

Bressingham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120789
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	327363
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Anthony Knight HMI

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)	103
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 Kristian Wimshurst
Headteacher	Mr Simon East
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Bressingham Diss Norfolk IP22 2AR
Telephone number	01379687318
Fax number	01379687385

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

Bressingham Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. Only a very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and all pupils have English as their first language. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with statements of special educational needs are above the national average. The school operates in partnership with a nearby primary school sharing the same headteacher. There has been some discontinuity in leadership of the school over the last year and the deputy headteacher had just been appointed as Acting headteacher in the week preceding the inspection. The school is involved in a School Sports Partnership and has Active Mark and Artsmark Silver. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of one Reception class. Children start in this class with knowledge and skills that are broadly at the levels expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a very happy school. While overall effectiveness is satisfactory, reflecting the achievement of pupils and standards over the last three years, there are many good features that have enabled pupils to make outstanding personal development which prepares them well for life beyond the school. These include the good curriculum, which provides a wide range of stimulating experiences, and the good care, guidance and support which ensure that all pupils feel an integral part of the school. Above all, this school has the interests of all pupils at its heart.

In 2008, pupils made satisfactory progress given their starting points and standards were broadly in line with national averages. Recent developments, such as the improved tracking system, have strengthened the effectiveness of teaching and learning which are now good. As a result, pupils are now starting to make good progress in lessons. The school is aware of the need to continue to use this data to make sure work is always matched to the different learning needs of pupils. The school is also right in recognising the need to build on the improvements in teaching by ensuring all teaching increasingly matches the best, especially in the extent to which work always provides all pupils with the challenge and support they need to make the best possible progress.

All staff work closely together and relationships with pupils are excellent. Pupils enjoy learning, feel safe, understand healthy living choices and contribute much to the school through their active involvement in lessons, support for each other as 'buddies' and the work of the developing school council. They are right in feeling they could do even more and are keen to be involved further in the ongoing improvement of the school.

The lack of continuity of leadership over the last year has made it difficult for the school to give full attention to helping all pupils make even more progress in Key Stage 2. Hence, overall leadership is satisfactory. Nevertheless, developments since the appointment of the substantive headteacher in September 2008 are already having a strong impact on teaching and learning. The school knows what it needs to do and all its judgements were confirmed by the inspection. While improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory the capacity of the school to make further improvements is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good leadership and good teaching, and the care shown by all staff, help children integrate well into the life of the school. Children respond creatively and confidently to the wide range of opportunities given and enjoy talking to adults about what they are doing. Tasks are well-matched to children's learning needs and their interest is engaged through the use of stimulating starting points. They particularly enjoyed recording and listening to their own work. Good questioning maintains their involvement and helps them learn. They benefit from positive interaction with the older pupils and learn to work cooperatively with each other. They also benefit from the good opportunities for outside play, including the chance to plant and weed their own garden, and the good balance between directed activities and activities children choose for themselves.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by making effective use of the improved tracking data so that work is always matched to pupils' different learning needs.
- Ensure all teaching increasingly matches the best especially in the extent to which pupils are always given the challenge and support they need to make the best possible progress.
- Give pupils more opportunities to contribute more directly to the ongoing improvement of the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and standards were significantly above average in 2008. There has also been good improvement in writing in this key stage since the last inspection. Progress in Key Stage 2 has been more mixed and has been satisfactory overall over the last three years. Most pupils achieved the expected level of attainment at the end of the key stage but some of the school's own targets, especially for the highest level of attainment, were missed in 2008. However, better tracking of pupils' progress shows that more pupils are on course to achieve the school's targets for 2009. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, while this has also been satisfactory, is also benefiting from closer tracking and focused support. Progress in the lessons seen was good and reflected the increased progress seen in the tracking data across all classes. Although improvements in teaching and learning have accelerated progress in lessons, this has yet to be demonstrated over a longer period of time for achievement to be judged as good overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are happy, confident and polite. The respect they show for each other and adults is outstanding and is seen clearly in the excellent way they take care of each other such as acting as 'buddies' and helping the younger children. They respond energetically and creatively to all challenges given to them. For example, in one lesson, pupils led the learning constantly asking questions, offering their own ideas and even providing a perfect link between tasks! They contribute much to the quality of the school and are rightly keen to do even more. The school council, for example, is keen to extend its role by building in more regular time for members to report back to their classes and ensure all views are heard.

