

Broomhaugh Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122285
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	327685
Inspection dates	31 March –1 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	64
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Waters
Headteacher	Ms Jen Stephenson
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Lane Riding Mill Northumberland NE44 6DR
Telephone number	01434 682374

Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This small rural school serves not only the village but also outlying areas. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meal is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average while the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and are taught in mixed-age classes. An independent provider runs before and after-school care on the premises

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Broomhaugh Church of England First School is an outstanding school where pupils blossom both academically and personally. The school is at the heart of the community where it has a deservedly good reputation. Parents think highly of it and are full of praise for the quality of leadership and the excellent staff. Most parents returned the questionnaire, a typical comment being 'The school has a fantastic atmosphere, it is a happy place where our children are developed as individuals.' The school is an energetic community providing a purposeful environment where children love to learn because they say its fun. This contributes to their outstanding personal development.

Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is excellent. They have a very good understanding of how to keep healthy through regular exercise and good diet. Pupils take on responsibilities readily and play an active part in community activities. They say they enjoy school and talk confidently and with great enthusiasm about the many opportunities the outstanding curriculum offers them. Pupils are happy to share information about the schools they link with in Ethiopia and Sierra Leone. They are proud to say that they raise funds to help the children in Ethiopia to access cleaner water.

Pupils make outstanding progress in their work and achieve extremely well. They make a very good start in the Reception class and usually enter Year 1 with standards that are above average. Pupils continue making very good progress through Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 so that when they leave pupils' standards are high and considerably higher than the expectations for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and achieve extremely well.

Good teaching, underpinned by pupils' extremely positive attitudes to learning, result in high standards and outstanding achievement. Teachers' good subject knowledge and effective questioning keeps pupils thinking, however, not all pupils are consistently challenged enough during lessons. Marking, while up to date, is inconsistent in mathematics and does not always help pupils to know how to improve. Teachers' natural enthusiasm engages pupils in learning and contributes to the wealth of new experiences for pupils through excellent use of the school's grounds, the local environment and visits further afield.

A strength of the curriculum is the way in which different subjects are linked together to motivate and engage pupils. The curriculum is planned well with excellent opportunities for enrichment and enjoyment. During the inspection pupils were enjoying a wide range of mathematical activities in the school grounds, from measuring the distance Sid snail had walked around the raised beds in the garden to finding the circumference of trees.

The headteacher is passionate about maximising the potential of every child in a caring and structured environment where all pupils are encouraged to grow in confidence and self-esteem. She is supported well by the drive and commitment of staff and governors who share her vision and sense of direction. Very good systems have been developed to track the academic achievement and progress of pupils. As a result mechanisms have been established to identify all pupils needing support. Governors have a clear understanding of the school, both supporting and challenging the headteacher, and are a significant factor in the school's outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The effectiveness in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Parents comment on how quickly their children settle due to the excellent induction programme. Children are excited to come to school and love to learn new things. This is because relationships between the staff and children are so good and because a well-planned curriculum provides a lively and stimulating range of activities to support their learning. Children are nurtured well and cared for in a safe and stimulating environment. They enter the Reception class with a range of basic skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age, but often below in reading and writing as well as calculating. They flourish in their Reception years, sharing space and resources, and make good and often excellent progress. By the time they enter Year 1 they have exceeded the expected levels of knowledge, skills and understanding for their age. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress because early assessment and close links with parents highlights their needs. Teaching is highly engaging and provides children with exciting opportunities to acquire essential skills and knowledge. Children are very able to run a shoe shop, design the boxes, serve customers and advise on the most appropriate style of footwear. At the same time they can count customers in and out, individually or in pairs. There is an excellent balance between activities led by teachers and those developed by children themselves. Excellent use of both inside and outside areas means that children widen their learning experience and they grow in their desire to explore and be independent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking in mathematics consistently tells pupils how to improve and that teachers provide a high level of challenge to always meet the needs of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school is accurate in its judgement that pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards are exceptionally high. By the time children leave Reception and enter Year 1 standards are above average for their age. Very good progress in Key Stage 1 results in standards rising to significantly above average levels by the end of Year 2 because teachers identify what the pupils need to learn and provide the right activities to help them succeed. This very good progress continues through Years 3 and 4 so that standards reached by the time pupils leave the school are high. Overall, pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make very good progress towards their targets set in learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being including spiritual, moral and social and cultural development are outstanding. This is a very happy school where pupils genuinely care for each other. Pupils are extremely kind and polite; they behave well and have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils of different ages work and play together well. They enjoy school very much and this is reflected in their good attendance. Their understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles as well as the importance of plenty of fresh air and exercise is excellent. This is supported well by pupils being able to use part of the school grounds to grow herbs and

