

# Brookland Infant and Nursery School

Elm Drive, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 0RX

## Inspection dates

16–17 May 2018

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The commitment, drive and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders have brought about significant improvements over the last year.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking the right actions to bring about and sustain further improvement.
- Monitoring by leaders and governors is accurate. Actions to improve the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics are taking effect and, consequently, teaching has improved.
- There remain a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which leaders are addressing effectively through training.
- Most current pupils are achieving well and making good progress from their starting points. However, work for the most able can lack challenge, which sometimes impedes the progress of these pupils.
- Improved use of the pupil premium funding is diminishing differences between the achievement of current disadvantaged pupils and their peers in school and nationally. Differences are not yet eliminated.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They enjoy a balance of activities that help them to make good progress in all aspects of their learning. However, adults sometimes do not take opportunities when children are choosing their own learning activities to provide additional challenge.
- Phonics is taught well and this provides pupils with a good foundation in reading skills.
- The school ensures that pupils are safe and well cared for at all times. Procedures for all aspects of safeguarding are robust.
- Pupils behave well consistently. They are polite and confident and show a high degree of respect for one other, listening to each other's viewpoints and working collaboratively. Most take pride in their work, but a few do not present their work as neatly as they could.
- The developing curriculum provides increasing interesting opportunities for pupils to apply their English and mathematics skills when learning other subjects. Pupils have enriching experiences that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management, by:
  - continuing to diminish the differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally who have similar starting points, including improving the attendance of these pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to be outstanding, by:
  - ensuring that work regularly challenges the most able pupils to reach higher standards by being sufficiently demanding
  - making sure all teachers consistently apply the school's policy for handwriting and presentation
  - intervening more in the early years when children are choosing their own learning activities, in order to provide greater challenge and deepen learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher provides determined leadership. Since joining the school, she has established high expectations for both staff and pupils and been unremitting in her drive to improve teaching, learning and outcomes across the school.
- On taking up post in September 2016, the headteacher inherited disappointing outcomes at the end of key stage 1. She was determined to raise standards and bring about improvements. Supported by her deputy, she immediately took action to drive long-term improvement. Unfortunately, these did not have the impact hoped for due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and a lack of leadership capacity across the school. Consequently, standards declined again at the end of key stage 1 in 2017.
- Since this time, leadership has been strengthened with new leaders for English and mathematics. New teachers have also been appointed. The skills of all staff have been honed through the provision of high-quality training, support and coaching. Teachers are clear about the key aspects of teaching and learning which enable pupils to make secure progress. All teachers are assessed against these key criteria and leaders have a comprehensive and accurate view of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. The mathematics and English subject leaders are knowledgeable about their respective areas. They are passionate about their work and demonstrate an enthusiasm for making the school even better. They know what needs to be done to secure further improvement and are effective in disseminating good practice, which has contributed well to the improvements seen.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of what the school does well, and what it needs to do to improve further. The school improvement plan is detailed and identifies the right actions to support sustained improvement.
- Leaders and teaching staff have worked hard to address the disappointing outcomes for pupils shown in statutory results at the end of key stage 1 in 2017. As a result of improvements in the quality of teaching, current pupils are now making good progress in their learning. The majority of pupils in each year group are on track to reach the attainment expected for their age by the end of the school year.
- Leaders are now managing pupil premium spending more effectively to provide targeted support and enrichment for disadvantaged pupils. This is bringing about better progress for current disadvantaged pupils across the school. However, although improving, the achievement of some disadvantaged pupils still lags behind that of other pupils in the school and nationally.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively. These pupils are supported well to make good progress from their starting points.
- The primary physical education and sport funding for schools is being used well. Staff have been able to observe and work alongside specialist sports coaches, which has led to improved confidence and expertise. Pupils benefit from a range of sports equipment and also a variety of after-school clubs, including tennis, gymnastics, football and

multi-skills. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in 'the daily mile' as part of a healthy lifestyle.

