

Brington CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110827
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	325234
Inspection date	1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	78
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Geoff Brighty
Headteacher	Mrs Allyson Watkins
Date of previous school inspection	13 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Lane Brington Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 5AE
Telephone number	01832 710383
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, including that of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The following issues were investigated in depth.

- What has been the impact of the work done to raise standards in writing?
- How well is the school using its new information and communication technology (ICT) hardware and software, and what has been the impact on pupils' learning?
- How effective is the provision for the most able pupils?
- What has been the impact of the significant changes to the senior leadership

The inspectors gathered evidence from observations of lessons and other activities, analysis of school documents, parents' views, discussions with staff, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a very small school serving the village of Brington and surrounding villages. The proportion of the pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups. None is at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average but is high in some year groups. Overall the indicators show that pupils at the school largely come from favourable socio-economic backgrounds.

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. Their attainment on entry to the school is broadly typical for their age. The current headteacher has been in post since September. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Charter Standard of the Football Association, the Activemark and also Healthy School status. The school is part of Huntsnet, sharing various projects with other local schools and developing extended school services.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school has improved since its last inspection, despite significant changes to leadership and staffing, and the issues raised then have been addressed well. Its success is due to high quality teaching and learning, extremely well behaved and attentive pupils and excellent leadership and management, focused strongly on raising standards further. This provision is resulting in outstanding achievement and exceptionally high standards. A large majority of the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed their satisfaction with the school, although a few felt aspects of communication between home and school could be improved. The school is aware of this and is addressing this, in part, with the planned new website. Most parents agreed with the comment of one who wrote: 'The school provides a very happy, caring and stimulating environment for learning and development.'

One of the school's major strengths, and a big reason for the excellent progress pupils make, is the amount of time given to group and paired work. This is clearly developing pupils' excellent speaking and listening skills, as well as giving them opportunities to work in teams, to negotiate, cooperate and collaborate on topics. Because of this they are developing outstanding skills to support their future learning and lives after school. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above those expected and by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are consistently very high. These results represent excellent progress by all pupils, especially during both Years 2 and 6. This is shown in their assessments and the school's system for tracking progress. In these particular year groups the amount of progress the pupils have made during this school year is that normally expected over two years. All groups of pupils progress equally well, including those from local air bases, and those with learning or behavioural difficulties. Boys do particularly well at this school reaching much higher standards than is often the case nationally. The most able pupils also achieve exceptionally well and an excellent number reach the higher levels in national tests.

In addition to high standards in core subjects there are high standards in history in Years 3 and 4 and in design and technology in Years 5 and 6. Written work has improved well after development work on writing for different purposes, better marking of writing to help pupils improve, and more effective use of computer technology to support writing. The school has worked hard to enhance provision for ICT and good resources and software are now used more productively. However, the use of technology in other subjects, especially for research, has yet to be fully developed.

The high standards achieved are due to the outstanding provision. The quality of teaching is consistently at least good and often outstanding. Teachers are very well supported by high quality teaching assistants, especially during the full inclusion of pupils with behavioural or learning needs. Lesson planning is imaginative and, as well as making learning fun, a lot is expected of pupils, enabling them to make excellent progress. During the inspection, for example, Years 1 and 2 visited the church to work with the vicar and learn about christenings. Earlier in the day one group had worked outside learning about fractions using large practical equipment to support their understanding. Relationships are very strong. Pupils help and support each other well and teachers know them as individuals. Pupils are grouped appropriately for their tasks. For example, inspectors saw pupils grouped by ability for work in mathematics, and also grouped as mixed ability for an investigation so that the more able could support the learning of others. The staff plan from a good curriculum which covers all required learning and is well enriched through clubs, visits, visitors and special events. A recent week-long topic

on different countries enabled pupils of different ages to work together and for learning to be more meaningful because pupils could make links between subjects and use their skills in more practical situations. The school is aware of the need to do more of this and plans to review the curriculum next year, making it more creative and practical, with more activities using problem solving and thinking skills, including more focused use of technology.

The pupils' learning is very well supported by their excellent personal development, which is fostered by outstanding care, guidance and support. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Even so, the school is aware from its review of provision for community cohesion that not enough is done to help pupils learn about how other people live and worship in this country. However, work being done to put the school at the heart of the local community, including work with a local travellers' site, is excellent. Pupils are also developing a good understanding of how others live across the world. In school, opportunities for responsibility are taken enthusiastically by pupils. They have a very secure understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Their great enjoyment of school is clear from talking to them, and from their excellent attendance. Although pupils' behaviour during the inspection, and from the school's records, is excellent, they say that occasionally incidents do occur. It is a reflection of these deep-thinking and articulate pupils that they express interest in the fairness of how teachers deal with any inappropriate behaviour. The school ensures pupils' safety through the full range of safeguarding procedures and health and safety precautions. Academic guidance is strong. The school's tracking of progress and use of data to highlight and recognise any underachievement results in very good interventions and pupils' excellent progress.

The success of the school is due to excellent leadership and management. Although the school has had a new headteacher and newly appointed a senior teacher this year, strengths have been maintained and new initiatives introduced. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has quickly created an ethos of continual improvement among staff. The success of work to improve writing, initiating discussion about the new curriculum and introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum show that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further. One reason for this is the willingness of the leadership to seek expertise from outside. Recent developments in the provision for pupils who find managing their own behaviour, or learning, difficult have been based on outstanding use of external support. The governing body provides the school with excellent support and challenge, as well as acting as an effective link with the local community. Regular visits to school provide them with the information needed to help them make informed judgements about financial matters and educational developments.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in Reception. On entry, except for their personal, social and emotional development and their reading and writing skills, which are below those expected, their attainment is in line with that typical for their age. From this starting point, they make good progress overall and exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development; many achieve a full level higher than expected. The strong focus on teaching letters and sounds makes a significant contribution to the good progress in children's early literacy skills. The fun approach to learning, along with good levels of support and encouragement from adults, help to develop high levels of independence. The teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills is firmly based on practical tasks that really appeal to the children and there is a good mix of indoor and outdoor tasks. Children settle into routines quickly because procedures are clear and practical. They play happily together and learn to share and

make choices. This is because they are integrated carefully so they learn to mix with each other, developing their social skills very effectively through a wide range of well planned and purposeful play activities. Staff take excellent care of the children, making sure they are safe at all times.

The children gain an increasingly broad understanding across all areas of learning. They learn to apply their knowledge from one area to another because activities are imaginatively planned. For instance, they were seen to carefully select 'the right' materials from a random pile so they could construct a sun-shelter for their toys. The good teaching results in the children being enthusiastic about learning. Adults assess and monitor children's progress carefully, including those who need extra support so that all move on well with their learning. The teacher provides clear direction for her able and skilled team who always have the children's best interests at heart. Her management is good. She has plans to develop further links with the playgroup and Year 1, to ensure better continuity in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Review and develop the curriculum to ensure sufficient opportunities for pupils to use new technology and to use their creativity, problem-solving and thinking skills.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

2 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brington CE Primary School, Brington, Huntingdon, PE28 5AE

I am writing to thank you for your help during your school's recent inspection, and to tell you what we found out about your school's work.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school because you and your teachers have made it such a happy and pleasant place to work and play. We really enjoyed talking to some of you and watching you working, swimming and practising for your performance. We hope this goes well and would love to have seen the final version.

We think, like many of your parents, that Brington is an outstanding school. This is because:

- your behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent and you all get on together so well
- your teachers give you work which is both challenging and very well planned and you have a lot of opportunity to work together in teams
- you reach very high standards and because you try so hard you make excellent progress and learn lots of new things
- you are very well cared for by the adults and you are outstandingly well prepared for your next school and your future lives
- Mrs Watkins and the other teachers are continually striving to make things even better for you.

Even in the best schools some things can be made better. We have asked your teachers to look at the curriculum to make sure you get enough opportunities to use computers and other technology for different purposes, and that you are able to use your creativity, problem-solving and thinking skills in different topics and subjects.

Thank you again for your help. Enjoy your time at Brington and keep working hard!

Yours faithfully

Geof Timms

Lead inspector