

Brown's Church of England Primary School, Horbling

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120603
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327321
Inspection date	24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Bob Roberts

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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	93
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	Mrs Doreen Richardson
Headteacher	Mrs Mandy Wilding
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sandygate Lane Horbling Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 0PL

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	24 June 2009
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Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- achievement and standards, with a focus on progress and the reliability of school data
- the quality of teaching and learning in order to verify, or otherwise, the school's own evaluation
- the quality of care, guidance and support and whether it could be judged good.

Inspectors gathered evidence from observations and visits to lessons, assessment of data and documents, and meetings with governors, groups of pupils and school managers. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school serves the small rural community of Horbling and the surrounding area. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small number speak English as an additional language but these pupils are not at an early stage of acquiring English. An above average number of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. The school has significantly more girls than boys. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is smaller than average but the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly larger than in most schools. Many of these pupils experience learning difficulties identified as dyslexia. A Reception class offers Early Years Foundation Stage provision for four- and five-year-olds. Breakfast and after-school childcare are provided on the site. This is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection report. The school holds Sportsmark, Healthy Schools, and Artsmark Gold awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brown's Church of England Primary is a good school. The improvements since the relatively new headteacher took up post in January 2008 have been rapid. There is a shared vision for the future and a determination to succeed. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding.

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The vast majority were positive, indicating that most parents and carers think highly of the school. A significant number referred to the impact that the headteacher has had, to the excellent communications with parents (including frequent e-mails) and to the real sense that parents have of being involved in their children's education. One parent wrote of the 'transparency' of what goes on and added: 'The school has, in my view, managed to achieve a sense of seamless daily transition from home to school and back to help children see the whole of their life as a learning experience.'

The school's self-evaluation shows an accurate understanding of the current strengths and areas for further development. Inspectors agree with almost all of the school's own judgements and these confirm that there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school judged the quality of its teaching as good and inspectors' visits to lessons and the achievements of pupils confirm the school's view. Teachers develop good relations with their pupils, building trust and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to listen carefully and respect the contribution of others. Activities are varied and interesting, engaging pupils very well in their learning. The integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into learning is effective. Pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work and there is a culture of praise and celebrating achievement.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Links between subjects and the development of skills are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about projects, such as the renovation of the wildlife conservation area. Music, art and drama are particular strengths and many parents referred to the frequent, high-quality drama productions that involve the whole school. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. A high proportion of pupils take advantage of these opportunities.

Care, guidance and support of pupils are good. The school has a very caring approach. Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. Health and safety are taken seriously. All aspects of welfare receive a high priority. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, enabling them to make good progress. Steps taken to extend the most able and talented are very effective. An effective behaviour policy, consistently applied across the school, helps to foster exceptionally good relations and behaviour. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is good, leading to the identification of those who need additional support, which is then provided. Pupils discuss and agree targets with their teachers and parents. The marking of pupils' work and the approaches to assessment are, however, inconsistent and not always helpful to pupils.

The school's good provision leads to good achievement. Pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment. They make good progress overall in their time at the school. Standards reached at the end of Year 2 have been average but the school's own data suggests that progress has improved significantly and levels of attainment for 2009 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time pupils leave school in Year 6, standards are above average.

In 2008 the levels of attainment reached were above average overall and particularly high in science. Indications are that the current Year 6 pupils have made good progress over the last year and have reached levels of attainment that will also be above average. Progress in mathematics this year has been exceptional. However, the rate of progress in writing, whilst satisfactory, does not match that in other subjects.

The school judged the personal development of its pupils as good. Inspectors judge it outstanding. In particular, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Strong links with the local church, daily practices at assemblies and lunchtimes, as well as effective teaching of subjects such as art, contribute to excellent spiritual development. Pupils have a strong sense of other cultures, developed in part through fund-raising, projects, and through particular activities, including the recent 'Passport Day' and the introduction to a range of modern foreign languages. Excellent social and moral development is evident in pupils' outstanding behaviour and their support for each other. Older pupils help and work very supportively with younger ones. Attendance is good. Pupils have a very good understanding of what it means to live a healthy life and an exceptional understanding of safety issues, including internet safety. An active school council involves all pupils in its activities. Several other outstanding opportunities assist pupils to contribute to the school and wider community. In all these ways, as well as through their academic achievements, pupils are effectively prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher brought valuable experience from her former posts. She has taken firm action to improve the quality of teaching and created a shared culture of learning within a caring environment. Achievement has improved significantly since her arrival and indications are that it will improve further. The whole community has a very clear sense of what is distinctive about the school and a conviction that this will enable it to thrive. Community cohesion is promoted very effectively, with respect to both the immediate, local and wider communities. For example, pupils from the school recently won a county competition with their production of an ICT-based animation on combating racism. The staff work as a team, as many parents noted. The governing body has been through a transitional period but their support and challenge to the school is good and improving. They are closely involved in the strategic direction of the school. The capacity of the school for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The numbers of children coming into the Reception class are small and so the average level of their skills and development varies a good deal from year to year. Over the past few years, attainment on entry has been broadly typical for the children's age, although lower in communication, language and literacy and in some aspects of mathematical development than in other areas. Children make good progress and enter Year 1 with knowledge and skills that are close to those expected. Teaching is good. All adults involved are highly committed to the children's welfare. Induction procedures are excellent. Parents are well informed and closely involved in what is going on. The children are effectively encouraged to develop habits and behaviour that help them to become good learners. The lead teacher has a high level of expertise. She leads the team well, ensuring that assessments are thorough and reliable. A shared knowledge and understanding of the pupils' development leads to effective planning which meets their differing needs effectively. The balance is good between adult-led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. The well-arranged classroom encourages practical

learning. Observation of the outside space is difficult from the classroom, so to ensure children's safety an adult must always be outdoors. Building plans are in place to rectify this problem.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop and implement a marking policy which is helpful to pupils and monitor the consistency and effectiveness of its use.
- Improve the rate of progress in writing so that it is at least the same as in other subjects.

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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 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	2
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?	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	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 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

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brown's Church of England Primary School, Horbling, NG34 0PL

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. We very much enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for the friendly way in which so many of you greeted and spoke to us.

Brown's is a good school. The most obvious thing about it is how happy people are to be there and to work there, including you. Many of your parents wrote to me about the lovely family atmosphere. You clearly enjoy coming to school, you work hard together and behave very well. The teaching you receive is good. Teachers work hard to make the lessons enjoyable and they succeed in this. The school provides you with many experiences that suit you well. The sports activities, the other clubs and the excellent art, music and drama give you plenty of opportunities to acquire a wide range of skills. You feel safe and well cared for. You help each other extremely well and the way in which you develop as individuals is outstanding. You progress well in your subjects and reach good standards by the time you leave in Year 6. Your attendance at school is good and you all make an excellent contribution to the school itself and to the wider community.

We have asked the school to improve two things further. First, the way teachers mark your work needs to be more consistent and helpful to you. Second, your progress in writing is not as fast as it is in other subjects, so we are asking the school to improve this to help you become even better writers.

Many of your parents filled in the questionnaire that was part of the inspection. Almost all of them think very highly of your headteacher, of the staff and of the whole school. We agree that they are doing a good job.

We wish you all well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Bob Roberts

Lead inspector