vegetables, which they enjoy. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to express their views, for example as members of the school and Eco councils, where supportive staff willingly adopt their perceptive ideas. They have a clear understanding of how to keep safe. Pupils talk confidently about organising fundraising activities and how they use this money to improve areas of the outdoors. Older pupils demonstrate maturity, very good self-discipline and a strong work ethic. The skills and confidence these pupils develop ensure that they are extremely well-prepared for the next stage in their education and the future. Excellent links with other schools and agencies as well as the local community bring substantial benefits to pupils' learning and personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is occasionally outstanding. Lessons are planned creatively with due consideration to the needs of learners. Teaching is enhanced by the welcoming, well-resourced classrooms, which are supportive of learning. Strong features of lessons include exciting planning, excellent relationships and good questioning by teachers and teaching assistants to extend pupils' language and learning. Good use is made of both group and paired work, so that pupils can learn together and develop their speaking and listening skills, which they use with confidence. However, work is not consistently challenging enough always to meet the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, supporting individuals and small groups. Marking is regular and in English clearly shows what pupils need to do to improve. This is not yet the case in mathematics. Homework is used effectively to encourage learning beyond school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The first class curriculum excites and inspires pupils helping them to achieve well in both their academic and personal development. It responds successfully to the challenge of mixed-age classes. One of the many strengths of the curriculum is the priority the school places on using both the rich environment of the school grounds and those of the local community. Pupils are enthused by practical activities and opportunities to work outdoors. The needs of all pupils are met well and pupils benefit from the way teachers plan effectively, ensuring that the skills learnt in English, mathematics and science are used successfully in other subjects. For example, pupils use their skills to design and make a box that is ideally suited for the healthy sandwich they have created. The wording and design on the box has then to meet marketing requirements. Pupils throughout the school have the opportunity to enjoy an extensive, stimulating range of extra-curricular activities. The wealth of visitors and extended opportunities available to pupils significantly enhances their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents rightly feel that this is an extremely caring school where pupils' personal development is given a high priority. It is clear that staff and pupils value and respect each other. The school takes very good care of its pupils and all the required procedures for safeguarding, including child protection, are in place. Adults give attention to and the welfare of pupils the highest

priority and this is evident throughout the school. Academic guidance is very good. Pupils' progress is tracked closely and pupils are very clear about how to achieve the targets set for them and those they set for themselves. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of quality learning support and close links with outside agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the way in which staff work extremely well as a team helps to promote a caring ethos in which pupils thrive and learn successfully. The accuracy of the school's self-evaluation indicates that the headteacher knows exactly how the school is performing at this moment while continually seeking ways to make further improvements. Subject leaders carry out their monitoring role very well, tracking pupils' progress and planning for school improvement. The governors play a highly effective role in shaping the school's direction. They are extremely committed and offer high levels of support and challenge. The school shows a good commitment to promoting community cohesion, but as yet pupils do not get enough opportunities to meet representatives of other communities. Parents value the strong links that the school encourages and believe the school to be outstanding and, along with their children, they are proud to be part of a very happy family. The school has an excellent capacity to improve.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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 interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Broomhaugh Church of England First School, Northumberland, NE44 6DR

Thank you so much for making me feel welcome when I inspected your school. It was really good to talk to you and I have good memories of how friendly and caring you are, not just towards me but also towards each other and all the adults in school. I was impressed with how keen you were to talk, telling me about your many activities. I would have loved to join you in your many eco-activities or travel on the double-decker bus with Reception class children. You also told me how much you enjoyed school and this is partly because of the way all the adults care for you. I agree with you and feel that all the adults in school look after you, in many different ways, extremely well.

I looked at other parts of school life, including how you all help in your community as well as raise funds to support the school in Ethiopia. I think it's excellent that you are able to spend so much time outside, getting plenty of exercise as well as eating healthy food. All these help you to develop well, supporting the area you live in as well as other children in countries far away. You do this outstandingly well.

I enjoyed spending time in each of your classrooms, not just watching you learning inside, although that was very good, but outside as well. All your staff work very hard to make your work interesting. When teachers plan your lessons I thought that the way they link all the different subjects together is very clever. In fact I thought that the curriculum they use to help you learn and the way they use both the classroom and your school grounds is excellent. I was delighted to see how well all the adults in your school, including the governors, work together. In fact, I thought they did this outstandingly well!

Even though your school is outstanding, it can always do better. I have asked the school to do two more things. One is to challenge you even more during lessons to help you improve your learning and the other is to mark your maths work more often with comments that will help you to know how to improve your work.

Thank you for all your help and for telling me so many things about your school life. I know how proud the school is of all you do. Well done and I hope you all continue to work hard and enjoy being part of an outstanding school.

Yours sincerely

Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector