

Brundall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120909
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339810
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

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	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linnet Smith
Headteacher	Rick Stuart-Sheppard
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2006
School address	Braydeston Avenue Brundall Norwich NR13 5JX
Telephone number	01603 712597
Fax number	01603 712597
Email address	office@brundall.norfolk.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 24 lessons, and 16 teachers were seen including full-time staff, higher-level teaching assistants and supply teachers. Inspectors held meetings with the governors, staff and the school council, and looked at pupils' work. They talked informally with other pupils, and met with their parents and carers at the start of the school day. School documents were scrutinised including policies, development planning and self-evaluation, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. Minutes of governing body meetings were examined as well as the headteacher's reports to the governing body, local authority reports on the school and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 109 parents and carers, 15 members of staff and 99 Key Stage 2 pupils.

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

- The work the school is doing to improve further the pupils' attainment in mathematics by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.
- The school's focus on ensuring its different groups of pupils make equally good progress as they move through school from year-to-year.
- The progress the school has made in developing its methods for assessing pupils' work.
- The ways through which the school is developing its curriculum in order to promote the pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized school; however, the number on roll has decreased in recent years. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, and there are currently none who speaks English as an additional language. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. The percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. There are four mixed age-group classes; two for Reception and Year 1, one covering Year 1 and 2 pupils, and one for some Year 2 and 3 pupils. There are additional single year group classes for other pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school holds a Physical Education Chartermark; it has gained an Artsmark and the bronze Eco-Schools award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils make satisfactory progress. They enter the Reception Year with attainment meeting national expectations and leave at the end of Year 6 with overall average standards. In the 2009 Year 6 national tests, attainment in English was above average and science was average. Attainment in mathematics has gradually declined over the last three years from above to broadly average. The latest school data shows standards in mathematics for the current Year 6 are below expectations. In contrast, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has increased significantly since the last inspection, and is now outstanding. School data for the past two years, and inspection observations, confirm that children make significant progress in Reception to gain above expected standards. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents and carers recognise the excellent quality of work being undertaken in the combined Reception/Year 1 classes. These improvements in outcomes are gradually feeding through into the main school with pupils are now moving into Year 1 with above expected standards. However, attainment currently remains average overall by Year 2, including for mathematics. The school has undertaken some re-evaluation of its provision for mathematics, but this has yet to be completed. The use of assessment information to help improve pupils' learning and the monitoring of the subject to identify how provision can be further developed, including the reporting of this monitoring to the governing body, are not yet sharp enough.

The school currently shows satisfactory capacity for further improvement. It has experienced an uneven track record of success since its last inspection. Improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage has not yet been matched in Key Stage 2. Satisfactory monitoring and broadly accurate self-evaluation have identified further areas for development to secure consistently good teaching. However, the school is not using assessment information consistently in lessons to support and develop pupils' learning. The school has started to pilot, with selected pupils from each class, a new structured approach, developed nationally, against which to assess pupils' progress. The school has only partly completed its development of a new, more creative curriculum aimed at enabling pupils to make relevant links between different subjects. Some of the best learning was seen in lessons where the teaching promoted pupils' awareness of such links. The school is successful in promoting the personal development of its pupils. This is being underpinned well by good pastoral care and guidance. Pupils show an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles, and take part enthusiastically in sport and related extra-curricular activities. Overall, pupils are being prepared satisfactorily for their next stage of education.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils standards in mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - completing, by the end of the Summer Term 2010, the analysis and re-evaluation of the subject, and develop an action plan for improvement
 - developing the use of assessment information to help improve planning for the subject and pupils' learning
 - ensuring senior and middle leaders monitor pupils' progress closely and report regularly to the governing body on the impact of their strategies.

- Increase the proportion of good teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring a more consistent approach to the use of assessment and the planning of work that matches pupils' abilities and learning needs
 - using questioning to check on pupils' understanding throughout each lesson so as to identify, and resolve, any gaps or misconceptions
 - using questioning to challenge all pupils' to think more deeply about their learning and ensure they understand what to improve
 - ensuring a more consistent approach to marking so that written comments enable pupils to understand their next steps in learning
 - establishing fully, by the end of the next academic year, the use of new criteria for assessing pupils' progress.

