

Battling Brook Primary School

Frederick Avenue, Hinckley, LE10 0EX

Inspection dates 16–17 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	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.

- Children get a good start to school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers create exciting opportunities for children to develop their skills and make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in reading, and progress in mathematics is improving steadily. As a result, standards are rising in English and mathematics.
- Teachers make sure that lessons are interesting and encourage pupils to do well. They ask searching questions to check pupils' understanding and help them build rapidly on what they already know.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well. They try hard in lessons and are polite to adults and each other in and around school.
- Pupils feel safe in school because adults create a secure, caring atmosphere. Pupils told inspectors that there is always someone they could go to if they have a problem.
- The headteacher and senior leaders rigorously check how well lessons are taught to make sure teaching is good and all groups of pupils are making consistently good progress. Any pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly helped to keep up.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and understand how it can improve. They visit often and have regular meetings with senior staff to see how well it is doing.
- The school's aims, such as trying hard and respecting each other, support the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, some teachers do not show high enough expectations of what pupils can do. On these occasions, pupils do not make the rapid progress that some are capable of.
- Progress in writing is not as rapid as in mathematics and reading. While the teaching of literacy skills in English lessons is good, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects or to write at length.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons or parts of lessons, 11 of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other staff, three groups of pupils and four members of the governing body.
- Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 48 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own questionnaires, individual communications from parents and carers and the 44 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documentation, including: the school's checks on its performance; its analysis and tracking of pupils' progress; records of behaviour and safety; school improvement plans; records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance; safeguarding arrangements; and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Daniel Kilborn

Additional Inspector

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Full report

Information about this school

- Battling Brook Primary School converted to become an academy school in June 2013. When its predecessor school, called Battling Brook Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start in a part-time Nursery class. Most of these children move to one of the full-time Reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five years old. Children who have not attended the Nursery also join the Reception classes at this time.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- At just under 23%, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is much higher than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average at just over 21%.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure all teachers show consistently high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve, by providing work at the right level of difficulty to encourage rapid progress.
- Raise standards in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy skills in longer pieces of writing and in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have created a very positive ethos across the school so that pupils behave well and are keen to succeed. They rigorously check how well lessons are being taught. They carefully track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils to make sure they are all achieving well. Support is provided for any pupils who are in danger of falling behind, and leaders regularly check that it is being effective. They recognise that, in some cases, individual pupils could progress faster than they sometimes do and are already taking steps to ensure teaching promotes rapid progress more consistently.
- The headteacher has created an effective team of middle leaders who check the progress pupils make in particular subjects and different age groups, including the early years. The very effective system for checking and improving teachers' performance is a key factor in the good teaching seen throughout the school. Teachers are only rewarded with pay rises if targets for pupils' achievement are met. Good support from other staff and additional training courses help teachers refine their skills and achieve their targets.
- The pupil premium is used well to support disadvantaged pupils. Some of this funding is used to help the families of disadvantaged pupils to meet the cost of school visits, to purchase items of school uniform and to enable pupils to attend school clubs. The rest is used to provide additional adult support for pupils on a one-to-one basis or in small groups as needed.
- The curriculum is well planned. The subjects pupils learn are exciting and engaging. For example, Year 4 pupils learning about the human body in their 'Burps, Bottoms and Bile' topic were keen to talk to the inspector about the leaflets they had produced about teeth. One pupil wrote to the headteacher requesting even healthier food in school, explaining how this affects the function of the digestive system. Some teachers develop literacy and numeracy skills well through the topics taught in other subjects, but not as effectively or frequently as they could.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. It has enabled the school to join a local sports partnership where pupils can compete against those from other schools in a wide range of activities. This has resulted in more pupils taking part in competitive sports such as cross-country running, in which the school has been particularly successful. The funding also pays for training for teachers so that they can become more proficient in teaching physical education.
- Staff create a caring atmosphere through promotion of the school aims. Such themes as 'we take pride in each other's achievements' and 'we are all of equal worth' pervade all areas of school life. The 'Respect File' is used to record evidence of pupils fulfilling the school aims so that their contribution to school life can be celebrated in assembly. Pictures of inspirational people and references to the aims in all the corridors and classrooms make clear that the school promotes important values such as respect and equality of opportunity very strongly and tackles discrimination well. This all contributes to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about a range of cultures and faiths. They visit different places of worship and discuss their similarities and differences. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school has built strong partnerships with other local schools and universities. This gives staff the chance to share expertise with those from other schools. It also provides opportunities for training new teachers and developing the skills of all adults working in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school. They are proud of its strengths but also know how it needs to improve. Their systems for checking how well it is doing are thorough and well organised, and give a clear picture of the progress made. Visits are reported well and governors ask the headteacher and senior leaders challenging questions to hold them accountable for improving the school.
 - Governors use data well to check on the achievement of different groups of pupils. They make sure that the pupil premium is supporting disadvantaged pupils effectively. In order to be even more rigorous in checking this, they have recently appointed a governor with specific responsibility for measuring the

impact of the pupil premium. Similarly, another governor has a focus on the impact that the sports funding is having on pupils' physical health and well-being. Governors are confident that this additional money is benefiting all eligible pupils.

- Governors understand that the appraisal system is contributing to the good teaching. They make sure that teachers' pay rises and promotion depend on the progress made by pupils in their class.
- Governors make sure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet national requirements. All staff are checked to ensure their suitability for working with children.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite in and around school and respectfully step aside or hold doors open for adults and other pupils. At playtimes, pupils share equipment and play happily together and are eager to talk to visitors about their school. Pupils who joined the school recently say that they were made very welcome and soon settled in.
- Pupils say that behaviour is generally good. They think that the system whereby pupils lose or regain part of 'golden time' activities depending on how they behave is a good one. They say it helps remind people to behave well.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils try hard and want to do well. Disruptions are rare and pupils take a mature approach to the very few pupils whose behaviour is at all challenging. One pupil told an inspector that those pupils 'are on a journey to improvement' and appreciated that they needed help with their behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school and were keen to talk to inspectors about their lesson and other activities. They said that they learn new things every day. They show a similar pride in their work, which is usually neat and well presented.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and attribute this to the caring teachers and other adults who look after them and keep them safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including physical and cyber-bullying and name-calling. They say that occasionally bullying does happen, but staff quickly deal with it. Pupils agree that there is always someone they could go to with a problem, such as members of the 'care team'. These adults oversee the well-being of pupils and support both the pupils and their families as required.
- Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet. They are clear about precautions to take and why these are necessary. They also know about safety on the road and when riding their bicycles. Visitors to school warn them about other issues such as 'stranger danger'. Junior road safety officers have worked closely with the local community police officer.
- The school has worked closely with parents to encourage good attendance and punctuality. As a result, attendance has improved and is now above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and other adults build strong relationships with pupils in the classroom. They are respectful to each other and the pupils, who instinctively follow their example. Pupils live up to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and attitudes, and they are keen to learn and do well. As a result, pupils are eager to answer questions and quickly settle to their work.
- Teachers ask pupils questions skilfully to check their understanding and make them think hard about their learning. Pupils are expected to explain and justify their answers, which helps them demonstrate a deeper

understanding. Teachers then build on this knowledge to move pupils forward in their learning.