Pupils feel completely safe and really enjoy school. They understand healthy living choices, although this is not always reflected in the food they bring into school. Attendance is good and above the national average. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and significantly enhanced through the developing links with other schools within and beyond this country. Increasing progress in literacy and numeracy, the breadth of curriculum experiences and opportunities to work with and support each other all enable pupils to develop the skills they need to achieve well after they leave this school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved through the increasing use of assessment data and this has had a positive impact on the good progress pupils are now making in lessons. Teachers manage lessons well and pupils are clear about what they are learning. The use of success criteria and personal targets in some subjects are also helping pupils understand what they need to do to make their work better. However, pupils are right in asking for more challenge so they are constantly stretched to provide the best possible answer. The school also recognises that some tasks need to be adapted more for those who find the work difficult so they can learn through smaller steps and constantly reinforce their understanding.

In the best lessons, pupils are engaged through high expectations and teachers analyse pupils' responses carefully so that potential misunderstandings are avoided. Pair work is balanced effectively with whole class discussion so that all can respond and learn at their own level. Pupils are given opportunities to contribute and take ownership of the work through being encouraged to question and give, and develop, their own ideas. Teaching assistants provide good support and work effectively with the class teachers. Marking has improved and the best not only highlights what has been achieved but also gives a clear focus as to what could be improved further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad and balanced curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to learn outside of the school through, for example, visits to other places. Good use is also made of visiting specialists, such as in music. There is a good range of additional experiences both within the timetable, such as the Artsweek, and in extra-curricular activities. The school is sensibly exploring how to make the curriculum even more interesting for pupils through increasingly making links between subjects while also ensuring pupils are helped to make progress within these subjects. Subject leaders are right to be thinking about ways to increase the monitoring of provision across the school and to revisit all the schemes of work. The learning environment is enhanced through stimulating displays of pupils' work, particularly their art work. Pupils are also given opportunities to participate in whole school activities and regularly celebrate success in assemblies.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers know their pupils well and work hard to ensure they are happy. The relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils also contribute much to the care shown by the school to all pupils through, for example, their work as 'buddies' and through the school council. Child safety procedures are secure and the school provides a safe environment for all pupils. Circle time is used well to discuss issues and ensure pupils are given the information they need to live safely. All pupils are integrated into the life of the school through sensitive additional support where this is required. This includes all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who receive extra support during lessons from teaching assistants. The improved tracking

system is also enabling more focused intervention for all pupils although the impact of these interventions has yet to be seen fully.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

While achievement and standards have been satisfactory over the last three years the appointment of the substantive headteacher in September 2008 has enabled positive developments to take place such as the tracking system and renewed focus on pupil progress. These developments have already impacted positively on teaching and learning which in turn are increasing the progress pupils are making. The school staff have worked excellently together to ensure as much continuity as possible. This was seen clearly in the way the school pulled together following the very recent absence of the headteacher due to illness. The deputy headteacher was able to step in quickly and manage the inspection effectively.

The governing body is led well and has a firm grasp of the challenges and opportunities facing the school. New members are being increasingly involved in the life of the school. The good links with the partner primary school are enabling staff to work with, and learn from, each other and share resources more effectively. While some parents have concerns about how the schools are sharing a headteacher, this school is ensuring that this arrangement works to the best interest of the pupils in this school. Overall, parents expressed very high praise for the school and the way the staff care for their children. A small minority felt that that the school did not always take account of pupils' views. The school is aware of these concerns and has good plans to extend the role of the school council to provide even more opportunity for pupils to be consulted and to contribute. The school contributes well to community cohesion through the village fete and involvement of others in the community in school events. The school is aware of the need to now re-look at this area of their work to evaluate more systematically the ways in which the school plays a key part in the community.

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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?	3
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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
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	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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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?	3
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	3
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**

15 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bressingham Junior School, Bressingham IP22 2AR

I really enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you for welcoming me and talking to me so confidently and politely. You and your parents are right that Bressingham is a very happy school. It is also a school that is making good improvements to help you make even more progress in your learning.

Your school now has good records of how well you are doing and your teacher is using this information to choose the best possible tasks for each of you. Do make sure your teacher knows if you are finding the work too hard or too easy. Some of you feel you could be challenged a bit more sometimes and so I have asked your teachers to make sure that you feel stretched by the work. You can help by always doing your best and telling your teacher if you think you could do even more.

What struck me most was how well you work and play together. It was good to see how the older pupils help the younger ones and to hear about the work of the 'buddies'. It was also good to meet the school council and I know they are keen to do more. I have asked your school to build in more regular time for members to report back to their classes and ensure all views are heard. Make sure you tell your school council representative about the things that you think are good and how the school could be made even better.

It is clear that your school has your best interests at heart and knows what you need.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Knight

Her Majesty's Inspector