

Brockenhurst Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116276
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312242
Inspection dates	31 October - 1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Gehane Gordelier (HMI)

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 on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Park
Headteacher	Mrs Trudie Bateman
Date of previous school inspection	09 June 2003
School address	Sway Road Brockenhurst SO42 7RX
Telephone number	01590 623163
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Brockenhurst Church of England Primary is smaller than most other primary schools. Fewer pupils than the national average are known to be eligible for free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is well below the national average.

The headteacher has been in post for five years and the school now benefits from having a very limited turnover of staff. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were on a residential trip to Wales; they were accompanied by several key members of the school staff, including the assistant headteacher and a few parent helpers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The school prides itself on its Christian ethos and this is evident in all aspects of school life. Under the good leadership of the headteacher, the school is well led and managed. This ensures that pupils feel safe, happy and are well educated. When some young pupils were asked what they like best about their school one pupil replied 'everything is best'. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to provide pupils with a high level of care and pastoral guidance and support. Consequently, pupils' personal development and well-being are among the school's many strengths. The commitment and dedication of staff and governors as well as the pupils themselves, all contribute to the school's good reputation. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding; their mature and thoughtful conduct contributes to the calm and caring atmosphere in the school and is a factor of successful learning. Pupils also make a good contribution to their community and demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. One parent states that this is a 'very welcoming school, which is especially good at nurturing children and providing emotional support.'

Children get a good start to their education in the Reception year as the quality of teaching of teaching and learning for the youngest children is good with outstanding features. This lays down solid foundations for pupils of all abilities, most of whom continue to make good progress in the infant and junior classes. As a result, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in English, mathematics and science exceed national averages. The inspection also revealed a significant number of higher attaining pupils in Year 3.

Teaching throughout the school is good and most lessons are well planned and include well-established routines and opportunities for pupils to share and discuss their work and thinking. Common features of successful teaching include the use of good questioning skills, which help to extend pupils' learning and encourage them to be reflective learners. Teaching usually combines fun and exciting activities with purposeful learning. This contributes to pupil's good enjoyment and their development of secure basic literary and numeracy skills from an early age. This not only helps to prepare them well for the future, but also enables most of them to make good progress in a range of curriculum subjects. During the course of the inspection, this was particularly evident in art, science, personal social and health education and geography. Pupils demonstrate particularly good speaking and listening skills as well as a high level of skill in physical education; their singing is also of a high standard and a pleasure to listen to. All lessons include positive relationships between staff and pupils with additional adults being well deployed and contributing effectively to pupils learning, including pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, during the course of a lesson, teachers do not always assess sufficiently how well pupils are progressing and pupils are rarely invited to articulate what is expected of them or what they have learnt. Furthermore, the quality of marking is not consistently good throughout the school and pupils are not sufficiently aware of their targets. This is unhelpful to pupils and at times slows down their progress.

The school provides a curriculum, which is not only broad and balanced but actively promotes enjoyment. The school is beginning to make greater use of cross-curricular links, although there are often missed opportunities of tackling school priorities across the curriculum, for example opportunities for pupils to write. Whilst existing staff demonstrate good subject knowledge, not all curriculum leaders have formally recorded the progression of skills, knowledge and understanding across the school. This reduces the effectiveness of curriculum guidance and limits the ability of some subject leaders' to judge progress and standards. This is also contributing to targets, which although satisfactory are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils. The headteacher provides the main thrust in the drive for improvement through lesson observations and the performance management of teachers as well as good and accurate self-evaluation and subsequent planning. Middle leaders monitor the quality of pupils' work by undertaking work scrutinies and talking to pupils. However, not all of the middle leaders are sharply focussed on progress and standards and this is reducing the effectiveness of their leadership. Nevertheless, the school demonstrates that it has good capacity to improve. This is evident from the progress made since the time of the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the foundation stage

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the school is above national expectations for most pupils who join the school in the reception year. The foundation stage is well led and managed and children are well taught and supported by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. Well-structured teaching, which focuses sharply on the different areas for learning, enables children to make good progress. Children achieve particularly well in their reading and their personal development. The lead teacher, however, is aware of the value of increasing opportunities for children to choose their own activities, over the course of the year, so that they become more independent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Embed the use of assessment so that teachers as well as pupils can use this information to promote even greater levels of progress.
- Review programmes of work to ensure they include clear guidance about the new skills, knowledge and understanding pupils are expected to learn as they progress through the school.
- Ensure that middle leaders are sharply focused on progress and standards and that targets are sufficiently challenging for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and achievement is good in most subjects. In 2007, pupils in Year 6 exceeded targets for English and mathematics. Attainment at Key Stage 1 has remained above national averages for three consecutive years. Standards in reading are particularly good as are pupils speaking and listening skills. The most significant impact of a recently implemented phonics programme is the rise of standards in writing particularly for younger pupils. Standards of pupils who were in Year 2 last year are higher than the published data seem to indicate particularly for higher attaining pupils. Consequently, standards in the current Year 3 class are particularly good.

