

# Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Church of England (C) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123144
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340291
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	119
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Numphud
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Hunt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Greenmere Wallingford OX10 0QH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed nine lessons with five teachers being seen. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 65 questionnaires from parents and carers; 13 from staff and 52 from pupils.

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

- the impact of leadership in improving progress, especially in writing and for pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness of teaching at providing the right level of challenge for all pupils, especially the more able
- pupils' involvement in decision making, their responsibility taking and how well they understand the next steps in their learning
- how well the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are met in a mixed-age class.

## Information about the school

This small rural school takes most of its pupils from the local community. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most, but not all, of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside Year 1 pupils who are divided between two classes.

The headteacher took up post in September 2009, after a year when the school was without a permanent headteacher.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This satisfactory school is moving forward quickly under the strong and purposeful leadership of the new headteacher. There are effective self-evaluation systems and this means that the headteacher and governors are very clear about what to do next. They are taking decisive action to tackle the fall in attainment that started after the last inspection and the good impact of their work is already evident in improved pupil progress, especially in writing.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's differing needs are met well even though there are two age groups in the class and attainment is above average by the time they move into Year 1. Pupils' attainment is above average at the end of Year 6, reflecting satisfactory overall progress from the start of Year 1. Pupils make the best progress in English because the development of literacy skills is promoted well in different subjects and there are many opportunities to write purposefully. In mathematics, skills develop steadily, but teaching does not always provide the right level of challenge for all pupils, including the more able. In science, progress is satisfactory in most of the school but slows significantly in Years 5 and 6 because topics are not studied in sufficient detail and work is not marked or assessed regularly enough.

Pupils are a credit to the school. They are well cared for and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are sociable and articulate and keenly take on responsibility, making an excellent contribution to the community. Pupils are given a very strong voice in the life of the school and are very pleased that their views are valued; as one pupil commented, 'I like this school because it is a democracy.' Pupils are very thoughtful about the needs of others and they participate very enthusiastically in local events such as the village carnival.

The new headteacher and governors have ensured that there has been a good pace to change as the school emerges from a period of instability. There is a good drive for improvement and a good understanding of what needs to be done to develop teaching so that all of it is good or better. Although developments are relatively recent, they are already embedded. The school has successfully demonstrated that there is a good capacity for further improvement in the way that it has raised attainment in writing and has improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders rightly know that the next step in building this capacity further is to develop subject leadership in English, mathematics and science so that responsibility for monitoring provision is shared among more staff.

The school has a good partnership with others and engages well with parents and

carers. This contributes well to the school's work. For example, parents and a local business have recently worked together to purchase a new school minibus. Parents and carers are positive about recent changes, with one commenting that the new headteacher has been a 'breath of fresh air for the school.'

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of mathematics teaching so that 80% is good or better by ensuring that teachers consistently pitch work at the right level for all pupils.
- Strengthen subject leadership in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that middle managers rigorously monitor provision and play an active part in planning for improvement.
- Improve the quality of science work in Years 5 and 6 by ensuring that topics are taught in sufficient detail and work is regularly marked and assessed.

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

<b>3</b>
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Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Their thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in above average attendance and their very positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in many lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils worked together enthusiastically on finding facts about The Great Fire of London, sharing their ideas happily. When working with an adult, learning moved on quickly, but at other times, the pace of learning was slower because not all pupils were able to work independently. In a numeracy lesson where pupils solved problems, they cooperated well but there was not enough time for learning to move on more quickly. Where progress in lessons is good, differing needs are met well. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 4, pupils made quick progress in learning about capacity because they were encouraged to think like mathematicians and to find out for themselves the value of having a standard unit of measure. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in lessons. They take a full part in activities and are keen to improve.

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They learn to consider complex moral issues such as whether it is right to kill animals for their skins and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils happily take part in acts of worship and they write thoughtful prayers for the school prayer book. Pupils behave well and work hard most of the time, although some do not always present their work neatly enough. Pupils feel safe and keenly adopt healthy lifestyles. They thoroughly enjoy the school's sports clubs. They know what is meant by a healthy diet and show great pride in the latest crop of potatoes that they have grown in their garden.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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**

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

## How effective is the provision?

Members of staff work successfully to provide high quality pastoral care. There are good links with outside agencies to get extra help for pupils when it is needed and the new headteacher has improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that it is now satisfactory. Pupils with a statement of educational needs are given high quality support and do well both academically and socially.