- Complete, during the next academic year, the school's programme to remodel its curriculum in order to challenge and inspire pupils further, and make their learning more relevant.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Achievement is satisfactory because pupils attain overall average standards across the expected range of key skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to prepare them for their future lives and well-being. Pupils apply themselves steadily to their studies, but work is often aimed more generally at the middle ground. Consequently, opportunities for extension work for the more able pupils are sometimes missed, and levels of challenge are inconsistent between classes and subjects. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well because they benefit from the positive learning environment in the Reception/Year 1 areas and the wide ranging support available in these classes. There is sound support elsewhere from teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to make satisfactory progress given their starting points. Working relationships between pupils and adults are usually good. However, some teaching does tend to dominate lessons and this limits learning. Where collaborative work is encouraged, pupils make better progress. In a

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Year 6 English lesson pupils made good progress in imaginative letter writing. Their active involvement in both independent tasks and group discussions showed thoughtful consideration of the heroine in their reading book. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities also showed a strong feeling of empathy for her plight.

Most pupils do show good attitudes to school and learning, and attendance is above average. Behaviour is good; discussion with pupils shows they have a good understanding and tolerance of the few who do find difficulty in managing their own behaviour. Pupils appreciate the school’s rules, but sometimes find it confusing when a few staff do not apply these consistently across all aspects of the school’s life. Strong links with a local business are supporting very well pupils’ enterprise skills. They understand the importance of the environment, and ecological awareness is high. There is a secure awareness of cultural diversity and appreciation of peoples’ individuality. Pupils know how to keep safe, whether dealing with everyday hygiene, using tools and equipment in lessons, or looking out for each other at playtime.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons the quality of activities is satisfactory, but there are some inconsistencies in approach when planning for the needs of individuals and groups of different abilities. Simply planning work that is a little harder for some or a little easier for others is insufficiently challenging for the full range of pupils in a class. The good teaching asks pertinent questions of the pupils, enabling them to explain their ideas and develop their key skills. The satisfactory teaching does not check regularly

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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enough on pupils’ level of learning and the depth of their understanding. The quality of teachers’ written comments when marking is similarly inconsistent between classes and year groups; consequently not all pupils are entirely sure how to improve. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently satisfactory, but is being reviewed effectively by the new coordinator who has been in post since Easter.

Until recently, the school’s curriculum has been organised and taught as separate subjects, but not always tailored sufficiently to meet the pupils’ individual needs. Good work has been started, in line with national initiatives, on a curriculum designed to promote links between subjects and make learning more relevant for the pupils. Consequently, in a Year 3 history lesson, learning was good where a recent trip to Norwich inspired pupils’ study of the Anglo-Saxons. Literacy and design and technology were supported well through the writing and engraving of runes. Year 4 pupils were inspired by the prospect of applying their information and communication technology skills when preparing newspaper reports about VE Day celebrations. Pupils are served well by the school’s provision for the arts and music, and outdoor activities promoting healthy lifestyles. However, curriculum planning to raise standards in mathematics is weaker. The positive impact of the school’s personal, social and health education programme was seen in Year 5 lessons where groups of pupils discussed thoughtfully the concept of drugs which may be good or bad for us. This exemplifies the way the school’s good care and support of its pupils underpins well their social and moral development. Pastoral care and working relationships between adults and pupils are good. Potentially vulnerable pupils are supported well.

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 school’s senior leaders collect a fair amount of data on the school’s performance from regular tracking and assessments. However, they have not always known the best ways of analysing and evaluating this information to identify and resolve potential weaknesses, such as those in mathematics. This has, on occasions, led to an over-optimistic self-evaluation, and the school falling short of some of its targets though most are met. The school does have its strengths, such as pupils’ attainment in English by Year 6. Monitoring by the headteacher is satisfactory overall. As a result, the school has a sound understanding of where it needs to improve, but is not always clear as to exactly how to achieve this. It is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for its pupils, and succeeds well in this in the younger year groups.

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Nevertheless, the needs of individuals are not always met entirely when the school takes too broad a brush approach to improvement planning.

