

Brookland Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118664
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	320495
Inspection dates	30 April –1 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Ellis HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	90
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vivienne Cubbon
Headteacher	Sue Hill
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2007
School address	Brookland Romney Marsh TN29 9QR
Telephone number	01797 344317
Fax number	01797 344776

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school with four classes situated in the small village of Brookland. Few pupils live in or near the village and many have significant distances to travel to school. All pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is a Church of England school with strong links with the diocese and the local church, which is adjacent to the school. The school has a sport achievement and Healthy School award. When the school was inspected in March 2007, it was deemed to require special measures.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Brookland is a good school that now provides well for its pupils. Pupils' achievement and personal development are good because of the good care and guidance pupils receive.

Parents find the school welcoming, they feel well informed about their children's learning, and the vast majority of parents have nothing but praise for the school. As one typically commented, 'Our daughter loves coming to school, is extremely happy and keen to learn.'

Children mostly enter the school with the skills and knowledge that are at the levels expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Reception class and, from then on, pupils make good progress because of their own positive attitudes to learning and teaching that is consistently good.

Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection in March 2007 because pupil progress is tracked rigorously and intervention programmes are quickly put in place if any pupil drops behind. Pupils say that they enjoy school very much and attendance figures are broadly average and improving. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and confirm the view of this inspection that they have challenging targets that are achievable. Well-planned, motivating work is underpinned by a good curriculum and enriched by a good range of visits and visitors. Pupils who have learning difficulties are supported very effectively. In addition, there is good liaison with parents and outside agencies to support learning. Consequently, all pupils in the school achieve equally well.

Teaching is good and teachers know the pupils well. Assessment information is used effectively to match tasks and activities to pupils' needs and pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own work. However, on occasion, teachers do not include sufficient time in lessons for pupils to reflect or discuss the progress that they make toward their learning objectives.

The pupils' personal skills are good and pupils are polite and considerate. They say that they feel very safe and extremely well cared for. Older pupils are good role models and help care for the younger ones. This is a caring community where every child is valued and measures to safeguard pupils are fully in place. Pupils are able to make a positive contribution to the community and they are engaged in a variety of charitable and other ventures. In addition, they learn to find a voice through membership of the school council and help to care for their school and think about ways to improve it further.

The school has good accommodation and there are many stimulating displays in the classrooms and corridors, which celebrate pupils' work or support learning. However, the outside area used by the Reception class does not provide enough opportunities for physical and creative play and is difficult to observe from the classroom.

The headteacher and her team focus on developing high standards in both work and personal development. They work effectively together and monitoring of the school's work is good. The governing body provides a good balance of support and challenge. As a result, there has been continuing improvement since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There are good links with the local nursery that most children attend before starting at Brookland and a well-planned induction programme that helps children settle quickly. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in the Foundation Stage because of good management, good care and high expectations. The classroom environment is stimulating and organised into different learning zones. However, part of the outside area is not directly visible from the classroom, which limits its use, and it is not well equipped to enable both creative and physical play. Children behave well, are cooperative, and are keen to help each other and talk about their work. Regular assessments of each child help staff to make learning relevant and set tasks at an appropriate level. Planning allows for a good mix of adult led activities and activities chosen by the children. As a result, children develop their independence and enjoy learning. The school's Foundation Stage assessment information is accurate and shows that most children make good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outside Reception area so that it provides better opportunities for learning through creative and physical play.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to reflect and discuss the progress that they make toward their learning objectives.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children come into the school at the levels expected across most areas of learning and their speaking and listening skills are generally good. The 2007 national test results of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were in line with the national average and represented satisfactory progress. There were no significant differences in the performance of different groups. The small cohort size makes direct comparison with previous years statistically unreliable. However, results in English at Key Stage 2 have shown a steadily improving trend over time due to the school's focus on raising attainment in English. The accelerated pace of learning is enabling pupils to make up lost ground. The school's tracking data and inspection evidence show that most pupils are now on track to achieve or exceed their challenging targets. Pupils' progress has improved due to effective tracking of their progress. This sharper identification of potential underachievement has enabled the school to put in place effective intervention programmes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the need to adopt health lifestyles and stay safe. Behaviour is good and pupils are happy and confident both in class and around the school. They are supportive of each other and good relationships at all levels help pupils to enjoy school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, they cooperate well when working in pairs or small groups, and they respect the different views and opinions of other pupils. Attendance has improved because there are robust procedures to challenge poor attendance and it is now satisfactory. Contributions to charity events, participation in the school council and other responsibilities, such as buddying, show that pupils make a satisfactory

