

Brinkworth Earl Danby's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126390
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	340972
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Freeman
Headteacher	Sarah Findlay-Cobb
Date of previous school inspection	5 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent 70% of their time looking at learning. They observed 12 lessons and all teachers present during the two days, and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documents including records of pupils' progress and other monitoring activities, school policies and guidelines, teachers' plans and questionnaires received from pupils, staff and 99 parents and carers.

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

- the progress of pupils, particularly in writing
- specific examples of outstanding personal development and how they are supported
- the effectiveness of strategies used by the school to address issues raised by the split site
- the impact of significant turbulence and frequent changes to staff, particularly within the leadership team, on the pace of school improvement.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. It recently reduced from seven to six classes following a decline in the number of pupils on roll, but this decline has been halted and numbers are beginning to increase again. It operates on two sites more than two miles apart. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are on the lower site in the village of Dauntsey and pupils in Years 3 to 6 are on the upper site in Brinkworth. Major refurbishment of the lower site was completed during this school year. Almost all pupils are White British, speak English as their first language and come from the surrounding rural area. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; the majority of these pupils' have behavioural and emotional needs. The school has an Activemark and National Healthy Schools status.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils perform well academically and their personal development is good and in some aspects outstanding. Particular elements that are outstanding include the degree to which pupils feel safe in school and their awareness of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. The care, guidance and support of all pupils are good and the school has exemplary systems to ensure its recruitment policy safeguards pupils.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and this is maintained by older pupils on both sites. Attainment is well above average, especially in speaking and listening, mathematics and science.

The quality of teaching and the range of planned experiences across the curriculum are good, and on occasions very good. Teachers usually ensure work is matched to pupils' different needs. However, in a few lessons, particularly on the upper site, information from assessments is not used sufficiently to match work closely to different needs and substantial parts of lessons are directed at the whole class. At these times the pace of learning slows. Within pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development their awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity of Great Britain, beyond rural Wiltshire, is limited. The school works effectively to promote local community cohesion but some recently planned initiatives to promote greater national and global links have been thwarted.

The school has been through a particularly turbulent time since the last inspection with massive turnover of staff, including all leaders, significant restructuring and reductions in staffing and long-term absences. The impact of leadership on the school's performance and on the school's capacity to improve have been adversely effected by these exceptional circumstances as the pace of school improvement, while satisfactory, has been slowed. The rate of school improvement is further hindered by the complications associated with the considerable distance between the two sites.

However, the headteacher provides resolute and effective leadership. She has a mainly accurate view of the school's performance and is supported well by effective governors, helping ensure the school's sound capacity to improve. The very new leadership team, while poised to take on a greater role, is yet to demonstrate its impact across the whole school, and strategies to enable subject leaders to gain a view of performance on both sites are not yet established. The findings from some checks on the school's performance, for example when observing lessons or examining pupils' work, are not systematically collated. This reduces their potential impact on improving provision and ensuring consistent practice across the two sites.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership by:
 - clarifying the roles of senior managers by April 2010, including their responsibilities across both sites
 - providing planned opportunities and training to enable subject leaders to monitor their subjects across the school by September 2010
 - ensuring information gained from checks on the school's performance is always systematically recorded, shared and followed up
 - developing innovative ways, including the use of technology, to enable staff and pupils to have frequent contacts with their peers across both sites.
- Ensure all teachers make good use of assessment information when planning learning in order to match activities to the full range of pupils' abilities, particularly in English and mathematics and on the upper site.
- Develop, and begin to implement by October 2010, a programme of regular planned opportunities for pupils to increase their understanding of the cultural diversity of Great Britain and the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Overall attainment is significantly above average. Attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the end of Year 2 is rising and is above average. Boys and girls of all abilities, including the few with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress, including in their writing. Attainment in national tests in Year 6 last year was above average. Evidence from pupils' work this year and from observed lessons shows that attainment is significantly above average with a high proportion of pupils on track to attain targets above expectations for their age.

Pupils' speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed, and these help them to clarify their thinking and explain what they are learning, for example when producing a piece of persuasive writing. Pupils are attentive, listen well and are keen to contribute their ideas in class discussions. They talk about most of their work enthusiastically, for example, 'I was excited to be able to write about the need for funding for underwater conservation.' Pupils clearly have a positive attitude to school and their achievement is good. In many respects they are very well prepared for the next stage of education and adult life, with well-developed computer and problem-solving skills. However, attendance is no more than average, as more pupils take time off for family holidays than is usual.

Almost all pupils behave very well in lessons and at times such as assembly and when having lunch. Pupils are keen to contribute to their community by helping out around school and participating in, for example, the Malmesbury and Wootton Bassett festivals. Almost all pupils believe that the school helps them to be healthy; they participate enthusiastically in 'wake and shake' and talk knowledgeably about the potential risks of

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sunbathing. School councillors help manage projects, such as by suggesting ideas for the contents of the home/school agreement. However, there are very few opportunities for older pupils on the upper site to act as role models for those on the lower site, and whole school assemblies are rare and require expensive coach hire. Pupils perceive themselves to be privileged and show limited appreciation or understanding of the cultural values and qualities of those from different walks of life.

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	2
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and most consistently so on the lower site. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons, for example when exploring differences between black and white in an arts afternoon on the lower site and learning new hockey skills on the Muga court on the upper site. Good use is made of teaching assistants, when available, in almost all lessons. In a few lessons, overlong teacher explanations to the whole class, activities for groups and review sessions at the end do not reflect the full range of pupils' abilities. At these times teaching does not respond to the range of previous learning and the normal good rate

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

of learning slows, especially for the most able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers plan a broad and stimulating range of experiences. They make good use of computer technology in their teaching and to support pupils' learning, for example when researching information about gas masks as part of a literacy lesson linked to a topic on the Second World War.

The good accommodation and extensive grounds on both sites are used well to enrich the curriculum. Joint staff planning for the theme weeks helps to promote continuity and progression throughout the school, but in other ways teachers find it difficult to share plans and ideas routinely between the two sites. Provision to support pupils' personal, social and emotional development is particularly effective and vibrant displays, most noticeably on the lower site, support pupils and celebrate their achievements. Special events, sporting programmes, festivals and competitions all enrich the curriculum, as do the residential trips in Years 4 and 6, but there are relatively few planned opportunities for establishing meaningful links with other communities.

There is good care, guidance and support for all pupils and additional help for those in need of it. A good example of this is the effective physical sessions to promote hand/eye coordination for a few boys in the upper-site hall at the start of the day. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support individual pupils who may be seen as vulnerable, and there are effective partnerships with parents and carers and outside agencies to share expertise and ensure coherent care. Parents and carers appreciate the way the school is vigilant in the handover arrangements at the beginning and end of the day which are carefully staggered to allow time for them to move from one site to the other. The school works effectively to promote attendance while responding sensitively to requests from some service families for annual leave during term-time.

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?

Many aspects of leadership are good and contribute positively to pupils' good progress and development and the good provision, thus maintaining the school's overall effectiveness. The governing body is well led. It has been very active in major staffing restructuring decisions and in the recruitment of a new senior management team. It has rigorous procedures to ensure legally required policies are in place and effective means for being informed about the school's work and overall performance. The Chair of the Governing Body has an exceptionally clear view of the school and has worked effectively

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to support the headteacher in helping to drive forward improvements at a difficult period in the school's history. Governors and staff work closely together, for example in the way priorities for development are identified. Good strategic planning enabled the school to respond effectively to falling rolls and continues to contribute to its sound capacity to move forward.

Although the new senior management team has yet to establish clear working practices across the school, organisational steps, such as the allocation of time to each site, are helping to ensure smooth running on a day-to-day basis. Leadership across the lower site is effective but the headteacher is the only leader to have a clear role across both sites. Comprehensive procedures designed to safeguard pupils are established and implemented robustly. The school works effectively to promote equal opportunities. Its inclusive philosophy is reflected in the additional resources and staffing used to meet the needs of specific potentially vulnerable pupils. Although the school has carefully reflected on the needs of its immediate community, for example in the provision of family learning sessions, it recognises its more limited success in promoting community cohesion more broadly. This is rightly a priority in its development plan.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in the Reception class they mostly have skills that are above those levels usually expected for their age. Good teaching and the opportunities provided for children to learn in a highly imaginative and motivating environment enable them to make good progress. Many attain beyond expectations. Activities are planned that

ensure children have a wide range of opportunities to work and play together, share equipment and learn how to cooperate in groups. Their early understanding of sounds and building words is enhanced well through regular, systematic teaching. There is a balance between tasks led by adults and opportunities for children to choose and develop their own activities, but the latter are often organised as distinct phases and not sufficiently integrated in children's whole experience of the day.

Links with parents and carers and pre-school groups are well established and children are introduced gradually to school so that they are familiar with routines and people before they start. Children's progress is monitored carefully and this helps staff to plan for each child's important next steps. The teacher and teaching assistant work together extremely well. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is evaluative and looks for additional ways to improve. Currently this involves planning to extend the limited outside play area.

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

At least 90% of parents and carers who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire indicated their support for each question and there was unanimous recognition that the school keeps children safe. Inspectors agree. A very small minority expressed concerns about not being informed about their children's progress, dealing with inappropriate behaviour and meeting their children's particular needs. While recognising individual parents' and carers' concerns, inspectors found that these aspects are well managed by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brinkworth Earl Danby's 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 99 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 159 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	60	35	35	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	69	70	30	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	34	55	56	9	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	41	50	51	4	4	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	44	53	54	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	43	53	54	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	55	43	43	1	1	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)	42	42	52	53	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	43	46	46	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	42	47	47	8	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	35	54	55	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	53	54	40	40	4	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	54	41	41	3	3	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

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.



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16 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Brinkworth Earl Danby's Church of England Primary School, Chippenham, SN15 5AX

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing some of your work. Yours is a good school with a few things that are excellent but also a few that need to improve. Many of you told us you feel safe in school and that adults take good care of you. We agree, and so do all your parents and carers. We are particularly impressed by the very mature way you recognise how important it is to stay healthy, for example by eating healthy food, doing lots of exercise, such as the 'wake and shake' sessions, and being careful when out in the sun.

You behave well, although there are times when one or two of you struggle with your behaviour. In lessons you listen carefully and get on with your work sensibly. Your teachers plan lots of interesting things in the classroom and special events such as the arts weeks. You are making good progress and we found that your attainment in English, mathematics and science is higher than for most children of your age. You are also skilled at using computers. We are sorry that there are not many chances to meet up as a whole school or for those of you from the upper site to help the younger ones on the lower site. The school governors work hard to make sure the school has what it needs, and have been very busy with all the recent staff changes.

The headteacher has lots of ideas for improving the school. We have asked her, along with the staff and governors, to work on three things to make it even better.

- Make sure that all the leaders are clear about their jobs around the school and how they can get to know what is happening on both sites.
- Make sure the work teachers set is not too hard or too easy for you.
- Provide more opportunities for you to get to know about life and different customs in other parts of Britain and around the world.

You can help by working hard, telling your teachers if work is too easy or too difficult and continuing to be helpful around the school.

Yours sincerely

Martin Kerly

Lead inspector

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