

Coombe Road Primary School

Milner Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4BP

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have arrested and reversed a significant decline in the quality of pupils' learning and behaviour since the previous inspection. In the words of one member of staff, 'The school has come a long way.'
- Since their appointment, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have won the respect of parents, staff and pupils alike. They have raised expectations, re-established pupils' good behaviour and improved staff morale.
- Substantial improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment during the past year-and-a-half mean that pupils are making much better progress than previously. As a result, standards in English and mathematics are rising in all year groups. However, teaching does not yet deepen and extend pupils' understanding sufficiently, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Parents recognise substantial improvements in the school since the previous inspection. One parent expressed the views of many when she commented, 'Whatever they are doing is working for all pupils, so they need to keep doing it!'
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They are proud of their school and behave well.
- Clear expectations, effective safeguarding procedures and strong relationships ensure that pupils are safe and secure.
- Effective leadership, high expectations and good-quality teaching in the early years mean that children settle very well into school life and make strong progress. However, activities in the early years outdoor area do not yet support boys' learning fully enough.
- Middle leaders' roles in supporting improvements in teaching and learning are at an early stage of development. They do not yet make a sufficiently strong contribution to the school's improvement.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teaching deepens pupils' learning and understanding fully, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Make better use of activities in the early years outdoor area to improve boys' learning.
- Develop middle leaders' roles in checking the quality of teaching and learning and strengthen their contribution to the school's development.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have secured substantial and sustained improvements in the school's work since the previous inspection. In the past 18 months, senior leaders have established consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour, which underpin all aspects of the school's work. They have established a friendly, welcoming and hard-working atmosphere in the school.
- Eighteen months ago, the local authority, working with a national leader of education, took concerted and successful action to arrest a significant decline in the school's performance. The subsequent appointments of the current headteacher and deputy headteacher brought strength and stability to the school's leadership and have ensured that improvements have been sustained. Since these appointments, the school has gone from strength to strength, with further marked improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour.
- The headteacher has improved teamwork significantly. She has developed clear, detailed and effective plans for improvement which are understood by all members of staff.
- Staff morale is much better than at the time of the previous inspection. Numerous comments made by members of staff during the inspection reflect the school's growing confidence. One member of staff reflected the views of many when commenting, 'Our school has never been in a stronger position.'
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established rigorous and consistent procedures for tracking pupils' progress. The deputy headteacher has been central to developing an accessible and clearly understood format for presenting information about pupils' achievement to staff and governors. This has played a key role in ensuring that teachers and governors are clear about how well different groups of pupils are learning, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged. Stronger teamwork and effective procedures for managing teachers' performance have ensured shared accountability for pupils' achievement across the school.
- Leaders work positively and constructively in partnership with a number of schools in the locality. The regular sharing of good practice and resources between schools in the partnership has made a valuable contribution to the school's development.
- Leaders use pupil-premium funding well to support disadvantaged pupils, including the most able pupils. They have increased teachers' awareness of disadvantaged pupils' needs since the previous inspection and focused resources more sharply on pupils' individual needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils, like their classmates, are making much better progress than previously.
- Leaders have made considerable changes to the curriculum since the previous inspection. For example, they have overhauled and updated curriculum plans to ensure that teaching builds securely on pupils' learning in a range of subjects as they move up through the school.
- The deputy headteacher's highly effective leadership of mathematics has been instrumental in improving outcomes in mathematics for all groups of pupils. He has a

clear and realistic view of the school's performance and provides a strong role model for colleagues.

- Leaders have provided good-quality training which has improved teaching in a range of subjects, including phonics and mathematics.
- A wide range of carefully planned additional activities, including visits and clubs, make a valuable contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils' love of school is evident in the way that so many skip and run into the school playground at the start of the school day, and also in the substantially improved attendance rates.
- The school's values are well established and widely understood by pupils. Pupils learn about British values through a range of lessons and activities. For example, they see democracy working at first hand when electing house captains, sports captains and school councillors. Pupils speak respectfully about different cultures and beliefs.
- Leaders plan and use physical education and sports funding effectively. They check that its use is ensuring that all groups of pupils are active and involved in sport. Parents and pupils speak enthusiastically about the wide range of sports clubs and about the increased participation in local sports competitions.
- Leaders use funding well to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Carefully targeted teaching for individuals and groups makes a significant difference to pupils' personal and academic progress.
- Parents, governors and staff recognise the substantial improvements in the school's work since the previous inspection and express strong confidence in the school's leadership.
- Senior leaders have made a good start in developing middle leaders' roles. For example, they make sure that middle leaders are included in activities which help them to evaluate the quality of teaching, such as looking at pupils' workbooks and participating in discussions about pupils' progress with teachers and senior leaders. As a result, middle leaders have a secure view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. However, they are less clear about the next priorities for the development in teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Governance of the school

