

# Brookmans Park Primary School

Bradmore Way, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, AL9 7QY

**Inspection dates** 15–16 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils, including the most able and those who need extra help, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards are improving. Pupils who are now in the school are working at levels well above the national average.
- Pupils enjoy school. They work hard and are keen to learn. They behave well and feel safe.
- Lessons promote good understanding. Teachers match the work to the needs of the pupils, and have high expectations of pupils, who make good progress as a result.
- School leaders keep a close check on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. As a result, teaching has improved since the previous inspection.
- School leaders are developing the attitude in both pupils and staff that everyone should try to do the best they can.
- Governors know how well the school is doing. They offer a high level of challenge as well as support to the school leaders.
- The school promotes pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- School leaders' checks on the quality of teaching do not take enough account of the progress made by pupils over time.
- While teachers usually offer pupils advice on how they can improve their work, pupils do not have enough opportunities to make these improvements.
- Subject leaders do not have a precise enough understanding of the areas of weakness in teaching in their area to be able to remedy these effectively.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 14 lessons, some of them jointly observed with school leaders, and made brief visits to several more. They looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and with a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documents were looked at, regarding safeguarding, child protection, attendance and behaviour policies as well as records of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's improvement plans and notes about the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered the responses to a questionnaire completed by 29 staff.
- They also took into account the 49 responses from parents on the Parent View website, as well as 19 responses from parents unable to access Parent View, who used paper copies of the questionnaire. Inspectors also took account of five letters and emails from parents expressing their views of the school.

## Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Walley

Additional Inspector

Linda Baily

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average -sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is much lower than average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is lower than average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower than the national average.
- The school has an Eco-School Award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- School leaders need to ensure that the progress that pupils make over time is the most important factor when they are making judgements about the quality of teaching.
- Teachers need to give pupils sufficient opportunities to respond to the advice and guidance offered in their marking and feedback.
- Subject leaders should analyse with greater precision the areas of relative weakness in the teaching of their subject so that the support and guidance they offer is most effective.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children who enter the Nursery class have knowledge and skills which are slightly above those typical for their age. However, as another group of children from other settings join this cohort at the start of the Reception year, the overall levels of knowledge and skills of children in the Reception class is only marginally higher than those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year, children's knowledge and skills are ahead of national expectations.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics which are well above national averages.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were well above national averages. This was an improvement over the standards achieved in the previous year. In addition, recent results show that the current Year 6 pupils have reached standards which are higher than those attained in 2013.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils in 2013 who made and exceeded the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. Again, this was an improvement on the previous year. However, as a result of the improvements in teaching, the proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 who have made expected and more than expected progress is greater than the national average.
- Current assessment information shows that throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that, by the end of Year 6, they will attain considerably higher levels than the national averages.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium benefit greatly from the additional support which the pupil premium has funded. This ensures that these pupils achieve well. There were not enough Year 6 pupils in 2013 known to be eligible for free school meals to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least the progress expected of them, and some make more than expected progress, in all subjects.
- Scores in the 2013 Year 1 national screening check on standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) were well above average, and this has had an impact on pupils' confidence and ability in reading.
- Most pupils read well, and have many opportunities to use their reading skills in lessons and in topic work. Less-able readers are helped with regular opportunities to practise reading in small groups. Younger pupils show clearly how they cope with unfamiliar words using the 'sounding out' and 'blending' techniques which they have been taught.
- Primary Sports funding has been used to widen the range of opportunities to take part in games and sports, including inter-school competitive sport and other physical activity, such as gymnastics. Younger pupils are also developing healthier lifestyles through enjoying more physical activity during playtimes, which are led by older pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In most lessons, teaching engages pupils, and much of the work set for them is at the right level to get the best from them. Pupils are encouraged to work hard in lessons and to achieve ambitious aims, regardless of their abilities and starting points.
- Teachers and teaching assistants effectively use questions and advice to develop pupils' understanding and skills. This is well planned to offer targeted support to those pupils who may need more help. For example, a teacher kept a list of pupils who he considered would be especially challenged by a writing exercise, and referred to this as he monitored the pupils' work. In another lesson in the Reception class, an adult noticed that a child in a physical education activity was having difficulty catching a ball, so she sensitively took the child to one side, and

gave extra coaching to the child to improve this skill.

- The records of the frequent lesson observations carried out by school leaders show that most teaching is judged to be good. In the rare cases where teaching is judged to be less than good, school leaders put in place more intensive support.
- Pupils are keen to learn, and say that the teaching helps them to do as well as they can.
- Work in pupils' books is plentiful and generally well presented. It is evident that teachers encourage pupils to work hard, and in many cases pupils' work indicates that they are achieving standards higher than those expected for their age.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes encourages children to acquire a range of skills through well-prepared activities. Children can often choose what they would like to do, but are encouraged to extend their learning, including their language skills, through prompts from adults.
- In marking pupils' work, teachers often give advice to pupils on how they can improve. However, while teachers have made considerable improvements in this practice since last inspection, this practice is not fully used in all classes. In addition, even when the advice is there, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to respond to the advice and make the necessary improvements to their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils want to do their best, and so try hard in their lessons and take pride in their achievements. They work well in groups, and often try to help each other.
- Around the school buildings and at playtimes, pupils behave in a considerate manner towards others, and show respect for adults. As a result, the school is an orderly place in which effective learning can occur.
- Deliberate disruption of lessons is extremely rare. On a few occasions, pupils are rather slow to respond when a teacher asks for silence when wishing to address the whole class. However, pupils comment that teachers manage behaviour well so that they can concentrate on their learning.
- Pupils and parents agree that behaviour is good. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, and is dealt with well by adults. Pupils have a good understanding of what to do if they feel they are being bullied.
- Behaviour is managed well. Pupils understand that there are rewards for good behaviour and attendance, and that the sanctions for poor behaviour are fair.
- There have been no exclusions for more than three years. The very rare incidents of bullying or racist comments are logged and dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils' attendance is better than the national average. The school has effective rewards for good attendance, and checks up immediately on any unexplained pupil absence.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when out of school. Older pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet and when cycling. All pupils learn about road safety.
- The school's systems for safeguarding pupils are robust.

**The leadership and management are good**

- School leaders have developed a culture of high expectations for pupils, and high standards of professionalism for teachers. This has been helped by recent changes to personnel in the leadership team.
- Leaders encourage all members of the school community to have a strong sense of determination and perseverance to achieve ambitious aims. The headteacher and deputy lead by example, and have taken up learning to play musical instruments alongside pupils to show that these attitudes are important throughout life in order to achieve, and that learning is a lifelong process
- Improvement plans are accurately focused on helping pupils to make more rapid progress. They correctly identify what success will look like and which members of staff are responsible for each aspect of the plans.
- Leaders rigorously check the progress of individual pupils and groups so that they can ensure that the school is doing as much as it can to help all of them. As a result pupils who are at risk of falling behind are given extra support. Consequently, nearly all pupils make at least the progress expected of them and often better.
- The setting of targets for teachers to improve their work has established clear links between teachers' pay and their impact in the classroom on pupils' skills and knowledge. School leaders ensure that teachers receive the right training to help them improve.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively; eligible pupils are well supported, have more opportunities to participate fully in school activities, and are achieving well.
- The provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is managed well. As a result, these pupils receive effective support and make good progress.
- The topics and subjects studied by pupils are well planned and engaging. The themed approach allows pupils to make some decisions of their own about their learning. Evidence from scrutinies of pupils' work show that they apply and develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics through topic work. These topics are enhanced by visits, such as a recent trip to Boulogne and residential visits for older pupils. In school, visitors and themed days add enjoyment and interest. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the ways other people live are exemplified in their link with a school in Uganda. As a result, pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well.
- A large majority of parents are supportive of the school; they feel that their children are happy and are making good progress.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has offered guidance in drawing up an action plan, and has followed this up by checking on the school's progress in making improvements. The local authority has also organised effective support for the headteacher and for the Early Years Foundation Stage leader.
- School leaders check frequently on the quality of teaching, and this has led to improvements. However, they do not place enough importance on the information they have about the progress that pupils have made over time when judging the quality of the teaching.
- Subject leaders have an overview of the progress made by pupils in their subject, but do not have an accurate picture of the specific strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of their subject which promote or hinder the pupils' progress. As a result, the support and guidance they can offer is limited, and therefore the quality of teaching is not as good as it could be.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors provide good support for the school's leaders. They check the performance data of the school thoroughly and raise questions and concerns so that the school can achieve the best for its pupils.
  - Each governor has a responsibility to oversee a specific area of the school's work. They check on this through visits to school so that can report back to the governing body, noting strengths or areas of concern. As a result, governors have a much more detailed picture of the school's effectiveness.

- Governors have an overview of checks on teachers' performance and understand that teachers who meet the targets set for them will progress along the pay scales. They effectively manage the performance of the headteacher.
- The governing body oversees the budget well. They have identified areas of need and have allocated resources appropriately to meet these needs.
- Governors make sure the school's arrangements for safeguarding children fully meet the current national requirements. They also ensure that all adults who work with pupils are checked for suitability, and that pupils are kept safe.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117570
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	442042

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	340
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Haines
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nathan Hairon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01707 652355
<b>Fax number</b>	01707 662787
<b>Email address</b>	admin@brookmanspark.herts.sch.uk

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