contribution to the community. Pupils develop the confidence and personal qualities that will enable them to move on smoothly to the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and learners do well because lessons are planned well. Teachers maintain a good pace and generally encourage pupils to be active participants in their learning. Assessment information is used well to ensure that tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities so that pupils are enabled to do as well as they should. Marking has improved since the last inspection and pupils are provided with good oral and written feedback to help them improve or develop their work. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work so they understand what they need to do next. They are also set challenging targets that are regularly reviewed and updated. Teachers use questioning well to develop and consolidate learning. However, some pupils confirm the view that on occasion teachers do not include sufficient time in lessons for them to reflect or discuss the progress that they make toward their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum serves the needs of different pupils well and there are now better opportunities for pupils to apply their problem-solving and investigation skills in mathematics and science. The increasing use of cross-curricular themes and activity days is bringing the curriculum to life for the pupils. There is a good range of well attended clubs and activities that further enrich the curriculum. Artwork, produced when pupils worked with an artist in residence, from one of these activities is displayed prominently along one corridor in the school and demonstrates the positive impact of enrichment activities. Pupils are prepared well for their future through good opportunities to develop core skills in, for example, information and communication technology and team working.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff show a strong commitment to ensuring that pupils enjoy learning and have opportunities to achieve as well as they can in all areas of learning. Pupils and parents value the school's caring ethos. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and effective. Pupils are set appropriately challenging targets and are increasingly encouraged to evaluate their own learning and the learning of others. For example, during a physical education lesson pupils were asked to watch the performance of others and provide helpful feedback on how movement routines could be developed. The school works well with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils get the support that they need to achieve as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and her staff are sharply focused on raising standards and ensuring good personal development for all pupils regardless of background or capability. Planning for

improvement is based on rigorous and up to date analysis of pupils' progress. Self-evaluation at all levels is accurate and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Systems to monitor the work of the school are in place and good use of accurate assessment information ensures that teachers are well informed about the standards and achievement of pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and say how much they value the family atmosphere and how well the teachers know their children. The positive impact of the actions taken to address the weaknesses identified by the previous inspection can be seen in the rapid improvement that has taken place and demonstrates good capacity for further improvement. Governors have reviewed their roles and responsibilities and, following training, are now well placed to hold the school to account.

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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	3
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	3
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

2 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brookland Church of England Primary School, Brookland TN29 9QR

Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for helping me with the inspection. I particularly enjoyed talking to you about your school, hearing your excellent singing in assembly, and watching you perform the maypole dance.

When your school was inspected last year, the inspection found that there were some things that needed to be improved and I have been visiting the school to check on how well you are getting on. I am pleased to be able tell you that those improvements have been made and I will not need to visit you again to check on your progress.

I enjoyed seeing how well you get on together and how well the older pupils help to look after the younger ones. You told me that you enjoy school and I could see from your work that you try to do your best in all your lessons. The adults in your school work very hard to make sure that you get the help you need and make learning interesting. You told me how much you enjoy the extra clubs and activities that the school provides.

There are a few things that need to be done to help make your school even better.

- There need to be more opportunities for the youngest children to use the outside area for different types of play so that they can use their imagination and develop physical skills like balancing.
- You need to have a little more time in lessons to think about how well you are doing and talk about what you need to do to make your work even better.

I am sure that you will want to continue to work with your teachers to make the schools as good as it can be.

With very best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis Her Majesty's Inspector

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