

Broke Hall Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124671
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	315012
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	John Messer

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	610
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Will Pryke
Headteacher	Mr Richard Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2003
School address	Chatsworth Drive Ipswich Suffolk IP4 5XD
Telephone number	01473729544
Fax number	01473278188

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This primary school is much larger than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and about an eighth are from minority ethnic families. A small minority speak English as an additional language and several are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. Most of those who find learning hard have difficulties associated with communication, language and literacy. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average.

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 pupils achieve well and attain standards that are well above average. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage; by the time they enter Year 1, standards are slightly above national expectations. They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1; by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils make good but inconsistent progress in Key Stage 2 so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Progress is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 mainly because leaders have not set challenging targets for the achievement expected of each year group each term in literacy and numeracy. The school has recently introduced a good system for measuring pupils' progress and is now using the data it collects to identify groups who are not making progress as quickly as they should and is targeting extra support where it is needed most.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are enthusiastic and work well together in year group teams, sharing their particular strengths. Their enthusiasm is infectious and relationships with pupils are good. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and eager to learn. Teaching is effective in most lessons and pupils achieve well but the quality of teaching is uneven. This is partly because the school has yet to review its agreed teaching and learning policy so that teachers have clear guidance on exactly what is required to sustain high quality teaching. Teaching assistants offer a good range of skills and are especially good at supporting those who find learning difficult. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a good range of educational visits and interesting visitors. The curriculum had become rather unoriginal with projects repeated each year in some classes but there are now many excellent initiatives being trialled to make the curriculum more exciting. These include the use of picture books to stimulate interest in reading and the use of extended role play to simulate real life situations. The school recognises that it has reached the stage in curricular development where there are opportunities to evaluate initiatives, revise curricular planning and create a fresh, whole-school approach that links subjects together in order to provide inspiring activities that are more closely related to pupils' needs and wider interests.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are self-assured and become confident learners. They thoroughly enjoy school and attendance is good. They are courteous, well behaved and sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, look after themselves and care for others. They make a good contribution to the wider community, as demonstrated by their wholehearted support of charitable fund-raising events. Pupils develop a good range of skills that prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Care, guidance and support are good. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Pupils receive good advice. They know their targets and in some classes the target-setting process is particularly effective in accelerating progress by showing pupils how to reach the next stages in their learning.

Leadership and management are good. The school is entering a new chapter in its history. The headteacher has only been in post for ten weeks. He has shared his ambitious vision for improving the school and is clear about aiming to raise the school's performance to an even higher level. There is an air of excitement and a sense of energy about the school. The overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with the education provided for their children.

The governing body is becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the school's performance. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school's good track record of success demonstrates that it has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well because the quality of teaching is good and staff provide interesting activities to make learning fun. Children love coming to school, willingly leaving their parents and carers. They say that they cannot decide what they like best. Good leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures that activities meet the children's needs and that the curriculum is well planned. Behaviour is good because staff make their expectations clear. Children benefit from intriguing activities, such as the taps and levers they need to twist and pull to make water flow through a system of pipes devised for them by an engineer. Role-play activities, such as the 'Rock Band', are inviting and encourage good social interaction. There is a good balance between activities chosen by the children and those led by adults. However, it is not always clear exactly what children are expected to learn in some independent activities. The attractive outdoor areas are used effectively as an extension to the classrooms.

What the school should do to improve further

- Review the curriculum and create a fresh approach that meets the needs and interests of all.
- Establish clear criteria to guide teachers about how to sustain high quality teaching and learning.
- Set appropriately challenging targets for the achievement that pupils are expected to make in literacy and numeracy in each year group.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Good teaching and pupils' enthusiasm for learning help them to achieve well. The faster learners, those who find learning difficult and those who speak English as an additional language, all make good progress. By Year 6, pupils produce work of good quality in many areas of the curriculum. They use their literacy skills creatively to write well crafted stories. They use their well developed computer skills to make carefully illustrated and beautifully presented class booklets and short animated films. They use their skills in mathematics imaginatively, for example, to work out the average cost of a packet of crisps and to determine how much they would save if they gave up eating crisps for a decade. They use their good musical skills well to present concerts that are popular with the other pupils and with parents. They leave the school with a battery of personal qualities and a good range of academic achievements that prepares them well for the next phase in their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are keen to share their ideas and talk enthusiastically about their work. The school council took part in the recent appointment of the headteacher and is taking an active role in environmental developments, such as recycling and using their budget to buy a greenhouse. Pupils feel safe and confidently share their feelings with staff. Younger pupils eagerly volunteered to demonstrate body language in their assembly to help other pupils learn about

