

Brambleside Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130963
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	381282
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Laurance
Headteacher	Danielle Warren
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons or part lessons taught by 11 different teachers. The inspection team examined the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. They held discussions with the headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and pupils. The inspectors analysed 181 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 98 from Key Stage 2 pupils, and 18 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What are the factors contributing to the consistently high attainment by the end of Year 2?
- What action is being taken, and how effective is it, to accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 and to raise attainment by the end of Year 6, particularly in English?
- To what extent are teachers in Key Stage 2 conveying high expectations and using assessment to match tasks to pupils' needs so that they are challenged and make good progress?
- To what extent are leaders and managers rigorously evaluating staff and pupil performance and taking effective action to raise pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has a number of awards including Eco Schools and Healthy Schools status. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010. The Chair of the Governing Body and leaders of English and mathematics took up their posts in September 2011. New teachers joined the school in September 2011, including some newly qualified teachers.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress and attainment in English in Key Stage 2.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate because of pupils' inadequate progress in English throughout Key Stage 2. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are broadly in line with the levels expected for their age and they make good progress in all areas of learning. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is, and has been for some time, consistently above average. This good start is not built upon throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is average in English and above average in mathematics, which reflects inadequate progress in English since then end of Key Stage 1. Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in writing. Inconsistencies in assessment, teaching and staff absence in the past have contributed to this underachievement. There have been recent improvements in assessment procedures and teaching but there is a legacy of underachievement for pupils, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. Initiatives to improve pupils' performance in Key Stage 2, particularly in writing, are being implemented. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunity to write extended pieces of work in English and to apply and develop their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching and learning are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. The teaching is improving in Key Stage 2 and an increasing number of pupils are making satisfactory progress in English. However, there is not enough good or outstanding practice in this phase to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment quickly enough. In the more successful lessons, teachers convey clear expectations and provide tasks which are carefully matched to pupils' needs. This ensures that they are challenged well, their interest is sustained and they make good progress. In less effective lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough, particularly for the more able. Learning does not always proceed at a quick enough pace. Opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice in other schools as part of their professional development has been limited so far but there are plans for this to happen in the future.

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Pupils' personal development is a strength and the school's good care, guidance and support make a valuable contribution to their skills. Pupils enjoy school and show positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe because of the good attention the school gives to safeguarding pupils and to their well-being. Pupils are courteous, polite and behave well in lessons and around the school. They adopt a healthy lifestyle by choosing healthy food and participating in frequent exercise. Their attendance rate is consistently above average.

The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body show a determination to improve the school and to ensure that pupils in all phases achieve well. The school knows what it does well and has correctly identified the most pressing areas for improvement. New leaders of English and mathematics are implementing plans to raise achievement in Key Stage 2 and are beginning to monitor the progress and success of these plans. With the recent improvements to assessment and teaching in Key Stage 2, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress throughout Key Stage 2 and raise attainment in English by the end of Year 6 to at least above average levels by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces of work
 - extending opportunities for pupils to apply and develop writing skills in subjects other than English
 - strengthening the quality of teaching in English throughout Key Stage 2.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning, especially in Key Stage 2, by providing opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice in other schools and ensuring that in all lessons:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently high
 - assessment is used to match tasks to pupils' abilities, particularly the more able
 - pupils' learning proceeds at a good pace.
- Senior leaders and managers should ensure that the priority areas for improvement are successfully implemented and that improvements are sustained.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Across the school, pupils show enthusiasm for learning and enjoy the wide range of activities provided. They told inspectors, 'Mathematics is great' and 'We love the clubs'.

Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 in the past has been inadequate in English and satisfactory in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

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make satisfactory progress. Pupils' development in writing has been the weakest area and the national test results in 2011 show that no pupils attained the higher Level 5 for writing in the Year 6 tests. Positive action is being taken to tackle underachievement but the changes are too recent to have had a full impact on pupils' performance. Although school assessments, pupils' work and the lessons seen indicate that pupils, including the more able are now making better progress in English in Key Stage 2, their achievement since joining Key Stage 2 has been inadequate. Pupils are currently making satisfactory rates of progress in lessons because of recent improvements to the teaching but this is not yet sufficient to enable them to catch up on previously lost ground.

Throughout the school, pupils are articulate and confident speakers. They respond well to the good opportunities they have to discuss their learning and express their ideas in pairs. Some pupils benefit from improved opportunities to write for different purposes. For example, in the Years 5 and 6 classes, pupils in the role of a World War II evacuee, wrote interesting letters home. They described their experiences and expressed how they felt in new surroundings. This was a good link between literacy and history but in the main pupils are not consistently acquiring and developing writing skills sufficiently through other subjects.

Pupils' progress in mathematics lessons is mostly good. There are some strong examples of investigative work where pupils apply their numeracy skills to solve problems. For example, pupils in a mixed-age Year 3 and 4 class, made good progress in investigating the length and area of their hand and foot. They used instruments to measure length accurately and squared paper to solve the problem of area.

