

Brackenbury Primary School

Locks Hill, Portslade, Brighton, BN41 2LA

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well and consistently reach above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress. They are on track to achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good. There is a culture of support and this helps teachers to thrive and continually improve. Senior leaders regularly check performance. As a result, pupils make good progress and attain well.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class. Teaching is good and activities are planned well to suit children with different levels of ability.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite to adults. They are able to work and play together harmoniously. Relationships are warm and there is mutual respect.
- Senior leaders and governors work hard to ensure that pupils are safe and secure. Consequently, pupils feel safe in the school. Their parents agree.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, know the school well. Governors make regular visits to the school to see how well pupils are doing.
- The core beliefs of the school support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils. The well-planned curriculum ensures that pupils are suitably prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders understand where the school needs to make improvements. They have thorough plans in place to ensure that teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not given time to act on the advice they are given in teachers' marking. This inhibits the progress they make.
- There is no coherent homework policy in the school. This is a concern of a significant number of parents.
- As a result of a series of promotions, there are no middle leaders in the school. Currently, all leadership responsibilities are concentrated within the senior leadership team. Consequently, leadership skills are not being developed within the staff.

Information about this inspection

- The learning of pupils was observed in all classrooms. Fourteen lessons were observed, one jointly with the deputy headteacher. Work in pupils’ books was examined in detail. A group of pupils from Year 2 were heard reading.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher and other members of staff, a group of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documents provided by the school. These included details of the progress pupils currently make, records of governing body meetings, the school’s improvement plans and the school’s evaluation of its work, as well as information relating to attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.
- The school sent paper copies of Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire) to all parents and carers because there was a limited response to the online version at previous inspections. There were 58 responses returned. There were no online responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents informally at the beginning of the school day. The 16 responses to the staff questionnaire were also analysed.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast club.

Inspection team

Jill Thewlis, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Brian Meyer

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. The school is growing into an all-through primary but it is not yet full. Currently, the school has pupils up to Year 4. There will be no Year 6 pupils until September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below that found nationally. Similarly, the numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language are below the national average.
- There are two Reception classes, neither of which is full as yet. All pupils attend school on a full-time basis. There is no nursery provision at the school.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action is twice that found nationally. The number of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is approximately double the national average.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in receipt of the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or in local authority care) in the school is broadly similar to that found nationally.
- Since the previous inspection, all the middle leaders have left the school following promotion. As of September 2014, there are new members on the teaching staff, 60% of the total teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that pupils are given time to improve their work after it has been marked and that teachers check that pupils have acted on the advice given
 - providing a coherent homework policy which reinforces the learning in school and enables pupils to make greater progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders within the school so that leadership responsibilities are spread more widely across the staff.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and other senior leaders give the school clear direction. They are determined that all pupils in the school will make good progress. The checks they make on the progress of pupils are accurate. Leaders understand where the school needs to make improvements and changes in order to accommodate older pupils. The school has a comprehensive plan in place for its future development. The integration of Years 3 and 4 has been well managed. Governance is effective.
- Senior leaders have a strong record of developing good teachers. They work alongside teachers to help them improve their skills. Consequently, teaching over time is good and teachers flourish. There is no inadequate teaching in the school.
- The performance of teachers is checked regularly. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths in teaching. All teachers have targets for improvement and these are linked to pay rises. Information about the performance of teachers is communicated to governors.
- Since the previous inspection, the gaps in the achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are closing. This is because the pupil premium is used effectively.
- The local authority has provided good support. The expected numbers of pupils to fill the increased capacity of the school have not yet materialised. The local authority are supporting the school in the transitional period.
- Subjects are taught through topics which link the subjects together. The well-planned curriculum helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. All major religions are celebrated. Pupils have opportunities to study aspects of other cultures, for example, dress and food. Parents and other visitors are invited into the school to talk to pupils about their culture. There are increasing numbers of opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. All pupils have access to all subjects and activities. Pupils are encouraged to air their views, for example, in contributing ideas for the use and development of the outside space.
- The primary school sport funding is used well. There is a greater number of clubs now available for pupils to join. Increasing numbers of pupils are taking part in regular physical activity now than previously. Staff have received training in the teaching of gymnastics. This has increased their confidence and, consequently, higher-quality physical education lessons are taught. New gymnastic equipment has been purchased. Pupils have additional opportunities to take part in physical activity at lunchtime because a specialist coach has been employed. He is also providing training for midday supervisors. A wider range of sporting competitions are open to the school now that they have older pupils.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress of their children. There are 'learning meetings' between teachers, parents and children on two occasions per year. At these meetings, the work and the progress of the pupils are discussed and targets for improvement agreed. The school holds a range of information evenings for parents which are highly valued, for example, on the teaching of reading.
- Senior leaders are available to talk to parents informally at the beginning and end of the school day. There are good relationships between all members of the school community. Discrimination is not evident in the school because leaders are clear that it is not acceptable. Leaders analyse the progress of different groups, including those who speak English as an additional language. As a result, they are able to provide support and ensure pupils do not fall behind.
- The leadership team have a clear and consistent approach to the management of behaviour. They ensure that new members of staff have received training in applying this system consistently across the school. Pupils understand how good behaviour is rewarded. They are encouraged to be responsible and to understand that all actions have consequences.
- As all leadership responsibilities are shared between the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, this is a heavy burden, which has been recognised by the governing body. Four members of staff have recently begun leadership training so that leadership responsibilities can be more evenly distributed amongst middle leaders.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are well provided for. Senior leaders ensure that all additional adults in the school are properly trained and well deployed to support the learning of pupils.
- All safeguarding requirements are met in full.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They make regular visits to the school and report back to the full governing body. Recommendations are acted upon. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the quality of teaching. They are familiar with the performance of the school and how it compares with that of other schools

locally and nationally. They ask challenging questions of the headteacher about all aspects of the school. The performance of the headteacher is checked by three governors and an external advisor. There is clear understanding about the link between performance and pay for all teaching staff, including the headteacher. Governors know how pupil premium and primary sport funding is spent. They know that the spending is having a positive impact on the progress of pupils. The school's budget is checked regularly. There are budgetary constraints because the predicted numbers of pupils have not been forthcoming to justify the increased capacity of the school. Governors meet regularly with the local authority to address this issue.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to all members of the school community. Relationships are warm and there is mutual respect.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. In one Year 1 class, pupils said, 'We can't talk to you now! We are too busy.' Sometimes, a few pupils lose concentration because tasks are not well matched to their abilities. Teaching assistants work well with those pupils who find it difficult to concentrate or who have challenging behaviour. This minimises possible disruption of learning.
- The school keeps good records of poor behaviour. The school's records show that incidents are reducing. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong.
- Pupils say that behaviour is mostly good. Parents, staff and governors agree. Staff deal with any poor behaviour quickly and effectively.
- The breakfast club provides a healthy and happy start to the school day.
- Attendance is average. The school do not authorise any holidays. Pupils enjoy school. As one boy said, 'I enjoy school because of maths.'
- Pupils, even the very youngest, are able to play and work together in a collaborative way. The core values of the school, creativity, independence and interdependence, help to foster this culture.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in the school. There is no racism and no bad language. This view is supported by school records. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils have an understanding of bullying. They know to talk to an adult if someone is being unkind to them. School records suggest there is little bullying and that, where it has occurred, it has been effectively dealt with. Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour is good. They do not express any concerns about bullying.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers plan activities at the right level of difficulty for the different abilities of pupils. The curriculum reflects the interests of the pupils. It is designed to broaden their experiences and develop their vocabulary. Consequently, they are motivated to learn and pupils make good progress.
- Classrooms are bright and airy. There is good support for pupils and this helps them in their learning. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. At this early stage of the year, there are few instances of pupils' work on display.
- Since the previous inspection, a new and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) has been introduced across the whole school. Pupils can confidently use phonics to read and spell unfamiliar words.
- Pupils read regularly and this helps them to make good progress in reading. Classrooms have attractive areas where pupils can choose to read quietly. Pupils enjoy reading. They like both fiction and nonfiction books.
- In mathematics lessons, pupils are able to use a wide range of resources to help them. Activities are well matched to the abilities of the pupils, including the most able. The understanding of pupils is deepened because adults ask searching questions. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking.
- When pupils write, they use phonics charts to help them to spell correctly. Pupils can confidently use a thesaurus to choose alternative words and so increase their vocabulary.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well supported. The gap between the achievement of these pupils and their classmates' is closing.

- Teachers mark work conscientiously and thoroughly. They follow the school marking policy. Pupils, however, are not given time to respond to comments in the marking. Teachers do not check that pupils are following the advice given. This inhibits the progress pupils make.
- Parents are concerned that homework is not consistent across the school. There is no coherent policy for homework which would build on the learning of pupils and enable more rapid progress to be made.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well in the school. They make good progress. In 2013, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line with national averages in reading. In writing and mathematics, pupils did better than similar pupils nationally. Attainment in all subjects has been above the national average for the last two years. Results in 2014 show an improvement on 2013, especially in mathematics. This is the first year the school has had pupils in Year 4. Current progress information suggests that they will achieve at least in line with national averages at the end of Year 6.
- The most able pupils achieved more highly than others nationally in writing and mathematics in 2013. They were in line with similar pupils nationally in reading. In 2014, the most able outperformed the 2013 national average in all subjects. The most able pupils in all year groups make good progress because they are given tasks which make them think harder.
- The work in pupils' books confirms a picture of good progress being made through the school.
- Since the previous inspection, disadvantaged pupils are making better progress. This means that the gap in attainment between these pupils and their classmates is narrowing because the support they receive is good. The gap has reduced from eight months to four months. Disadvantaged pupils in the school do better than similar pupils nationally in writing and mathematics. They are in line with the national average in reading. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have effective support.
- The numbers of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonic screening check in Year 1 has increased every year. It is now in line with the national average.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities below the levels which are typical for their age. The majority of pupils have weaknesses in speaking and listening. There are strengths in some aspects of personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress and this means most enter Year 1 with a good level of development.
- Achievement over time is good because leaders check that teaching is consistently good. Children with additional needs have effective support and this helps them to make good progress.
- The early years leader knows the children well. He ensures that teaching is good by checking regularly. The progress children make is analysed and support is put in place swiftly. Consequently, children make good progress and enter Year 1 at broadly expected levels.
- The provision for the early years is good. The school works well with nursery providers and with other schools in the area. There are warm relationships between adults and children and this helps children to settle quickly into school routines. Quiet music is played and this helps to foster a calm and peaceful environment. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the education of their children.
- Teaching is good. Adults question pupils well, for example, using searching questions to develop children's understanding of size comparison. Children have good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic; for example, a child said gleefully, 'Look! That ant is trying to eat the ladybird!' and 'I have killed the ant so it can't eat the ladybird.' The child's sense of right and wrong was developed because the teacher talked to the child about whether it was right to kill the ant.
- Children display an ability to concentrate and to persevere. A group of children spent a long time drawing and colouring their pictures. They were being very careful with their colouring, making sure they did not go over the lines. They can help each other; for example, one child was having difficulty accessing a paint programme on the computer. His friend helped him.
- Behaviour is good because children enjoy school. Adults have clear expectations and this helps children feel safe and secure.

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	114413
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	447755

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

Type of school	All through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harry Steer
Headteacher	Dawn Oliver
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 June 2013
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