- Governors have completely reviewed and updated their roles since the previous inspection and, consequently, make a much stronger contribution to the school's development. They work closely and productively with school leaders and with other members of staff. They provide good levels of support and challenge. Accurate and reliable assessments of pupils' progress, regular presentations to governors and governors' attendance at meetings about pupils' progress are all developments contributing to the increasingly effective role played by the governing body.
- Governors are understandably proud of the improvements in the school's work and refer to the 'enormous turnaround operation' secured by school leaders. However, they are not complacent and are clear about further improvements needed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are rigorously maintained. Adults are well qualified in safeguarding procedures and alert to children's needs. They value pupils' views and listen carefully to their comments. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' confidence and to their sense of security.
- Leaders have established consistent and well-organised systems to ensure pupils' safety and that policies are in place. All staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures and understand their shared responsibility for keeping pupils safe.
- The school provides an attractive, orderly and safe working environment for staff and pupils. Leaders have made significant improvements to site security since the previous inspection. For example, they have completed substantial work to reorganise access to the school site so that all visitors enter the building through the main entrance and sign in with office staff. This has substantially improved pupils' safety while at school.
- Leaders maintain good links with agencies, such as children's services and behavioural support services, and put specialist advice into practice in school to support pupils' well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and assessment has improved in all year groups and subjects since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants have consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' learning. They meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss pupils' progress and attendance, planning additional support for individual pupils and making changes to teaching where needed to ensure that pupils continue to make strong progress.
- Teachers are clear about which pupils are eligible for extra support provided by pupil-premium funding. They work closely with senior leaders to plan learning for disadvantaged pupils, including for the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have secured extensive improvements in the teaching of mathematics. Number and mathematics skills are taught consistently well across the school, building pupils' confidence and raising achievement.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' English work are much higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers pay careful attention to the use of spelling and punctuation in pupils' written work and encourage pupils to take responsibility for spotting and addressing any errors in their writing. This has had a considerable impact on the accuracy of all pupils' writing.
- The teaching of phonics has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants teach phonics confidently and effectively. Carefully focused teaching for those pupils who need extra help with their reading ensures that most pupils have secure key phonics skills by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching assistants work closely and constructively with teachers and are clear about