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They demonstrate positive personal qualities such as cooperation, kindness, respect and responsibility. In assemblies, they celebrate fellow pupils' achievements and birthdays. They reflect on the beauty of autumn and the importance of caring for the environment. Pupils say they feel well cared for at school and know that there are always adults they can turn to for help if needed. They make good contributions to the school and to the wider community. Those on the school council organise fund raising events and have made useful contributions to improving the playground facilities. Members of the eco club promote the importance of recycling materials and saving energy. Pupils raise funds for a range of appeals and charities to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	3

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

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

Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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:	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and this leads to good progress and high attainment by the end of Year 2. In these lessons, pupils know what they are expected to learn because teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the class. Clear instructions and explanations by teachers promote learning well. Questioning is used effectively to check pupils' understanding. In some lessons, teachers model good writing and demonstrate how to create accurate and interesting sentences but overall this strategy is underused. With stronger assessment systems, teachers have a clearer overview of pupils' attainment. However, in a few lessons, tasks are not sufficiently challenging for all pupils because teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan tasks that meet the differing abilities of the pupils. In history and science lessons, there is an overuse of worksheets which require a limited written response from pupils. These impede opportunities for pupils to plan and organise their own work and do not promote extended writing, particularly in Key Stage 2. Some classrooms are attractive and stimulating while a few are dull and cluttered. Teachers provide praise when marking pupils' good work but constructive comments to guide improvement are less evident.

The curriculum promotes good personal development for pupils and good academic progress in Key Stage 1. A range of initiatives have been implemented to raise pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. These are having a positive effect but have not been in place long enough to raise attainment in English to where it should be by the end of Year 6. There is a wide range of additional activities to promote learning and enjoyment. Clubs are well attended and include football, athletics, cooking, country dancing, gardening, Spanish and sewing.

The school's efforts to provide pupils with care, guidance and support underpin the

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

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school's positive ethos. Pupils, parents and carers appreciate the well organised, safe and secure environment provided. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with appropriate support. In partnership with other agencies, the school is effective in supporting pupils and their families who require additional help. There are very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and staff have created a positive and welcoming school ethos. Leaders and staff successfully promote good personal outcomes for pupils across the school and promote good academic progress in Reception and in Key Stage 1. The headteacher and senior leaders are firmly focused on improving provision and raising pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2. Senior leaders have rightly identified the most pressing priorities for improvement, including raising achievement in writing, and improving assessment and teaching. There are signs of improvement. However, indicators to measure the success of improvement planning are not always sufficiently focused on outcomes for pupils. The headteacher is effectively monitoring and developing teaching, and new teachers have settled in well.

A new and enthusiastic Chair of the Governing Body brings good experience. Members of the governing body show a clear understanding of the school's performance and are playing an active part in bringing about improvement. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are given good attention and policies and procedures are clear and easy to follow. The monitoring and evaluation of these are thorough. All staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. Safe practices for pupils are promoted effectively through teaching and the curriculum.

Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily. Discrimination is tackled well but improvements for pupils in Key Stage 2 are recent and not all pupils have access to consistently good provision. The school has a clear understanding of the community it serves and promotes community cohesion well. Different cultures and faiths are promoted thoroughly through the curriculum. Positive partnerships with other schools and different countries are developing well.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Through effective leadership, the school has maintained the good provision identified in the previous inspection report. Children settle quickly because of good induction arrangements, including home visits, and strong relationships between adults and children. Strong care, guidance and welfare help to ensure that children feel safe and secure. Children are very well behaved and relate positively to adults and to their peers.

Children enjoy the indoor and outdoor activities provided. They are well taught and make good gains in their learning. Assessment information is used thoughtfully to plan teaching and learning. There is a good blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Children have good opportunities to explore, be creative and work independently. For example, they enjoyed exploring with colour as they created striking print patterns using sections of fruit and vegetable. Role-play areas are imaginative and promote the children's language and creative development well.

Children enjoy the range of books available and thoroughly enjoy the stories read to them such as 'The Little Red Hen' and 'Rama and Sita'. Adults teach letter sounds well and children make good progress improving their reading skills. Children also make rapid progress in acquiring and practising early writing skills because of the interesting opportunities provided. The school is taking positive steps to further improve children's transition from Reception to Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2

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

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The inspection team received a higher than usual response to the parent and carers questionnaire. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are happy with their children's experience at the school. They are particularly pleased with the safety in the school and the sense of enjoyment. The inspection findings support these positive views. A very small minority do not feel that their child is making enough progress, that the school does not help them to support their children's learning and that unacceptable behaviour is not appropriately dealt with. Inspectors found uneven rates of progress, particularly as pupils move through the school, as highlighted in this report. The headteacher and staff are keen to extend the good partnership with parents and carers and provide further help for them to support their children's learning. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour was consistently good and there are effective procedures to deal with any inappropriate behaviour that might occur.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brambleside Community 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 181 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 313 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	52	80	44	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	100	55	77	43	4	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	67	37	99	55	11	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	33	93	51	19	10	5	3
The teaching is good at this school	60	33	101	56	7	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	35	87	48	21	12	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	44	93	51	3	2	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)	40	22	106	59	11	6	5	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	66	36	91	50	12	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	33	94	52	15	8	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	29	97	54	14	8	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	66	36	93	51	6	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	82	45	86	48	8	4	2	1

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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. ■ 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 pupils' 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.

7 November 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Brambleside Community Primary School, Kettering, NN16 9JG

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school, giving us your views and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Your school is not performing as well as it should and has been given a notice to improve. This is because pupils in Key Stage 2 have not made enough progress in English and their attainment by the end of Year 6 is not as high as it should be.

These are the school's main strengths.

- You enjoy school and attendance levels are above average.
- Children in Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and make good progress.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because of good teaching.
- You say you feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take good care of you and provide clear guidance and support.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- Behaviour in school is good and you get on well with others.
- You make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.
- There is a good range of additional activities provided such as clubs.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do the following things to improve the school's work.

- Improve your progress in Key Stage 2 so that you reach higher standards of work by the end of Year 6, particularly in English.
- We have asked teachers, especially in Key Stage 2, to expect more from you, to match tasks carefully to your abilities and to ensure that your learning moves along at a quicker pace.
- Senior leaders should ensure that improvements happen and that they are long lasting.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, particularly in English. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely
Derek Watts
Lead inspector

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