

Bilingual Primary School - Brighton and Hove

Brighton Alridge Community Academy, Lewes Road, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9PW

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should given their starting points. More-able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure pupils make good progress over time.
- Teachers are not always clear enough about what they want pupils to learn in lessons. Work is not always pitched at the right level, particularly for the most able.
- Pupils' skills in Spanish are not well developed.
- Attendance is not good enough and too many pupils do not arrive promptly at the start of the school day.
- Pupils do not always listen carefully enough to the teachers or each other.
- Systems for ensuring that the school provides a high-quality education, and that governors hold senior leaders to account, are not strong enough.
- There are not enough middle leaders to help improve teaching and learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Standards are above those typical for pupils' ages. Pupils achieve well in reading.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Older pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents and carers are confident that their children are happy and safe at school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Leaders have made recent improvements in teaching and pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' progress and the use of pupil premium funding, records of the monitoring of teaching, improvement plans, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited 20 lessons, including 16 that were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed break, lunchtime and the start of the school day, and attended two assemblies.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils, and talked with them about their work and the school. They also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met senior leaders, members of the governing body and an external consultant working with the school.
- The team took account of 73 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke briefly with a small number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Alison Bradley, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Una Stevens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school opened in its current, temporary accommodation in Brighton in September 2012. Planning permission has been granted for a permanent site in Hove, which the school intends to move to in September 2015.
- The number of classes is increasing each year. Currently the school caters for children aged four to seven years and is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and the English National Curriculum, using English and Spanish to teach the pupils.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. Around a quarter are from other backgrounds, mainly Spanish and Polish, and speak English as an additional language.
- One in 10 pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care). This is below the national average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported either through school action or school action plus are below average. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils achieve well, particularly the most able, by making sure that:
 - when teachers are planning lessons they focus on what the pupils will learn
 - work is challenging for all pupils, particularly the most able
 - questioning is used effectively during lessons to check what pupils have learnt and what they understand
 - expectations of pupils' attitudes to their learning are high and pupils listen carefully
 - pupils have opportunities to respond to marking and feedback to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring there is a clear long-term plan for the school with high expectations of what pupils will achieve in all subjects, including how pupils will become bilingual in Spanish and English
 - identifying and training middle leaders so that they can support senior leaders to improve the school
 - strengthening the systems for checking how good teaching is, ensuring that they take account of the progress pupils make in lessons and over time
 - strengthening partnerships with parents and carers so that pupils attend school regularly, arrive on time and complete activities they are set to do at home.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards are above those typically expected for pupils' ages. However, given their starting points, pupils are capable of achieving more than they do, particularly the most able.
- Most children join the Reception classes with knowledge, skills and understanding that are typical for their age or higher. They make steady progress during their first year in the school and are well prepared for their move to Year 1.
- By the end of Year 1, most pupils reach standards that are just above those typical of pupils of their age. The structured teaching of phonics from the Reception classes onwards ensures that the large majority of pupils know the sounds that letters make. This helps them to read accurately and have the confidence to try spelling a range of words when they are writing.
- The school's information and work in pupils' books show that most pupils in Year 2 who have been at the school since it opened have made reasonable progress over time. Progress has not been fast enough to make sure that all those capable of achieving the higher levels do so.
- Progress is strongest in reading. This is because the school gives high priority, and considerable time, to teaching reading to make sure that pupils have the skills they need to learn in other subjects.
- Senior leaders regularly check pupils' progress, paying particular attention to those who are not reaching expected levels and putting carefully targeted support in place. This is helping those pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language to make better progress. Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to support eligible pupils to catch up with others.
- Pupils are developing a basic vocabulary and understanding of Spanish, but are not developing bilingual skills well. This is because teaching of Spanish is not sufficiently well thought out.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough, and expectations are not high enough, to ensure that pupils make good progress over time.
- Some lessons do not meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able. Teachers are not always precise about what they want pupils to learn in lessons. They focus more on the activities pupils will be doing than on the knowledge and skills they want them to learn. The level of challenge is not consistently high enough, particularly for the most able. Questioning is not always used well to check what pupils have learnt and what they understand.
- Inspectors saw better learning where the purpose of the lesson was clear from the start and pupils had clearly gained knowledge by the end. Sometimes, the most-able pupils in a class were challenged by joining lessons in the year group above.
- Marking makes it clear to pupils, through the use of symbols, what they have done well. However, the comments teachers add are not always helpful. They do not always show pupils what they need to do better. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to respond and improve their work. These weaknesses slow progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in writing has been slower because until fairly recently they did not have enough opportunities to write at length. The introduction of weekly 'extended writing' sessions, in which pupils use the skills they have been taught, is making a difference. Pupils are now developing their writing skills at a faster rate.
- Homework is not used well enough to support pupils' learning. It is not set regularly and the school has not worked closely with parents and carers to help them understand the importance of completing activities at home.
- There is a lack of consistency in the teaching of Spanish in other subjects and no assessment of pupils' skills. English and Spanish are often used side-by-side. Pupils realise that rather than trying to understand what is said in Spanish they can wait for it to be translated into English.

