

Brownmead Primary Academy

Pencroft Road, Shard End, Birmingham, West Midlands B34 6SS

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- While school leaders and governors have brought about many improvements, these have not yet ensured the provision of high-quality teaching and learning for all pupils. Many leaders are currently new to post and they have not had time to demonstrate a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Too frequently, tasks set for pupils are not accurately matched to their needs. When this happens, pupils sometimes lose interest and the pace of learning slows.
- The most able pupils are not always given work which is sufficiently challenging and which enables them to work at greater depth.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. Too few achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics limit pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to match work to the different needs of the pupils.
- The curriculum is not fully developed.
- In the early years, adults do not always plan purposeful activities that are interesting to the children or extend their curiosity. This slows the progress that the children make.

The school has the following strengths

- Phonics teaching is effective. By the end of Year 1, almost all pupils are able to use their phonics skills well to help them read.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is improving.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported very well. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are polite and well-behaved. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and caring. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and that they enjoy coming to school.
- Effective support and training are available to staff at all levels to help improve the impact of their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that all pupils make more rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide tasks that are closely matched to the needs of all groups of pupils
 - sharing the best practice in school to ensure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged so that they have more opportunities to work at greater depth
 - using accurate assessment information to inform planning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - further developing newly appointed leaders to ensure that their skills are used effectively to improve progress and outcomes across the school
 - further developing the curriculum so that pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding across a wide range of subjects.
- Improve progress and outcomes in mathematics across the school, especially in key stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that pupils further develop their ability to apply mathematical skills in context through problem-solving and reasoning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years by:
 - providing learning opportunities that capture children’s interests and are sufficiently challenging to enable them to make good progress from their starting points
 - improving the quality of adults’ questioning to deepen children’s thinking.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher, senior leaders and other leaders are fully committed to delivering the best possible education for the pupils at Brownmead Primary Academy. However, leadership and management of the school require improvement because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is uneven across the school and outcomes for pupils are not consistently good.
- Governors, senior leaders and members of the multi-academy trust have made considerable improvements to the school since the school became a sponsor-led academy. There are effective systems in place to support pupils' welfare and behaviour and the school is a happy, safe environment. Outcomes have improved and they are now at least in line with those seen nationally in phonics at the end of Year 1 and at the end of key stage 1. However, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 remain too low, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders acknowledge that there is too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school. This is due to many changes of staff over the last three years and an expanding teaching team. Senior leaders set high expectations for teachers but these are not yet being fully realised. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. To address this, staff have access to a range of effective training and development opportunities as well as in-class support.
- The headteacher and governors are clear about the areas in which the school needs to improve and they are taking action to tackle these. For example, in 2016, outcomes showed that progress in writing was not as strong as in other areas. Because of a focus on this area, there have been improvements in the quality of writing across the school. However, as with teaching staff, there have been many changes to the school leadership team and a new leadership structure was introduced in September 2017. As a result, many subject and phase leaders are newly appointed to their roles and, while they are very keen to make a positive difference, it is too soon to see the impact of their work.
- While leaders have rightly focused on English and mathematics, other aspects of the curriculum are less well developed. Pupils do have access to a broad range of subjects taught through termly topics. However, leaders recognise that more needs to be done to provide a curriculum that supports the teaching and learning of key skills, for example, identifying patterns, drawing conclusions and thinking critically. Recent work to develop the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education scheme is helping to strengthen pupils' understanding about keeping safe and healthy.
- Pupils value the opportunities that the school offers them to extend and enhance their learning. Topics are brought to life through trips. For example, Year 5 pupils make a visit to Cadbury's World when learning about the Mayans. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to take part in an annual residential trip. These help pupils to grow in confidence and become more independent as well as providing them with a range of new first-hand experiences. Pupils also benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities, including choirs, a range of different sports clubs and support for

mathematics and homework.

- Leaders and staff make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are taught about different faiths and cultures. British values, such as democracy, are taught through 'Brownmead values'. These are divided into five aspects: moral compass; make a difference; inspire; aspiration and success; opening doors. Displays around the school celebrate this aspect of the school's work in seeking to develop equality, tolerance and respect. The school is working towards achieving the UNICEF 'rights respecting schools award'.
- School leaders are aware of the academic, social and emotional barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face and they appropriately target the use of the pupil premium funding to address their needs. The impact of activities is tracked and adapted as necessary.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is used effectively to improve pupils' participation in, and enjoyment of, sport. There is a range of activities, run by a sports coach, on offer before, during and after school. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sporting events and competitions against other local schools. Training for staff is helping to ensure that the quality of PE teaching across the school is improving.
- The school has secure systems in place to identify and assess pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs are addressed in a variety of ways, including extra support in class and specialist interventions from both school staff and external agencies. The impact of additional support is tracked carefully and activities are adapted as necessary. Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well managed.
- During the inspection, staff spoke positively about the changes that have taken place in recent years. They now feel valued and part of a strong team. They are positive about having more opportunities to work with, and learn from, others within school and across the multi-academy trust.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school. They value the commitment shown by leaders and staff to ensuring that all pupils are well looked after and happy in school. Parents feel that they are kept well-informed about their children's progress.