Teachers make learning fun and manage pupils' behaviour well. Skilled teaching assistants are deployed well most of the time and have a good impact on learning. Where teaching is best in Years 3 and 4 and in English across the school, it is because teachers use assessment information to ensure that there is the right level of challenge for all. However, this is not yet consistent in all subjects or year groups. The quality of marking is patchy and, in Years 5 and 6, science work is not marked regularly enough. The curriculum is engaging and exciting and provides pupils with many memorable experiences that add greatly to their enjoyment of school. Teachers are becoming increasingly adept at linking subjects together, although the use of literacy skills across the curriculum, which has been a key factor in the recent improvement in pupils' writing, is still much stronger than the use of numeracy skills.

A wide range of enrichment activities such as sports clubs and visits gives pupils opportunities to learn new skills such as tennis and golf and helps to bring subjects alive.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The calm and purposeful leadership of the new headteacher is having a positive impact on the work of the school. She is well supported by governors who did a good job in steering the school through a period of transition in the last academic year. Together, they are passionate about improving provision and their good determination and their drive for improvement is firmly embedded across the school. There is a good understanding of priorities and they are doing the right things to iron out inconsistencies in teaching. Subject leadership is in the early stages of development. Most leaders are enthusiastic but they have only a limited role in monitoring provision.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. Leaders are rigorous in dealing with discrimination but Year 1 pupils are split between two classes and do not have the same range of opportunities over the year. The headteacher already has good plans to change provision for these pupils next year so that this weakness is tackled. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils develop a good understanding of life in the United Kingdom and beyond through activities such as a recent multicultural week and recently established links with a school in Uganda.

The school has good safeguarding procedures. Pupils' safety is given a high priority and this is reflected in every aspect of school life.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b>	
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good teaching and an exciting curriculum mean that children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although there is some variation from year-to-year, most children are working at the levels expected for their age when they start school.

Children build well on this and their attainment is above average by the end of the year, reflecting good achievement. There is a delightful atmosphere in lessons, with the Year 1 pupils supporting reception children and all working together happily. Children develop confidence and independence because they are given good opportunities to select where they are going to work or to find out things for themselves. For example, children worked with great concentration as they looked for examples of symmetry in nature. Adults have good expectations in lessons although the pace of learning sometimes slows when children get overexcited and time is lost talking about things that are not directly related to learning. Planning takes good account of the different age groups in the class and the different areas of learning are linked together successfully. For example, children learn about money, types of food and write lists in the 'Greek restaurant'.

Leaders monitor progress closely and are making increasingly sharp use of data to look for trends in attainment over time so that any comparative areas of weakness can be tackled quickly. There are plans for developing the small outdoor area so that there is more space for physical development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

There was a high return of questionnaires. The vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school. Positive comments included, 'The school is very much at the centre of the community' and 'Brightwell is a lovely, friendly school.' Some parents and carers are concerned about the information they get on pupils' progress. The new headteacher is already tackling this by introducing a new reporting format for the end of the academic year. Several parents and carers feel that there is not enough



sport in school. Inspectors found that the amount of time allocated to physical education in lessons is the same as in most schools in most classes and this is supplemented by a good range of sports clubs and competitions.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell CE (C) 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 119 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	63	20	31	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	65	21	32	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	28	37	57	9	14	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	23	37	57	10	15	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	19	29	37	57	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	23	35	54	9	14	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	32	40	62	3	5	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	32	31	48	5	8	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	22	35	54	10	15	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	29	38	58	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	22	35	54	7	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	35	32	49	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	38	33	51	5	8	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.

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## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



23 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell CE(C) Primary School, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell OX10 0QH

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school recently. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You do well in the Reception Year where you are taught well. Satisfactory teaching means that you then make steady progress in the rest of the school.
- You behave well and are really happy at school. You are very friendly and you are helping the school to improve through the school council.
- The teachers plan lots of exciting things for you to do and you take a very active part in village events. The carnival sounded like it was great fun!
- You know who to turn to if you have a worry and adults give you suitable help when you have problems with your work.
- Your headteacher and governors are helping the school to improve quickly.

Your teachers know that there is still work to be done to make the school even better.

We have suggested three things that will help.

- Check that your teachers always plan work that is not too hard or easy for you, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure that all leaders are involved in checking your learning so that they know what to do next.
- Improve the quality of your science work in Years 5 and 6.

We wish you all well for the future. You can help your teachers by trying to present your work neatly all of the time.

Yours sincerely

Mike Capper

Lead inspector

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