's success is no accident. Good leadership and management have established a clear and common ethos with a sharp focus on continuous improvement in a caring environment. The school has had some staffing turbulence since the last inspection that has prevented it from making the progress it intended to in developing subject leaders. Now that staffing is stable again the school has comprehensive plans in place to enable these leaders to acquire the skills and experience they need to check the quality of teaching, learning and progress in their subjects. There is a structured programme in place to ensure this happens and to check its impact on children's learning. The headteacher is highly thought of by parents one of whom commented, 'Mrs Boyden is an exceptional head who has the progress of pupils at the heart of all she does'. She and the excellent governing body have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing and set clear priorities for improvement. The good improvements since the last inspection, including better resources and provision in information and communication technology, and in the building itself show that the school has what it takes to carry on improving.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

Children make satisfactory progress towards the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. Children settle happily into the Foundation Stage because the school maintains close links with their parents. The good use of support staff means that they have some time as a group separate from the Year 1 children to work on Foundation Stage activities while also benefiting from the having the older ones with them at other times. They have a useful outdoor area which the school plans to improve further. While teaching and the range of activities in Foundation Stage are satisfactory the pace of learning is a little pedestrian and uninspired at times.

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

- Check that provision in Foundation Stage is accelerating learning and achievement to match that in other classes.

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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?	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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	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?	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>	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	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**

23 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Brisley CEVA Primary School, Brisley, Norfolk, NR20 5LH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and was very impressed by your excellent behaviour. I particularly enjoyed talking with some of you over lunch and in the playground as well as with you older ones in the afternoon. This is the letter I promised to send you about what I learned about your school.

You know that you go to a good school where the teachers look after you very well indeed. You told me that if you feel sad you tell teachers and they sort things out. You spoke highly of how your teachers help you to learn by making lessons enjoyable and helping you if you get stuck. You have plenty of opportunities to show how responsible you can be and you work hard in lessons. As a result, most of you make good progress and older ones do particularly well in their tests, although recently your writing has not been as good as your mathematics and science. Your teachers are helping you to improve this. Changes in teachers in Foundation Stage have resulted in those children making satisfactory rather than good progress recently. I have asked your headteacher and the governors to check that their progress improves to good in the future.

I am sure your school is well placed to get even better and you can play your part by continuing to work hard and enjoy your lessons.

Ian Nelson

Lead inspector