The school tracks the progress made by different groups of pupils well, although recent technical difficulties have compromised the efficiency with which this is currently being done. Nevertheless, the school identifies those at risk of underachieving and effective measures are then put in place, to enable targeted pupils to achieve as well as their peers. Consequently, although the school is predicting a dip in standards in 2008, most pupils in the school including those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. The school has correctly identified that there is room for improvement. There are already good plans in place to help increase the rigour with which data is analysed and used to inform teaching and to ensure that challenging targets are set for all pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The good personal development of pupils of all ages is a key factor in making the school such a happy place. In the words of a parent, 'the pastoral care of the school produces happy, helpful and polite children. Behaviour around the school is brilliant; wherever you look, children are acting thoughtfully and being kind and caring.' Spiritual, moral and social development is good; however, although pupils' knowledge of British culture is good their understanding and appreciation of other cultures is less well developed. Pupils say that bullying is rare in the school and that 'bubble and

circle time' systems help them to feel safe. Pupils show a good level of concern for the safety and well-being of others.

The good and improved levels of attendance as well as comments from parents demonstrate clearly that pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils take on increasing levels of responsibility around the school; the older pupils present at the time of the inspection, acted as excellent role models. Pupils display a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, making sensible choices at snack time and all pupils take part in a weekly 'run for fun' around the grounds. The school contributes well to the life of the local village. The progress and standards that pupils develop in literacy, numeracy as well as in ICT help to prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Teaching makes effective use of the good resources including interactive whiteboards. However, pupils would welcome more access to information and communication technology (ICT) to support and enhance their learning in different subjects. Teachers do their best to devise learning activities, which are enjoyable and purposeful. This contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. A good example was observed in a literacy lesson in Year 4, when a writing activity was introduced as a role play when pupils receiving a pretend letter. Pupils opened the letters with much excitement and read out the invitation for them to report on a royal wedding.

Older pupils receive helpful guidance about how to assess their work, for example by using affirming statements to identify what they have learnt following a unit of work in English or mathematics. However, pupils would welcome more written guidance from some teachers about how to improve their work. Furthermore, pupils in Key Stage 2 are not all sufficiently aware of their targets for improvement. Where there are weaknesses in teaching the use of assessment to enhance learning is underdeveloped and there are missed opportunities for pupils to articulate what they are learning or what they have understood. This is also leading to lower expectations of what some of the more able pupils are capable of doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum and other activities is good and the personal, social and health education is a strength of the school, and is evident in the outstanding behaviour and caring attitudes of all pupils. The curriculum provides suitable opportunities for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to make good progress. The school offers many opportunities for pupils to develop physical and sporting skills, and the wide range of after school activities are popular and well attended. The school is particularly proud of some of the work in art displayed around the school. There are some fabulous examples of Batik wall hangings, which represent the local environment. Residential trips as well as outings, including to places of historical and geographical interest enrich the curriculum and help to bring some aspects of learning to life.

However, the quality of curriculum guidance for staff is too variable and currently relies too heavily on teachers' own subject knowledge. Programmes of work across the curriculum do not all include sufficient detail about the progression of skills knowledge and understanding from one year to the next and this is compromising the school's ability to excel.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages are well supported emotionally by caring staff, who also ensure that children are safe and healthy. Risk assessments are completed and arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are in place. Staff help new pupils settle quickly and support them well when they move on to the next phase of their education.

There are good links with outside agencies to help meet the additional needs of pupils. There are also good supportive relationships with parents and carers, who in turn are happy to offer practical help. The academic guidance pupils receive is satisfactory. Where this is good, assessment helps to inform teaching and learning more thoroughly and the marking of pupils' work is linked to learning objectives, providing clear guidance to pupils about how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good overall and contributes effectively to the personal development and well-being of pupils. The focus on standards has led to improvements evident within the school's work. Although the school works well as a team the role of some middle leaders is underdeveloped.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although the school's self-evaluation is good, not all leaders and managers contribute as effectively as they could. Furthermore, when planning for subsequent improvement, they do not all clarify equally well how actions will lead to higher standards and they do not all include success criteria which are quantifiable.

The quality of governance is good and improving. This ensures that most resources are used well and that the school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness in the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

14 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brockenhurst Church of England Primary School, Brockenhurst, SO42 7RX

I am writing to thank you for your contribution to the inspection of your school and to share with you some of the things we found out. We enjoyed the time we spent talking to many of you and we listened carefully to what you had to say. We agree with you that yours is a good school and that your headteacher does a good job of leading and managing the school and keeping you safe and happy.

There are many good things about your school.

- You behave brilliantly and the older pupils, who at the time of the inspection were those pupils in year 5, were excellent role models for younger pupils.
- You have a good understanding of how to be safe and how to lead healthy lifestyles. You make a good contribution to Brockenhurst village and to making your school a wonderful and enjoyable place.
- You make good progress and last year the test results for pupils in Years 2 and 6 were better than for most other children in England. This as well as the particularly good personal and social skills you have learnt will serve you well for the future.
- Your school and parents work well together and they try hard to do their best for you.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun.
- We were very impressed with some of the work in art displayed around the school as well as the work you have been doing in geography, English, maths and science. We also think that you have good PE skills and that you sing beautifully!

These are the main things we have asked your school to do to help your school to become even better.

- Make sure you as well as your teachers, all know and understand the progress you are making so you can improve your work.
 - Make sure teachers can find out the new skills and knowledge they need to teach for all subjects.
 - Make sure those who help the headteacher to lead and manage the school look more carefully at the standard of your work and the progress you are making, and that you are all helped to do your best by having challenging targets.
- It was a real pleasure and privilege to inspect your school and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

G Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector