

Brize Norton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123013
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292557
Inspection dates	18 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mr John Earish

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 on roll	
School	107
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mr Mark Smith
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001
School address	Station Road Brize Norton Carterton OX18 3PL
Telephone number	01993 842488
Fax number	01993 842488

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues; achievement and standards, teaching and learning, leadership and management, personal development and well-being, and care, guidance and support, gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small primary school admits pupils from a variety of social backgrounds. It is very popular and oversubscribed. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from different minority ethnic groups. When children start school, their skills and abilities are similar to those expected of four year olds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below that found nationally. A new headteacher is leading the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Brize Norton is a good school with some outstanding features. Pupils' standards are above average by the age of 7 years and well above average by the age of 11 years. Careful monitoring, detailed self-evaluation and actions to improve and develop the curriculum are enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well. Pupils' progress improves year by year, with the best progress being achieved in science and mathematics. The most recent results shows it to be amongst the top fifteen per cent of all schools nationally. The pupils really like coming to school because '...everyone is so friendly' and the '...teachers are always there to give you help when you need it'. Parents agree and are overwhelmingly positive about their children's education.

Pupils' personal development and provision for their care, support and guidance are outstanding. This is because the teachers are highly effective at tracking and supporting the pupils' personal and academic progress so they can achieve well. This underpins much of the school's continued success. Pupils are lively, enthusiastic and concentrate very well on their tasks. They take great pride in all that they do and find their personal targets challenging. Pupils explained how teachers have trained them to assess for themselves how well they were progressing and to identify what they need to do to improve their work. Indeed, some of the older pupils were able to explain clearly and accurately how to improve the standard of their writing from a level 4 into the higher level 5. They said this process helps them focus on their work and spurs them onto even greater achievements. The school council plays a very important role in the running of the school. The councillors have devised their own children's improvement plan and record the progress they have made on the school website at http://www.brizenorton.org.uk/bn_school/childrens_school_plan.htm.

The curriculum is of good quality with some outstanding features. It meets the basic academic needs of pupils well, as well as supporting their social and personal development through initiatives to encourage healthy living and staying safe. Teachers are fully committed to improving the school's provision. They are working successfully to increase the opportunities for creativity and enjoyment by making links between subjects in order to raise standards further. Outstanding enhancements to the curriculum motivate pupils, including the focus weeks, residential trips and numerous clubs and activities. For example, pupils grow their own vegetables and flowers in the school 'poly' tunnel and recycle the organic waste to make compost for the gardens. Some of the green waste supplements the diet of the school's chickens, housed in a coop in the corner of the wild garden.

All groups of pupils achieve well because the teaching is consistently good. Relationships are exemplary and, as a result, most pupils work hard and learn at a good rate. Teaching assistants provide good quality, targeted support. This means that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with additional needs are able to play a full part in lessons and achieve well. However, on some occasions, teachers miss opportunities for higher attaining pupils to explore their own ideas.

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has very high expectations of what is achievable, and shows a strong determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. His very good leadership over a short time has inspired the teachers to strive to make the school outstanding in every way. They share his clear vision for improvement based upon extremely detailed and accurate self-evaluation. This has resulted in a comprehensive improvement plan of good quality. Less experienced teachers are receiving good quality support to increase their confidence at monitoring new initiatives in order to sustain the rapid progress. The governing body is able to participate in strategic planning and give effective support because governors know the school well. There is a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the foundation stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum provides a good balance between those activities led by an adult and those initiated by children. Consequently, children make a confident and positive start to school life. Most children join the school with standards that are similar to that expected for their age. They achieve well and most reach levels expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1 and a few exceed them. The quality of teaching is good. The good start children make in the Foundation Stage prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to explore their own ideas in order to sustain their rapid progress.

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

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?	1

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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.

1 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brize Norton Primary School, Carterton, OX18 3PL

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I came to inspect your school. I was very impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other.

Here are some of the other things I liked best about your school.

- You behave extremely well, and you told me that you really enjoy school and have many interesting and challenging things to do.
- You are very knowledgeable how to live healthily and stay safe.
- You are all rightly proud of your school and you look after the buildings and grounds very well.
- Those parents and carers who wrote to me are very positive about your school and say they are very pleased with the care and education you receive.
- I especially liked to see that you are growing your own vegetables and flowers and was very surprised to find that you also keep chickens. I have been wondering how many eggs you collect each week. Perhaps you could put some information on your very informative school website.

I think that you are given a good education, which prepares you very well for the next stage of your learning. To make it even better, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities during lessons to learn independently and explore your own ideas.

You can all help by continuing to work hard to meet the targets set for you.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector

