

Brampton Abbotts CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116867
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	326470
Inspection date	8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	119
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	Richard Stevenson
Headteacher	Lynne Potter
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Brampton Road Ross-on-Wye HR9 7DE
Telephone number	01989 562256

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	8 July 2009
Inspection number	326470

Fax number

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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than the national average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. A significantly higher than average proportion of pupils leave or join the school at times other than those normally expected, largely because of the considerable movement of families in and out of the area during the year. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of Reception, which is integrated into one class with pupils from Year 1. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Eco Schools, Healthy School and Activemark awards.

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. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. The school's care, support and guidance for pupils are good, with the safety of its pupils being a priority. Parents are very positive about the school. For example, one said, typically, 'Our daughter is doing very well at Brampton Abbotts School.' Another added, 'I would not want my child to go anywhere else.'

Standards are broadly average, and pupils achieve well. When children start in Reception their knowledge and skills are generally below the levels expected, especially in relation to their language skills. During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage the children achieve well, with most reaching average standards by the end of Reception. In Years 1 to 6, the significant movement of pupils in and out of the school during that time has an effect on standards. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, while pupils individually achieve well, standards remain broadly average.

Good teaching is a key factor in pupils' good progress. Relationships are good, teaching assistants are well deployed and teachers make good use of a variety of resources and strategies to make the lessons interesting. Lessons are thoroughly planned, with, for example, careful allowance made for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, occasionally the work provided lacks adequate challenge for some pupils, especially the more able.

The good curriculum contributes well to both pupils' enjoyment of school and their learning. The curriculum is interesting and varied, and, for example, helps to make the pupils well aware of the need to follow a healthy lifestyle. The school routinely reviews its curriculum. A current emphasis is being placed on increasing the links between different subjects, to help pupils develop their skills in the study of stimulating themes and topics. Pupils report that they enjoy the good range of visits, visitors and clubs that the school provides.

The headteacher and other members of staff are a dedicated team providing good leadership and management. Self-evaluation is effective in identifying where improvement is needed. The current initiative to improve the consistency of marking and target setting is another step towards further improvement, because at the moment pupils are not always given clear enough guidance about how to improve the standard of their work. Governors are fully involved in supporting the work of the school. The good quality of the current provision and the improvements made since the previous inspection, especially in relation to the school's self-evaluation, show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are taught well. The children are happy in school; they enjoy themselves and they particularly value the company of the older children in the class. Their behaviour is good, although occasionally a very small number find it difficult to maintain concentration on the tasks they have chosen. This then slows their rate of learning. The staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children also benefit from the good links that are established with parents. Adults provide the children with a good balance between teacher-led activities and chances for them to choose for themselves, and they take every opportunity to help them develop their

various skills. The good variety of reading and writing activities helps to tackle weaknesses in literacy skills. A good range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used effectively in all areas of the curriculum. The leader uses her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm well in making good provision for the children, and other staff members support her well in providing for their various needs. The management of the welfare of the children is exceptional.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide challenging activities for pupils, especially the more able.
- Ensure that marking and target setting give pupils a clear awareness of how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are broadly average and pupils make good progress. Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception, most achieve average standards.

By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are also broadly average. However, throughout Years 1 to 6 a very significant number of pupils either join or leave the school at times other than those normally expected. Often pupils joining the school have gaps in their knowledge. The school supports these pupils well, although the standards they achieve are often not as high as those of pupils who have been in the school throughout those years. Those who remain throughout make good progress based on their prior attainment. The school makes suitable provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and this is helping them make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and friendly, and they freely express their views about their work and school life. They behave well and they show respect for each other, their teachers and the environment. Pupils feel safe in school, and they say that while bullying happens occasionally, it is not a problem as an adult will always 'sort it out'. They enjoy their lessons and show this by their attentiveness and positive work ethic. Attendance has been below the national average for the last two years. However, the school has been proactive in promoting attendance, which is improved and is now broadly similar to the average. Some pupils' understanding of our multicultural society is not quite as strong as the other good aspects of their personal development.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat fruit and healthy meals, and they readily take part in physical exercise opportunities. They know how to adopt safe practices, such as when using computers. Pupils contribute well to both the school and the wider community, and they participate actively in a wide range of activities in the town, for instance in sport and music. The eco committee enables pupils to successfully gain an insight into the responsibilities of adult life, and pupils really value taking on other responsibilities, such as acting as Young Ambassadors for the school. Good achievement in literacy and numeracy ensures pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their future life at work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers display good subject knowledge. Classes are well managed, and good relationships are a particular strength. Lessons are interesting, with a good mixture of whole-class and group activities, and pupils enjoy their learning. As a result, pupils are well behaved, keen to learn and ready to work hard. Teachers use a good range of resources and strategies, including interactive whiteboards. Teaching assistants are well deployed to promote learning, especially that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This ensures they are able to join in all class activities and achieve well. Good allowance is made for pupils to work with partners in tackling some of their tasks. Occasionally, opportunities are missed for pupils to discuss their work at length in front of the whole class, to help them clarify their understanding of the work being undertaken.

Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, and the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met well. However, although planning also takes account of the needs of more able pupils, it lacks consistency. On occasions, the work provided for these pupils is not challenging enough, so that their knowledge and skills are not fully extended during the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad and interesting range of subjects, and this contributes to their good progress. There is a good emphasis on the use of the school's very attractive grounds, and also the wider area of Ross-on-Wye. The pupils benefit from the provision of French, as well as from learning to play stringed musical instruments. Good use is made of information and communication technology in supporting work in other subjects. The school correctly identifies that the curriculum overall might be made even more interesting, and, as a result, more links are being made between subjects, to produce topics that will further motivate pupils. A particular emphasis is also being placed on the greater use of literacy, as the school recognises that a few pupils continue to have weaknesses in their writing skills.

There is a good emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills. The curriculum makes a very appropriate contribution to the development of pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is a good range of outings, visitors and clubs, which pupils much appreciate and which they support with enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Adults ensure that there is good pastoral care, and staff are very committed to the safety of their pupils. Pupils who join the school midway through the year are helped to settle quickly into their new surroundings. Safeguarding requirements are fully met, and child protection and safety procedures are robust. Outside agencies are used effectively to support pupils when a need is identified. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living, and they are reminded of the need to take care and stay safe, for instance when doing physical education.

Guidance and support in class are mostly effective, such as through the careful use of learning objectives during lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but while they often add words

of praise, they provide pupils with written advice about improving their work less frequently. Pupils have targets for improving their work but discussions with the pupils themselves suggest that, while some know these targets well, others are less certain and do not have a clear enough understanding of what they need to do to make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school with dedication and skill, and she is supported well by other staff members. There is a strong sense of teamwork. Responsibilities are shared well within the small number of teaching staff. Staff are keen to make the best possible provision for pupils, to help them achieve as well as they can and to develop the school further. Good care is also taken to ensure that no form of discrimination is evident in the school. The school's self-review has accurately identified strengths and areas for development. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Community cohesion is developed well. There are strong community links both in school and locally, and the school has successfully enhanced these through contacts made with schools in other parts of England, as well as in France and Uganda. Subject leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the strengths in their various subjects, and they have actively initiated and supported strategies for making improvements. At present they have limited opportunities to observe lessons in other classes, although plans are in hand for this to happen more frequently as different subjects become priorities for review. Governance is good, with the governors being fully involved, for example, in producing the school development plan and monitoring the school's performance. They readily exercise their role of 'critical friends' should the need arise.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	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
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

9 July 2009

Dear Pupils,

Brampton Abbots C of E Primary School, Ross-on-Wye HR9 7HY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed joining you in assembly and talking to you in lessons. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good, and what we think could be made better.

You are in a good school, where you are doing well with your work.

These things are some of the strengths of the school.

- Teaching is good, and teachers provide you with interesting lessons.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You really enjoy the range of activities that the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take great care of you.
- Your parents are pleased with the school.
- The headteacher and other staff lead the school well and know what they need to do to make the school even better.

These are things the school has been asked to improve.

- Make sure that the work you get in lessons is always hard enough to give you enough challenge.
- Ensure that you always understand clearly how to make your work better.

You can help too, by asking your teachers if you need harder work or if you are unsure about how to make your work better.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully,

Martin James

Lead inspector