

Brailsford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112804
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	338022
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Marsden

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Cox
Headteacher	Jackie Micklethwaite
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, spending around 20% of inspection time in lessons and observing five teachers. They held meetings with governors, pupils and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation, attendance records, evidence of pupils' progress, planning documents, and questionnaires from parents, pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current standards and rates of progress, to determine whether these have improved sufficiently since the last inspection
- the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and of gifted and talented pupils, to see whether they are being appropriately challenged in the school's mixed-age, mixed-ability classes
- the use the school makes of its very limited accommodation, to determine whether this has an impact on pupils' learning and achievement.

Information about the school

This small school draws pupils from the village of Brailsford and the surrounding rural area. A higher percentage of pupils than is normally found have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. A small proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school holds several awards including the International Schools Gold, the Green Flag, and Healthy Schools.

Leadership of the school has been stable since the last inspection, when there had been five headteachers in the previous four years. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a good education for its pupils. In keeping with its Christian ethos, it puts the celebration of pupils' sense of self-worth at the heart of all it does. Some aspects of the school are outstanding.

Over several years pupils' progress has been good in Key Stage 1 but it has been below national rates in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in the national tests are broadly in line with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics and consistently above in science. However, the numbers in each year group are very small and a large proportion of pupils who took the national tests in 2009 had not joined the school at the start of Key Stage 1, so these results do not give the complete picture. Progress seen by inspectors in lessons was consistently good. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and their progress over time, observed in their work and in the school's meticulous tracking records, indicate that current pupils are making good progress.

Pupils really like being part of a small school where they know everyone well and where they feel adults take good care of them. Pupils were quick to tell inspectors that teachers are 'helpful', 'caring' and 'kind', and they say that bullying is extremely rare. They enjoy making a difference to their community, and recommendations by the school council are taken seriously and acted upon. They develop a good insight into the world beyond their village, appreciate the opportunities they have to meet people from other faiths and cultures, and have contact with their partner schools in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Pupils reflect deeply on issues of concern in the world, such as the recent earthquake in Haiti. They have a good understanding of how their actions affect others. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers make lessons interesting and fun as well as challenging. Teachers are good at explaining things. They know their pupils very well and are good at tailoring work to individual pupils' needs. Teaching assistants play an important part in ensuring that all are appropriately challenged. They help pupils develop confidence as they work in classes and with small groups. Time is lost in some lessons, however, because teachers have to move furniture and rearrange their teaching space in order to make the most of the very small and cramped premises.

Behaviour is exceptional. Pupils are extremely courteous and considerate of others. Older pupils, especially, take care to look after younger ones in the narrow corridors and on the steep and narrow stairs of the old school building.

The curriculum provides a good balance between developing children's literacy and numeracy skills and extending their broader knowledge of the world. It teaches them how to stay safe and be aware of the hazards of smoking and drugs. There is an

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impressive range of activities at lunchtime and after school. These include, for example, sport, learning musical instruments, art, computers and gardening. The curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides wide range of activities and makes very good use of movement and song to promote literacy and numeracy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not able to move freely between indoor and outdoor areas, however, and this restricts their opportunities to choose activities for themselves. The headteacher has provided much needed stability since the last inspection and has developed a talented team of staff who are committed to pursuing excellence for the sake of the all the pupils. Detailed plans are in place to turn their vision into reality. All aspects of provision are rigorously evaluated by the school and the governing body, and appropriate action to bring about improvement is taken as necessary. Recent improvements suggest that the school is well placed to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - increasing opportunities for outdoor learning
 - giving pupils more opportunities to develop independence in their choice of activities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children enter school with skills and knowledge which are slightly below average. In lessons they concentrate well, enjoy their work, and consequently progress well. There are no significant variations in rates of progress for boys and girls. Teachers provide motivating reading material for boys which ensures that they progress in reading as well as the girls. Because of the good support they receive, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, and the school is particularly proud of the very good achievement of the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' attainment is above average at the end of Key Stage 1 in all subjects. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is above average in science and average in English and mathematics.

Pupils speak confidently about how they feel safe and how the school supports them in this. They are aware of the potential dangers of having a public footpath running through the site and take a sensible attitude towards this. However, they have to be supervised at all times as they move from one building to another. Pupils pursue a healthy lifestyle and the school is proud of its Healthy Schools award. Around three quarters of pupils eat a nutritious, healthy lunch cooked on site each day. Others purchase or bring healthy snacks. All take part in ten minutes of outdoor skipping daily, and many do extra-curricular sport.

Pupils avail themselves of many opportunities to make a contribution to the school and wider community. They become animated as they talk about their school council and

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what it has achieved. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, serve as 'mini-leaders' and playground buddies. They involve themselves in many activities with members of the local community, such as musical events and charity work, and older pupils write for the parish magazine.

The school develops pupils' workplace skills well through the teaching of basic skills as well as through group activities, teamwork and competitions. A group designing and selling healthy snacks for earthquake victims in Haiti were very professional in their approach to financial planning.

Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Daily assemblies are reflective and thought-provoking and there are many opportunities to experience awe and wonder such as in a recent project where pupils looked after eggs and watched the chickens hatch. Pupils' eyes are opened to the world beyond their village. They have direct contact with Hindus and Muslims, for example, and a recent visit from a Caribbean story teller was very popular. The school's success in developing children's international awareness has resulted in the prestigious International Schools Gold Award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils are quick to say how much they enjoy learning. They engage very well in lessons because teachers make lessons fun and interesting. Teachers explain things clearly, often with visual aids, and allow pupils to work collaboratively in groups or pairs. Teachers and pupils use computers and other digital resources very effectively to bring lessons to life. One group, for example, was very quick to grasp the principles of reflection because the teacher used an interactive white board to model what was happening. Teachers' planning is good because they know their individual pupils very well and tailor work appropriately to their needs. Teachers set challenging targets for individuals and refer to these regularly. This approach motivates pupils very well as they see themselves moving towards their personal targets. Teaching assistants work flexibly and are quick to take the initiative, which means they provide very effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils therefore progress well.

The school has no hall or gym and pupils have to be taken down a busy main road to the village hall for physical education lessons. Despite this the school provides two hours of physical education each week for every pupil. All Key Stage 2 pupils go swimming, and French has recently been introduced ahead of the national requirement to do so. Extra-curricular activities are wide-ranging and much enjoyed. The school makes use of volunteers, contacts in the local community, as well as neighbouring schools, to stimulate pupils' love for sport, the arts, music and environmental matters. The pupils' involvement in gardening, environmental projects and their awareness of ecological issues has earned the school the Green Flag Award.

Because pupils are very well known as individuals in this small school, the transition between the different phases of education is smooth. Support for any pupils facing challenging circumstances is also good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff questionnaires indicate very high morale and a sense of shared vision among the staff. Teachers set themselves ambitious and clearly defined targets for improvement. Their work is monitored closely by the headteacher and they regularly discuss ways of improving outcomes for pupils. Governors are well informed and offer a good level of support and challenge to influence the strategic direction of the school and support its day-to-day running. Pupils' families are known very well and the school is careful to

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involve all families, including those who may be reluctant to engage with school. Parents say the school is approachable and friendly. A recent innovation is the creation of a password-protected area of the school's web site which allows parents and carers to view samples of their own child's work at any time and keep informed about their achievement.

The school makes good use of partnerships with other schools, for example in arranging sports events, or events for gifted pupils. It works well with the church, the local parish council, and with the parent-teacher association. In the way it includes all pupils and ensures they have the opportunity to thrive, the school is outstanding. Leaders rigorously evaluate its work in order to ensure not only that the school itself is a harmonious and cohesive community but to ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities in the wider communities to which they belong, locally, nationally and internationally. Statutory requirements for safeguarding are rigorously met and kept under regular review. Because of the public footpath running through the site, staff are especially vigilant. A recently introduced traffic light system for visitors' badges enables everyone to see at a glance the status of any visitor on the site.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage children are assessed carefully so that their progress can be tracked accurately. A recently introduced programme makes very good use of singing and movement to teach literacy and numeracy and has led to significant steps forward in learning for many of the children. Children feel safe at school

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because they know that adults care for them well. Teachers are careful to develop children's social skills, such as table manners, and to ensure that children know the importance of behaving well and having consideration for the needs of others. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to make learning enjoyable as well as purposeful. Children have some opportunities to work and play independently, and staff allow children to benefit from outdoor learning, but opportunities for children to move flexibly between indoor and outdoor learning areas are lacking, and this restricts the opportunities for them to make choices in their learning and thus to develop greater independence. Leaders continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are quick to make changes and try out new ideas for the benefit of the children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires were received from 58% of parents and carers. A very small minority of parents expressed concern about the way the school deals with behaviour although inspectors found nothing but exemplary behaviour during the inspection. Another very small minority were concerned that the school does not keep them sufficiently well informed about their child's progress, and the school has recently made improvements in this area.

In the main, parents' questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive and show very high levels of satisfaction with the school. The following comments were typical: 'I feel my child is taught to her individual level and need,' and, 'The school provides a stimulating environment which has engaged my children's enthusiasm for learning and promoted in them a thirst for knowledge.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brailsford CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	63	18	33	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	61	18	33	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	35	24	44	10	19	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	39	25	46	6	11	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	52	20	37	6	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	41	23	43	7	13	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	59	19	35	3	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	39	25	46	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	39	25	46	7	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	41	20	37	7	13	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	46	15	28	11	20	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	25	46	20	37	4	7	3	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	50	22	41	3	6	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Monday 1 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Brailsford Church of England Primary School, Ashbourne DE6 3DA

I should like to thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful to us when we visited your school recently. Your parents value the work your school does for you and many of you were very proud to tell us how much you like coming to school. Here are some of the things we liked about your school.

You work hard in lessons and make good progress because you are taught well.

Your behaviour is excellent, and you help to make the school a happy place.

You know clearly how well you are doing and what to do to improve further.

You live healthy lives and know how to stay safe.

Your headteacher and the people who manage your school are doing a good job.

You enjoy lots of out-of-school activities that teach you important skills in things such as sport, music, computers and gardening.

You have lots of opportunities to take responsibility either in school or in the wider community.

This is what we think your school should do to make it even better.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that older pupils do as well in reading, writing and mathematics as in science.

The youngest children need more opportunities to work and play outside.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden

Lead inspector

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