

Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121028
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339835
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

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	19
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip Thompson
Headteacher	Mr Peter Lacey-Hastings
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
School address	Grove Road Brockdish Diss
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Over half of the available time was spent observing learning. In total, seven lessons were seen taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with governors and staff, and there were discussions with parents and carers and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment data, various school policies, the school improvement plan and 14 parental questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the actions the school is taking to improve standards in English
- how successful the school is in meeting the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities found in each class
- from their various starting points, how much progress is made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is an exceptionally small primary school and pupils are taught in two mixed age classes. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is much higher than average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. A relatively high number of pupils either start or leave during the school year.

The school has been awarded Active Mark, the foundation level of the International School Award and the Silver Eco Schools Award. An independently managed pre-school group operates on the school site and is separately inspected.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Brockdish Primary School is an exciting place to learn. It provides an outstanding quality of education. Classrooms and the school grounds are full of interesting and challenging activities that capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils are full of praise for the education they receive. One commented, 'Our teachers are kind and helpful; they make me feel confident and happy.' Parents and carers are similarly impressed. Their comments included: 'This is the best school I have known. The staff are excellent,' and 'The care and attention my children receive is outstanding.'

Pupils' outstanding academic and personal progress is the result of some excellent teaching and highly effective leadership and management. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a flying start and make excellent progress. Each class contains a wide range of abilities and ages. Even so, the curriculum is tailored precisely to the individual needs of each pupil. They all have challenging individual targets for attainment and are very well informed about how to improve their work. Data for the last three years, including test results for the end of Year 6 and the school's own assessment information, show that attainment has improved every year. This includes a dramatic improvement in science. Progress and value added measures for 2008 and 2009 show that pupils make outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science. Historically, attainment in English tended to lag behind that in mathematics and science. The headteacher and teachers have worked effectively to resolve this position. Attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 now exceeds the national average. Assessments and the work in pupils' books suggest this position is likely to be sustained over the next few years. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is also above average.

The dynamic leadership of the headteacher has proved to be central to the school's improvement. There is every indication that the school is well placed to continue its improvement in the future. This is based on a track record of rising standards and improvements in provision as well as accurate self-evaluation. Excellent use is made of assessment information in planning to meet pupils' needs. Even so, the evaluations of the initiatives in the school's improvement plan are not linked closely enough to their potential impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Link the evaluation of the initiatives listed in the school improvement plan more closely to their impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve outstandingly well and make excellent progress in lessons. The school has successfully increased the rate of progress of some pupils so that they are no longer identified as having a special educational need. This is based not only on some excellent teaching, but on pupils' enthusiasm as learners and their willingness to always do their best. Attendance is well above average, reflecting the enjoyment and commitment to learning shown by the pupils. Behaviour during lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils are mature, sensitive and always willing to take responsibility, such as when older pupils care for the younger ones. Pupils' awareness of how to stay safe and of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle is exceptional.

The Christian character of the school and its strong links with the local church make a very effective contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, pupils participated in a service at the church, accompanied by many parents, grandparents and members of the community. There is a very active school council, but all pupils are well placed to influence the school's development and their contribution to the community is exemplary. For example, they made crucial decisions about the plans to improve the outdoor provision and undertake daily tasks that help with the smooth running of the school. They frequently organise fundraising events to support a child in Ethiopia, most recently by selling daffodils for Mother's day. Pupils are very knowledgeable about the beliefs and cultures of other groups in the United Kingdom and abroad. They are prepared exceptionally well for the next stages of their education, which is illustrated by their ability to apply the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology with confidence in a range of contexts.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1

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

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

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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan their lessons precisely to meet the needs of each pupil, with individual learning refined to a high level. Lessons are imaginative, vibrant and full of pace. Discussion and the effective promotion of pupils' speaking and listening feature prominently. Pupils rarely, if ever, lose interest because they are eager not to miss the next exciting activity or learning opportunity. Every opportunity is taken to celebrate their achievements and efforts. A key feature of all lessons is the involvement of pupils in evaluating their own learning and progress. They all have carefully tailored individual targets and are given frequent feedback about how well they are doing and how to improve their work. In this respect, the contribution made by teachers' marking is exemplary.

The curriculum is equally effective at meeting pupils' needs. All subjects are covered in depth and helpful links are made across subjects. Additional provision for French, Spanish and specialist-led musical and sporting activities add to the quality. For such a small school, the range of additional activities is fantastic. There is something every day, including badminton, squash, 'Let's Get Cooking', gardening club and the 'J' club led by the vicar. Participation levels are high and nearly all pupils attend, even the youngest.