- The school's caring ethos and underpinning values ensure that fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are effectively promoted. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been designed to provide increasing links between subjects. Pupils benefit from a variety of visits and visitors to the school and also have the opportunity to take part in 'forest school' learning.
- Leaders have welcomed challenge and support from the local authority. The support has been well used and contributed effectively to improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. Support has also been brokered for leadership from the headteacher of an outstanding school in the area.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are highly ambitious for the quality of education offered by the school. They are well aware of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. They visit the school regularly and participate in monitoring activities alongside leaders. Governors bring a range of appropriate professional skills and experience to the school that enable them both to challenge and support leaders effectively.
- Governors receive detailed information about the achievement of different groups. They are aware that in the past, some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have not achieved as well as they should. They are clear about how additional funding to support these pupils is used and know that funding is now having a more positive impact on improving their achievement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school makes all necessary checks when appointing new staff and records are meticulous. Recruitment records are detailed and complete.
- Leaders ensure that a culture of safeguarding is promoted by all staff. Training is thorough and up to date. Staff consider a range of safeguarding scenarios in regular meetings. Consequently, all staff are aware of and fully implement the school's procedures for safeguarding.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that when they have concerns staff take them seriously and sort them out. Parents agree that this is the case. Pupils understand about bullying and say that on the rare occasions when they fall out adults resolve any issues.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe when using modern technology. For example, they know that they should not reveal personal information on the internet.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Effective action, taken over the last year in particular, has improved the quality and consistency of teaching across the school. This is reflected in the good progress that current pupils are making.

- Classroom environments provide consistently strong support for learning. Lessons are mainly lively and interesting, capturing pupils' imagination. For example, Year 2 pupils were highly engaged when producing flower drawings in the style of the artist Georgia O'Keefe. They enjoyed exploring different media and showed an impressive knowledge and understanding of the artist's style.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and most use assessment information effectively to plan work that ensures that pupils make good progress from their starting points. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson the teacher moved the most able pupils on from learning about arrays to the idea of multiplication so that they were challenged at a higher level.
- Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss their work, rehearse vocabulary and share their ideas. This supports their learning well. They ask challenging questions that make pupils think. Other adults make a good contribution to learning and provide effective support to individuals and groups.
- The teaching of writing, including handwriting, is improving. Pupils have responded well to the school's actions to improve sentence structure, leading to a better quality of writing. The integration of writing in English and in topic work is providing more inspiration for pupils to write for purpose and to produce longer pieces. There remains some variation in the quality of handwriting and presentation because not all teachers insist on high standards.
- Within mathematics, pupils are taught basic fluency skills in number and mental calculation on a daily basis. The recent focus on developing pupils' reasoning skills is evident in their books. In Year 1, some pupils wrote impressively detailed and accurate sentences to justify their thinking when solving problems.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is effective. Pupils use their phonic skills accurately to blend sounds or as a basis for spelling.
- Work is usually pitched well, according to pupils' abilities. However, on a few occasions work does not provide enough challenge, especially for the most able pupils. When this happens, these pupils do not make as rapid progress as they could.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are very well cared for. The school values of 'respect, honesty, equality, kindness, fun and safety' underpin all aspects of school life and help to nurture strong relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff.
- Superhero characters such as 'Captain Persevere' and 'Collaborative Kid' help pupils to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become confident, resilient, capable, creative and life-long learners.
- In lessons, pupils care and show respect for one another. They value their classmates' opinions and work collaboratively together.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are confident, welcoming and polite. They generally conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school at various points during the day. Incidents of low-level disruption are rare; those pupils who sometimes exhibit more challenging behaviour are well supported.
- Behaviour systems encourage positive attitudes to learning. Playtimes are harmonious occasions, where pupils play happily together with a range of equipment. Organised activities at lunchtime ensure that no one is left out.
- Pupils enjoy assemblies. During the inspection, in a 'celebration of learning' assembly, Year 1 children confidently presented to parents about their learning. A high number of parents attended this assembly, which was well organised and characterised by excellent behaviour.
- Pupils' attendance is generally in line with the national average for primary schools. Leaders are assiduous in following up any absences from school. They do all they can to promote regular attendance for all pupils. However, the attendance of a very few disadvantaged pupils is slightly lower than that of other pupils nationally and their classmates in school and this has a detrimental impact on their attainment and progress.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- Outcomes are improving and current pupils are achieving well. A higher proportion of pupils are on track to reach and exceed the expected standards in each of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 than in previous years.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and are now making better progress in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics as they build effectively on this solid foundation.
- Pupils' early reading skills are effectively developed. In recent years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 have been at least in line with those seen nationally.
- In both 2016 and 2017, at the end of key stage 1, pupils did not make as good progress from the end of the Reception Year as was expected. In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding expected standards at the end of key stage 1 was below average. This was particularly the case for writing.
- Leaders have introduced a range of strategies to bring about improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. These include: greater focus on sentence construction in writing; more opportunities to develop reasoning skills in mathematics; and promoting higher expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation. These strategies are having a positive impact. Consequently, pupils' progress and attainment are improving across these subjects.
- Over time, there have been differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school or other pupils nationally. However, as a result of more effective and strategic use of the pupil premium funding, the achievement of current disadvantaged pupils is improving. Previous differences between their