the part they play in supporting pupils' progress. They are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and confidently support pupils of all abilities, including the most able and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- All parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire felt that pupils are taught well and that they make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils of all ages are interested in learning and are keen to do well. They respect adults and each other.
- In the past, some pupils' high levels of absence have hampered their learning. However, the appointment of the school's attendance officer has made a significant contribution to improvements in pupils' attendance during the past year. She works very positively with staff, parents and pupils to check and support pupils' attendance. All groups, including disadvantaged pupils, attend regularly and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased substantially. As a result, all groups of pupils achieve increasingly well.
- Pupils feel safe and know what to do if they have a concern. Pupils understand how the school's rules help to keep them secure. For example, they know what to do when they hear the fire alarm and are clear about some of the steps they can take to ensure their safety when using the internet. All parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire feel that pupils are well cared for and safe.
- The school's breakfast club provides a relaxed, calm and enjoyable start to the day for those pupils who attend.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved dramatically in the past 18 months. However, some pupils do not share their classmates' positive attitudes to learning and do not always do their best during lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour has improved dramatically since the previous inspection. Most pupils behave well during lessons, playtimes, assemblies and when moving around the school.
- Parents, staff and pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare, a view confirmed by school records. Leaders respond promptly and seriously to any concerns about pupils' behaviour and well-being. Most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire feel that pupils are well behaved.
- Senior leaders and learning support mentors ensure that those pupils who find it more difficult to behave well benefit from consistent, carefully planned and good-quality guidance.
- While most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions promptly, a few struggle to sustain concentration during lessons. At times, they become fidgety and chatty and learn less well than others.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Significant and sustained improvements in the quality of teaching mean that pupils currently in the school make much better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. All groups of pupils make strong progress from their starting points in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Standards are rapidly rising in all year groups as pupils' progress accelerates across the school.
- Pupils' outcomes in mathematics were below national averages at the end of both key stages in 2016. Since then, the quality of mathematics teaching has improved markedly. Effective mathematics teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities develop an increasingly secure grasp of number. Pupils learn how to use a range of strategies successfully, such as practical equipment and number lines, to support their work in mathematics. This is strengthening their mathematical understanding well and is helping pupils in all year groups to tackle number problems with growing confidence.
- In 2016, the results of the Year 1 phonics check were below the national average. Significant improvements in the teaching of phonics during the past year have improved pupils' reading skills considerably. Pupils currently in Year 1 are well equipped with the key phonics skills they need to achieve well in reading.
- Pupils' attainment in reading in 2016 was average at the end of key stage 1 and below average at the end of key stage 2. Pupils' progress has accelerated across the school during the past year, lifting standards in all year groups. Pupils read regularly in school and at home. They enjoy reading a wide range of books.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join and leave the school during each academic year. This means that nationally published information about pupils' outcomes at the end of each key stage does not always give an accurate picture of pupils' achievement. The work in pupils' books illustrates the good progress pupils make from their individual starting points and the care they take with their work.
- In 2016, standards in writing were in line with national averages at both key stages. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points. Developments in the teaching of writing during the past year have brought further improvements in the quality of pupils' writing. All groups of pupils make strong progress in the use of vocabulary, spelling and handwriting.
- All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally strong progress. The gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing. Improved teaching and higher expectations have ensured that the most able pupils make the same rapid progress as their classmates. However, teaching does not yet ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, learn as fully or as deeply as they could in English, mathematics and other subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make strong progress from their starting points during the Reception Year. They rapidly develop some of the key personal, literacy and numeracy skills needed to achieve well and are well prepared for learning in Year 1. In 2016, the proportions of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year were much higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
- The early years leader accurately assesses children's needs at the start of the Reception Year. She makes good use of links with pre-schools and positive relationships with parents to get to know the children and to help them to settle into school life.
- The early years leader has made considerable changes to the curriculum to take account of changes in children's skills and experience on joining the Reception class during the past two years. For example, she and her team have strengthened the focus on developing children's language and social skills in response to children's needs. The early years leader and her team give children plenty of opportunities to practise and develop social and language skills.
- Children are keen to do their best. They behave well and participate enthusiastically in activities and lessons. For example, during the inspection, children understood the need to share the ride-on toys and waited patiently for their turn.
- Adults teach phonics effectively. They adapt teaching confidently to support children's different needs. As a result, children of all abilities use phonics with increasing success to sound out unfamiliar words. For example, during the inspection, children watched and listened to their teacher intently and went on to use what they had learned to read given words successfully. Skills such as these prepare children well for the next stage of their learning and make a strong contribution to their growing self-esteem.
- The early years leader has improved the use of the outdoor area to support children's development since the previous inspection. She and her team provide a wide range of appealing activities so that children have great fun while learning. As a result, children are active and involved and thoroughly enjoy school. However, some of the activities lack sufficient depth to extend children's learning fully, particularly for the boys. Leaders have rightly identified this as the next step in developing the early years provision.
- Adults pay careful attention to children's safety. They make sure that children are able to play and learn securely.

School details

Unique reference number	114365
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10024497

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Williams
Headteacher	Vicky Phillips
Telephone number	01273 291188
Website	www.brighton-hove.gov.uk
Email address	vickyphillips@coomberoad.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were both appointed in September 2016.
- The school works in partnership with a number of local schools in the locality through the Unity Partnership.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons, including 11 paired observations with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a national leader in education, senior and middle leaders, two local authority representatives, teachers and pupils. They also spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 36 responses to the staff questionnaire. They also considered the views expressed by parents and staff informally during the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including safeguarding policies, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' progress and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. They listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

James Munt

Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
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