The needs of every pupil are well known to all the staff and pupils' personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. The response to any pupil showing the slightest sign of falling behind is prompt and effective. The support for any pupil, who because of their circumstances might potentially be at risk, is outstanding.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the very effective leadership of the headteacher the school has flourished and attainment has improved year-on-year. Central to this improvement is an excellent programme of staff nurture and development, in which each member is enabled to take responsibility and expand their range of skills. The consequent developments to the quality of teaching have resulted in improvements for many pupils. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and planning for improvement is measured and thoughtful. The headteacher makes certain that everyone is well placed to contribute. Information about how well pupils are progressing is used to set suitably challenging targets for attainment, with the headteacher and staff ever eager to maintain the pace of improvement. The ways in which the school promotes equality of opportunity for all eliminates all types of discrimination.

Governors also make a major contribution to the school's record of improvement. They are well informed about the school's activities and contribute very effectively to planning for improvement and evaluating the quality of provision. Along with staff, governors are involved in visits to other schools to observe outstanding practice and helping them to affirm their own self-evaluation. Policies to ensure that pupils are safe are all in place and are followed precisely and consistently. This was illustrated by the attention given to pupils' safety as they walked from school to attend the service at the village church. The promotion of community cohesion at local, national and international level is also outstanding. For example, pupils have taken part in video conferencing with schools in the Lake District, Pakistan and Poland.

Excellent use is made of support agencies, especially to help those pupils who sometimes struggle with their learning. Liaison with parents and carers is also exemplary and the school works very effectively to help them to support their children's learning. Parents and carers are made welcome and are confident to approach the school, should the need arise. They are also hugely supportive of the school. This is typified by the commitment shown in helping to develop the school environment as a resource for learning. Their opinions matter, as revealed by their evaluations of the 'Mad Science Family Workshop'.

The wise use of resources, often supplemented by those provided by parents and the community, mean the school provides exceptional value for money. This is reflected in the excellent progress that pupils make and the remarkable improvements made to accommodation and resources.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1

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

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

In most years, children start school with attainment that is lower than expected for their age. They make excellent progress in all areas of their learning so that, by the time they are ready to move into Year 1, their attainment is above average for their age. The children are taught in a mixed-age class alongside their older classmates in Years 1 and 2. This arrangement benefits them greatly as they rapidly become mature and confident learners.

Provision for these children is exemplary and activities are planned which help them to make outstanding progress in all areas of their learning. The outdoor learning area is used particularly well and children are just as likely to be found learning outside as they are in the classroom. In this respect, careful investment and development have brought significant improvements in recent years. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that no opportunity is missed to promote children's speaking and listening skills and their mathematical development. Learning is typified by excited, but thoughtful, responses to challenging questions which really make the children think. There are also excellent opportunities to promote children's early writing skills and many are soon writing in a legible and sustained fashion.

Children's progress is assessed meticulously. The response to any who show the slightest sign of falling behind is prompt and matched precisely to their needs. Consequently, they soon catch up. Above all, children show a remarkable enjoyment of their learning and are invariably absorbed in the various activities. They are ever eager to talk about what they are doing and keen to share their ideas. The balance between adult-led activities and those in which children work independently and make decisions for themselves is ideal.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with all aspects of the school's work. They say that their children enjoy school and that they are happy with the progress they are making. The 14 replies meant every family with a child at the school responded.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 inspector received 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 19 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	86	2	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	79	3	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	79	3	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	71	4	29	0	0	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)	6	43	5	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	79	3	21	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	71	3	21	1	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	79	3	21	0	0	0	0

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



15 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Diss, IP21 4JP

You may recall I visited your school recently to carry out its inspection. Much of your school's work is very impressive and I concluded that it provides you with an outstanding quality of education. I know that you and many of your parents and carers agree with me.

Your behaviour and the ways in which you contribute during lessons and to your school and the wider community are excellent. You all make outstanding progress and your attainment is better than that found in many other schools. This is partly because you all work very hard. It also helps that your teachers make lessons exciting and interesting. Best of all, they give you all the help you need and are brilliant at keeping you informed about how to make your work even better. In addition, I cannot remember when I last met pupils who are as good as you at taking caring of each other. The way the older pupils help the younger ones is excellent.

Your headteacher, the staff and governors are always looking for ways to make your school even better, even though everything already works extremely well. With this in mind, I have asked them to look closely at how they measure the success of the things they do to help you learn as well as possible.

Finally, I would like to wish you all every success in whatever you choose to do in the future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead inspector

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