achievement and that of other pupils are diminishing, but are yet to be fully closed.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from effective provision to meet their varying needs. This ensures that they are fully integrated, working alongside their peers in the classroom and make good progress over time from their starting points.
- An increasing proportion of pupils are on track to reach greater depth in Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers usually provide appropriate challenge for all pupils during lessons. Occasionally, when this is not the case, a few pupils, including those who are most able, do not make the progress that they could.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children in the early years show eagerness to explore and learn. They enjoy the range of opportunities provided both indoors and outside to investigate and learn happily together. Behaviour is good: most children are happy to share and take turns. Routines are clearly established. Most children show perseverance with learning activities. The environment is spacious and provides good support for learning.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery. The new approaches introduced from the start of the year are ensuring that children make good progress from their starting points, including in developing their phonic knowledge and early reading skills.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has improved year on year and was above average in 2017. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know children well and plan a range of activities that mostly meet the needs of individual children. The new approach to focusing on a small group of identified pupils each day is ensuring that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have SEN and/or disabilities, progress well.
- The teaching of phonics is good in both Nursery and Reception. Adults support children well in developing their early reading and writing skills.
- Children benefit from a range of activities that they select for themselves and some that are led by adults. However, adults sometimes do not intervene when children are working on activities they have chosen themselves to provide greater challenge, so that they make the most of their learning.
- Children enjoy the experience of outside learning, particularly when they take part in 'forest schools'. This experience helps to develop their independence, resilience and vocabulary.
- The early years is well led. The early years leader knows children well and is aware of their needs and starting points. She, together with her team, ensures that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are met.

## School details

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Unique reference number | 117272        |
| Local authority         | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number       | 10037640      |

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

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Infant   |
| School category                     | Maintained   |
| Age range of pupils                 | 3 to 7   |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 323  |
| Appropriate authority               | The governing body   |
| Co-Chairs                           | Steve Bowman and Alison Worsley  |
| Headteacher                         | Alison Atkinson  |
| Telephone number                    | 01992 629485   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk">www.brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk</a>   |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:head@brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk">head@brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 15–16 October 2013   |

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. While most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language, the school has a diverse intake, incorporating a range of ethnic groups.
- The school provides full-time places for Reception children and part-time places for children in the Nursery class. The majority of children start school in the Nursery but around a third do so in Reception.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of children who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion that have an education, health and care plan is above.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced numerous changes in staff. This includes in the leadership of the school.



- Leaders have been receiving support from the headteacher of Woolenwick Infant and Nursery School, who is a local leader of education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes, including jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They listened to some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read and reviewed in detail work in the books of Year 2 pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, a representative of the local authority, subject leaders and members of teaching staff. They also spoke to parents and met with four groups of pupils to determine their views on school life.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents and information provided by the school. These included information relating to pupils' progress and the school's view on how well it is doing. Inspectors also reviewed the school improvement plan, documents relating to performance management and safeguarding, the school's monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 53 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. Additionally, they also considered 212 responses to the school's own parent questionnaire.

## Inspection team

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Joan Beale, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Clementina Aina            | Ofsted Inspector |
| Clare Haines               | Ofsted Inspector |

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