A number of governors have joined the governing body over the past two years. There is a strong sense of commitment to the school, and governors use their individual and collective skills very well both to support and question the school. Governors involve themselves actively in training to develop their roles. They know the use of data needs to be more cohesive, and are monitoring closely intervention strategies to improve standards. Their visits to the school focus well on the pupils and their learning. The governing body understands its responsibility to its community; consequently, the school’s approach to enabling and extending community cohesion within the school, local community and beyond is good. Partnerships with other local education providers and support agencies are well-established. Systems and procedures for safeguarding children are effective; there is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding and child protection matters amongst governors and staff.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent leadership and the very effective day-to-day management of the combined Reception/Year 1 classes over the last two years have resulted in high quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff all know and understand the individual needs of the children very well. This results from an excellent assessment system through which children’s progress is monitored meticulously. Observations by teachers and teaching assistants are very regular, thorough, and cross-checked. Children’s learning journals record their progress in detail. Parents and carers contribute to the records of their children’s learning at home, and these supplement

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the school’s own records very well. Parents have confidence in the staff, and there are particularly good opportunities for home-school contact. Good links with local Nursery providers, and parents, ensure staff have a clear picture of children’s strengths and any specific learning needs on joining Reception. Such careful attention to detail supports children exceptionally well and enables them to make increasingly good and often excellent progress in their learning during lessons. Children develop excellent social skills and significant confidence as a result of this practical and interactive teaching.

The children are welcomed each day into a rich and varied environment where excellent indoor and outdoor resources are used to provide an exceptionally stimulating learning area. Reception children also benefit well from mixing with their Year 1 classmates. This leads to excellent challenge across a range of their daily experiences. Adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly good at maintaining dialogue with children and questioning them gently to enable them to explain their ideas and thinking. Inspirational teaching methods promote both independent and cooperative ways of working very well. Teachers and assistants alike motivate children by joining in role play and promote fun and enjoyment in learning, for example with the theme of Jack and the Beanstalk. ‘Jack’s mother’ included healthy lifestyles as well as number work when children were adding and subtracting quantities of real fruit and vegetables. This resulted in children developing a strong understanding of healthy lifestyles.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are supportive of the school. A small minority expressed some concerns about the school’s leadership, levels of communication, and the ways the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors agree that some elements of the school’s monitoring systems require improvement. The governing body has recognised systems for communication with parents have not always proved sufficiently effective. It is, therefore, in the process of setting up a parents’ forum. This is to help resolve any concerns and promote ways through which families and the school can work together more closely to support pupils’ learning. Behaviour at the school is good, but inspectors agree that the school’s new behaviour management policy is not yet applied consistently.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brundall 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 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 280 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	55	45	41	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	56	46	42	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	28	57	52	16	15	5	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	28	64	59	14	13	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	38	61	56	4	4	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	33	47	43	21	19	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	47	52	48	2	2	2	2
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)	45	41	43	39	10	9	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	31	58	53	9	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	31	39	36	26	24	9	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	30	48	44	21	19	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	30	28	54	50	10	9	10	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	36	60	55	7	6	1	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	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). 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.

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 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.



28 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brundall Primary School, Norwich, NR13 5JX

We would like to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave to us when we visited you recently. We enjoyed talking with you and appreciated the way you shared your thoughts and opinions about school life. Yours is a satisfactory school.

These are the things we found are best about your school.

- You receive an excellent start to your school life in the Reception classes.
- You behave well and ensure you keep each other safe at school.
- You make a good contribution to the school and wider community.
- Your understanding of the importance of living healthily is excellent.
- Adults take good care of you, and you take good care of each other.
- The school governors play an important role in the life of your school.

We have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to do three main things to help you make better progress. First, by helping you attain higher standards in mathematics. Over the rest of this term, they will be working on a plan to achieve this. Secondly, your teachers will be developing the ways they mark and assess your work, and use questions in class. This is to help you understand more clearly how to improve in all subjects. Thirdly, we have asked them to complete the work they have started to help you make links between subjects, and your learning more interesting.

Finally, please continue to follow the main aims of your school, as displayed on the banners outside the buildings, 'To Learn; To Grow; To Create; To Achieve'.

With all best wishes for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller
Lead inspector

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