Governance of the school

- The local academy board brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to support the school. Members are clear about the many improvements that have been made since the school became an academy. They are realistic about the work that still needs to be done to ensure that the school provides effectively for the needs of all pupils.
- Members of the board understand the school's data and the quality of teaching within school. They have clear performance management systems in place. These ensure that staff are held accountable for pupils' progress. Members of the board also provide senior leaders with an effective balance of support and challenge. They are clear about how additional funding is spent to impact on pupils' progress.
- The local academy board values the links with the multi-academy trust and recognises

the benefits that being a member of the trust brings, for example, access to additional expertise and support. Under the leadership of the experienced chair, local academy board members are committed to working with school leaders to address the areas for improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping children safe is central to the life of the school. The safeguarding team has introduced systems and processes that have created a culture where staff know that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. As a result, the school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times.
- All staff have regular and wide-ranging training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. They have a good awareness of what constitutes abuse and are vigilant in looking out for indicators of risk or harm. Leaders also have a clear understanding of the specific safeguarding concerns that relate to the context of the school.
- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, the team shares information with relevant external agencies. Leaders are persistent when concerned about a pupil's welfare and follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. They are taught how to keep safe online. Pupils are confident that any issues raised will be quickly resolved.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too uneven to promote consistently good progress for pupils in English and mathematics. Over time, teachers have not made effective use of assessment and teaching has not provided enough challenge, particularly for those who are most able.
- Many learning activities are not matched closely enough to pupils' needs to ensure that they make good progress. Sometimes, the work set is not challenging enough and pupils can complete the tasks quickly and with little thought. On other occasions, the work is too difficult and pupils are unable to tackle the task without adult support. This applies to pupils of all abilities, including the most able pupils.
- Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow. As a result, pupils sometimes lose concentration and learning time is lost.
- The most able pupils are not given enough opportunities to work at greater depth and this is preventing them from reaching the higher standards of which they are capable. For example, in mathematics, they are often completing the same work as the majority of the class and, while activities are presented at different levels, there is little additional challenge to move their learning on.

- The school's system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress has developed over the last 18 months. All pupils are assessed each half-term and their progress is reviewed. Leaders use the information to track the progress of key groups of pupils in English and mathematics and to identify the priorities and necessary interventions for the coming half-term. However, leaders are aware that the information entered into the system has not always been accurate and they are taking steps to ensure that it is now more precise. For example, there are more opportunities for staff to compare samples of pupils' work with colleagues in school and across the multi-academy trust. This helps everyone to reach a common understanding about the expected standards. At an individual class level, teachers do not always make good use of assessment information to adapt their planning and actively respond to pupils' needs.
- Leaders are aware that pupils do not make sufficient progress in mathematics to reach the standards they are capable of and that the teaching of mathematics requires improvement. More lesson time is now being spent teaching mathematics. This is focused on developing pupils' mental mathematics skills. However, it is too soon to be able to assess the impact of this new approach on pupils' progress. Work seen in pupils' books confirms that there is a focus on developing basic skills but there are insufficient opportunities to apply this knowledge in meaningful and relevant contexts. This means that pupils have limited opportunities to develop skills in reasoning, justifying their thinking and solving problems.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Where pupils have the opportunity to write at length, they demonstrate a developing use of grammar and punctuation skills, particularly across key stage 1. However, not all teachers are providing enough opportunities for pupils to write at length and in a variety of contexts and subjects.
- Where teaching is effective, teachers' questioning develops pupils' reasoning skills and teachers accurately model examples of good practice to help pupils complete a task successfully. For example, in Year 2, pupils were helped to write sentences using correct punctuation; while in Year 6, pupils were all able to take part in a debate about Viking laws, using prior knowledge to argue or defend differing points of view.
- Phonics teaching is a strength of the school. There are clear routines in place and sessions are engaging. Teachers and teaching assistants model letter sounds clearly and employ a range of approaches to support pupils' learning. Pupils generally read well. They develop fluency and understanding that are appropriate for their age. Younger pupils are able to apply their phonics skills to read new and unfamiliar words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's nurturing environment promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Each classroom includes a range of displays to support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Weekly celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are for academic achievement or demonstrating school values. Achievements are also shared with parents via an online portfolio.
- Central to the school's ethos are the Brownmead values. Pupils were involved in the

creation of these values along with staff, parents and governors. Pupils understand how these values apply to their lives.