the impact of their actions on others. They are developing a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and enjoy being part of successful sports teams. Display boards throughout the school highlight their many successes and achievements. Pupils are developing as mature, confident and caring young people.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Staff are enthusiastic and work well together in teams. Teachers are good at using questioning strategies to extend the scope of discussion. In one science lesson about food chains, the teacher asked what the green plant had been eaten by. 'A vegetarian' was not what she expected to hear but she nevertheless made an excellent teaching point about this contribution. Classrooms are well organised and resources, such as interactive white boards, are used appropriately. Some lesson plans do not identify precisely what new skills pupils are expected to learn, and expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils are required to produce are not always high enough. Assessments of pupils' work is thorough. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and the best marking shows pupils how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is enriched with extra activities and visits that help pupils to enjoy their learning. Year 6 pupils, studying the Second World War, visited Duxford Museum dressed as evacuees, bringing the project alive. Year 1 pupils talked excitedly about their visit to Hedingham Castle. A good range of musical and sporting activities, such as choir, orchestra, football and netball teams, extend learning well. Some aspects of the curriculum are particularly relevant to pupils' needs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, are developing their ICT skills through the newly introduced 'Learning Platform' where they can store and share information on line. Pupils develop good skills to support their future economic well-being through real-life simulations, such as designing and promoting their own garden centre. The school has recognised that it now needs to evaluate all these initiatives to support the development of a fresh, whole-school approach.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A thorough and well organised approach to guiding, supporting and caring for all pupils has been established. This gives pupils confidence and supports their learning well. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to provide support where needed, and nurture groups and other special activities are organised for pupils with greater levels of need. Pupils who find learning difficult, those with disabilities and pupils with English as an additional language, receive sensitive support. One girl with no English on admission was speaking, reading and writing within the ability range of her year group only six months later. A boy with no English on admission became a high achiever in all subjects within two years.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The new headteacher has already helped to give the school clear direction for future development. He is leading a major whole-school review designed to identify the most important priorities for improvement. Much data on pupils' achievement is collected and analysed well. It is not always used to set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. Staff share an enthusiasm for participating in plans to provide pupils with a co-ordinated structure of stimulating learning experiences. The school is inclusive and takes care to make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in all activities. Senior leaders provide good support and the roles of subject leaders are developing well. Governance is good. Governors are closely associated with the school and are fully aware of all current issues. The school is managed well and operates smoothly. Finances are used efficiently. The school is now entering a new phase in its development and is poised to go from strength to strength.

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

Achievement and standards

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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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.

Annex A

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 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	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

27 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Broke Hall Primary School, Ipswich, IP4 5XD

We thoroughly enjoyed the short time we spent with you. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

There are many good things about your school. You work hard and make good progress. You are good at reading and writing. We particularly enjoyed some of the surveys that the older pupils did in mathematics. It was surprising that when they analysed some of their data they found that children in Year 1 eat just as much chocolate as those in Year 6. You are becoming particularly good at using computers and searching the Internet for information. You told us that you think that yours is one of the 'sportiest' primary schools in Ipswich. Judging by all the trophies you win you're probably right. You are sensible and you always try to do your best. Everything that you learn and the way that you develop good personal and social qualities means that you are really very well set up to move on to secondary school.

You told us that you are particularly good at making new friends and welcoming new children to the school. You are kind and sensitive to the needs of others. Those of you who find it rather difficult to learn new things get lots of help and often do really well. Those who speak languages other than English at home get good support and make as much progress as the rest of you. You know how to stay safe and look after yourselves and others. All the staff are keen to carry on improving your school and to make your lessons even more exciting.

We think that there are three things that would help your school. Teachers are introducing lots of new ways to help you to learn. We think that it is time to reorganise learning plans in order to make a clearly understood, whole-school approach to teaching the curriculum. We also think that with a new headteacher, now is the time to sort out teaching and learning policies so that everybody knows exactly what excellent teaching is like. I think that you could have clearer, more challenging targets for the amount of progress you are expected to make each term in literacy and numeracy. I know that you want to do your best and we are sure that if you continue to work hard the school will go from strength to strength.

I wish you every success in the future.

John Messer

Lead inspector