Staff do not routinely expect pupils to respond in Spanish and, when they do, they too readily accept just one word or a short phrase. Sometimes, introducing new Spanish vocabulary during lessons distracts from the purpose of the lesson and slows learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils do not always listen to each other or to teachers in lessons. At times, they interrupt or talk over others during discussions.
- In the main, pupils know how they are expected to behave around the school and in the playground, and respond well. Occasionally, they do not follow the rules.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- In the last school year, attendance was below average. Some parents and carers did not send their children to school every day or took family holidays during term time. There has been some improvement this year because senior leaders have made their expectations of regular attendance clearer. There are too many pupils who do not arrive promptly at the beginning of the school day.
- Pupils enjoy school. They generally feel safe and can identify an adult to whom they would turn if they were having any problems. Not all pupils are confident, however, that when they fall out with, or hurt, each other that staff follow it up effectively. Older pupils have been taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet.
- Almost without exception, parents and carers who expressed a view felt that their children are safe and happy at the school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet strong enough to ensure that the school provides a high-quality education for pupils. Senior leaders are new to their roles. They recognise their need for support and use a number of external consultants to check on what they are doing and to provide training.
- Leaders have not been able to give sufficient time to developing the quality of education. They have focused on setting up systems from scratch and finding a permanent site for the school. The headteacher has taken on too many administrative tasks because until recently there have not been enough staff to do them. Currently, there are not enough middle managers to help senior leaders improve teaching and learning. New leaders are being identified and trained to take on responsibilities from next term.
- There is a lack of clarity about how Spanish should be taught. Leaders know that developing pupils' Spanish skills cannot be at the expense of standards in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics. They have ensured that topic plans are in place so pupils are taught a broad range of subjects. The school's action plan is appropriately focused on improving the quality of education.
- Senior leaders check regularly the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making. Support for individual teachers has improved their teaching. Extra support for pupils who were starting to fall behind has helped them to catch up. However, leaders' views of the school are too positive. Their expectations of the progress pupils will make over time are not ambitious enough. When leaders check on teaching, too little attention is paid to what the pupils are learning in lessons and over time.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils develop a good understanding of the wider world through the links with Spain and schools in other countries. They are interested in real-life situations. During the inspection, pupils responded with enthusiasm and maturity to a discussion about fair and unfair issues related to the football World Cup. Staff make good use of the different cultures in the school community, and families' skills and experiences, to broaden pupils' understanding and attitudes.
- Pupils are benefiting from the new sports funding. It has been used to buy equipment and to

provide specialist physical education teaching, using the Spanish language. Teachers are present when specialist teachers are working with pupils so that they can develop their own skills. Pupils also benefit from access to some of the sports facilities in the academy with which the school shares a site.

■ The school's systems for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are honest about their lack of experience. Until recently, they have been preoccupied with the procedural issues of setting up a new school. Governors are ambitious for the school. They are not clear how they will achieve their vision of it being the best bilingual school in the country because they have not set out the details explicitly from the start. Governors are aware of, and meet, their statutory responsibilities. They are increasingly focused on holding senior leaders to account for the quality of education at the school. Governors receive information about pupils' achievement and also the quality of teaching. They have arranged for training to help them better understand and challenge this information. Governors know how additional funds are being spent to raise standards and have ensured a policy is in place to link teachers' pay to pupils' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138261
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	426369

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marina Gutierrez
Headteacher	Carolina Gopal
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01273 916212
Email address	info@bilingualprimaryschool.org.uk

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