- Lessons are lively and interesting. During the inspection Year 5 pupils watched, and then listened to, the soundtrack of a short recording that was used to encourage them to construct high-quality descriptions for use in their own writing. The most able pupils turned these into metaphors and similes, such as 'the flowers dance like lost souls', to improve the quality of their writing even more.
- Additional adults in the classroom work effectively alongside teachers. They are well briefed by the class teachers and trained in supporting pupils' learning. This means that their support is timely and accurate in helping pupils make good progress, particularly in the early years. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are ably supported by additional adults who help them achieve well alongside their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils are also supported well. The well-organised help provided by additional adults means that they can learn in small groups or have extra time with the teacher to enable them keep up with other pupils in the class.
- The most able pupils do well throughout the school because most teachers show high expectations of what they can achieve. Challenging tasks help build rapidly on what these pupils already know, so they can reach higher levels in their work.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils develop a love of reading very early in their time in school, and are able to read fluently and with evident enjoyment by the time they leave.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. The school has changed which mathematical skills are taught each year in line with national guidance and this is helping raise standards. Pupils enjoy accessing their mathematics homework through the internet and eagerly complete this each week, building on skills learnt in lessons.
- While pupils are taught formal literacy skills in English lessons, they do not have enough opportunities to practise these skills in different subjects or in longer pieces of writing. Sometimes, pupils are given tasks that limit the amount they can write when the particular sheet or form only requires a brief response.
- Occasionally, some teachers do not expect enough of the pupils. On these occasions, pupils have to complete work they can already do before reaching more challenging work that could help them make even better progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' progress, often from very low starting points, is improving rapidly. Those currently in the school are achieving well and attainment is rising steadily. The progress of pupils leaving Year 6 in 2014 accelerated markedly in their final two years of Key Stage 2, and most made at least nationally expected progress by the time they left.
- Year 6 standards in writing were lower than in reading and mathematics last year, and few pupils made really rapid progress. Even so, the results for all subjects were still broadly in line with national averages and this represented good achievement given pupils' starting points.
- Pupils typically start in Key Stage 1 with below-average skills, especially in English. Changes to the way reading and writing are taught are leading to improved standards by the end of Year 2. The results of the 2014 national screening check on how well Year 1 pupils understand phonics (the sounds letters represent) were above average. During the inspection, pupils used these skills confidently and accurately to read and write unfamiliar words.
- Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 remained below average in 2014, but the gap between their attainment and the national average had

narrowed. Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are on track to reach higher standards this year.

- Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching is now consistently good across the key stage. School data show that this good progress has continued since September. Pupils are working at expected standards in Years 5 and 6 and more are on track to make good progress overall than did so in 2014, particularly in writing. Achievement in reading is also good, and in mathematics it continues to improve.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are progressing at least as well as their peers. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were behind their peers by three and a half terms in mathematics, four and a half terms in reading and nearly seven terms in writing. They were behind other pupils nationally by about four terms in mathematics and reading and over seven terms in writing, although their progress was much closer and matched that of other pupils nationally in reading. These gaps in attainment are not representative of other year groups. Gaps are narrowing because the progress of eligible pupils across the school is now consistently good.
- The most able pupils generally make progress that is as good as other pupils. In some cases they make even better progress. As a result, more pupils are working at higher levels than previously.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are quickly identified and support provided to give them confidence to do well and succeed alongside their peers.

The early years provision

is good

- The Nursery and Reception classes provide children with a good start to school life, where they thrive and make good progress. They start school with knowledge and understanding below typical levels, sometimes well below, and particularly in their communication and mathematical skills. Well-planned activities, both inside and outdoors, help develop children's confidence and knowledge as well as specific skills and good behaviour.
- Caring adults are sensitive to children's individual abilities and any special educational needs. They ask probing questions and regularly talk to children about their learning, helping to develop their language and understanding.
- The Nursery and Reception classes are led well. Children's progress is rigorously tracked, and activities build on their interests and what they already know. Improvements to the way phonics are taught mean that children's early reading skills are developing well. While the proportion of children who attained a good level of development in 2014 was below the national figure, it was an increase on the previous year.
- Teachers communicate well with parents, who are encouraged to share children's achievements at home so that they can be celebrated in school. Similarly, achievements in school are shared with parents through, for example, the 'Boasting Book'. This encourages parents to talk to their children about their school activities.
- Despite their good progress, children still start Year 1 with below-average skills and understanding. However, their confident and positive attitudes to learning prepare them well for tackling Key Stage 1 work.

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	139737
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	453399

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	589
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Bull
Headteacher	Stewart Marsden
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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