- Pupils have many opportunities to make a contribution to school life and the wider community, for example by raising money for charities such as 'Children in Need'. Older pupils have the opportunity to take on a range of school-wide responsibilities, for example head boy and girl, school council representatives and playground leaders. Pupils take these roles seriously and are proud to undertake them. Pupils feel that school leaders value their opinions. For example, the school council was recently involved in determining rewards and consequences as part of the school's revised behaviour policy. As one pupil said, 'This school gives you loads of life experiences by giving you responsibilities.' These opportunities are helping to prepare the pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take, including cyber-bullying. They are clear that incidents of bullying in school are rare and they are confident that an adult will deal with any concerns quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well-mannered, confident and friendly. They are proud of their school. Pupils show respect for the ideas and views of other pupils, and work together cooperatively to support each other's learning.
- The school's behaviour policy is effective and focuses on motivating the pupils to behave well. Pupils and staff understand the policy and use it consistently. Pupils appreciate this consistency and sense of fairness. Older pupils say that behaviour 'has changed a lot' and 'is now better everywhere'.
- Behaviour in classrooms is generally of a high standard, with most pupils being keen to learn. Occasionally, pupils lose focus or become distracted if the level or the pace of the lesson is not right for them. This can impact on the progress that they make.
- School attendance levels have dropped a little over the last 12 months and they are below the national average. School leaders are taking robust action to tackle this and good attendance has a high profile across the school. Leaders track attendance carefully and promptly follow up any absence. They are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently strong progress as they move through the school. Outcomes are improving but too few pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave at the end of key stage 2. This is the result of inconsistent teaching.
- Provisional assessment information for 2017 indicates that the school is closing the attainment gap with national standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading and

writing. However, attainment remains below national figures in these areas and in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Outcomes in mathematics were particularly disappointing. Progress was not strong enough to allow all pupils to be sufficiently well prepared for the move to secondary school.

- School assessment information and evidence gathered during the inspection show that progress and attainment for pupils in mathematics are weak across the school, particularly in key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress. This is because the work that they are set is not sufficiently demanding and does not challenge them to think deeply enough. As a result, too few pupils reach the higher standards by the end of key stage 2. There has been, however, an increase in the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in key stage 1 in 2017, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The rates of progress for disadvantaged pupils across the school are generally improving, although outcomes do vary between subjects and year groups. In writing at the end of key stage 1 in 2017, the difference in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally who are not disadvantaged reduced by 15%; while in mathematics, for the same group, the gap widened by 13%.
- Historically, boys' outcomes have not been as strong as girls' have but, again, there is no consistent pattern. Differences in performance are starting to reduce overall. Teachers across the school are increasingly adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils, for example through topics such as 'toys', 'wild water' and 'out of this world'.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress from their starting points. This is because the progress of pupils who receive additional support is being more carefully tracked and monitored.
- There are no significant differences in outcomes between pupils from different ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national average for three years and the school's outcomes in 2017 were particularly strong for all groups of pupils.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Early years provision requires improvement because staffing changes have resulted in the quality of teaching being inconsistent over time.
- Teachers collect detailed information about what children can do and what they need to do to develop further. However, adults do not use this information precisely enough to plan activities that match different children's needs. As a result, learning is either too easy or too difficult for some children. This means that not all the children make the progress that they are capable of.
- Adult-led activities provide children with opportunities to practise their number, phonics and writing skills. However, the questions that adults ask do not consistently challenge the children to think deeply about their learning or to explain their understanding. Too many questions ask the children to recall what they already know. This slows the

progress that the children make.

- The recent development of the outdoor learning environment provides a range of equipment to develop all aspects of the children's learning. However, this area is not yet being used to maximum effect. Along with the indoor learning environment, there are not enough stimulating activities to excite the children and to capture their interests. As a result, some children lose focus and move from one activity to another with little real purpose and learning opportunities are lost.
- Routines for children to listen carefully and take turns are not fully established. Because of this, many children become restless, call out and are easily distracted in whole-class activities. This can limit children's learning.
- The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has increased over time, although the outcomes remain below the level seen nationally. Many children enter Reception with skills and knowledge below the level typical for their age. In 2017, the majority of children made strong progress from their starting points. Most children are well prepared for their move into Year 1. Where this is not the case, additional support is provided.
- There are effective transition arrangements in place to support children as they start in Reception. As a result, children settle quickly and are happy to come to school. There are strong links between early years staff and parents. Parents get regular updates about their children's progress and staff offer workshops for parents to help them better support their child's learning.
- Adults know the children well. Relationships are positive and children are well cared for. Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements in the early years are met.
- Children generally behave well. They generally listen to instructions from adults and play well together.

School details

Unique reference number	141320
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10037083

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ian Lowe
Headteacher	Ashley Winters
Telephone number	0121 675 3102
Website	brownmead.learning.academy
Email address	enquiry@brownmead.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Brownmead Primary Academy is the size of an average primary school. However, the school is expanding from one-form to two-form entry and numbers are gradually increasing. There are currently two classes in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2. There is one class in each of Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The school does not have a Nursery class.
- The school became a sponsor-led academy in November 2014. It is a member of the Washwood Heath multi-academy trust. The local academy board works with the headteacher and the school's senior management to provide strategic direction for the school. The local academy board reports to the board of trustees for the multi-academy trust.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with other pupils coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most primary schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club. The local academy board manages this provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons or small-group sessions. A number of these observations were undertaken jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to some pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. Inspectors also met with representatives of the local academy board including the chair of the board.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through scrutinising 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including seven free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents on the first day of the inspection.
- Eighteen responses to the staff questionnaire were considered as part of the inspection, as were seven responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anna Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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