

Battle Primary Academy

Cranbury Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2TD

Inspection dates

30 April–1 May 2019

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

- Since joining the school, the headteacher has taken a methodical and careful approach to improving the organisation. He has recruited and galvanised a strong staff who want the very best for pupils. This is a good school.
- Middle leaders now play a vital role in school improvement. They follow the strong example of their senior colleagues and show ambition for the pupils in the school. They are well placed to secure further improvement.
- Pupils from this diverse community get along well. They take pride in their work, treating each other with respect and tolerance. This is a happy and harmonious school.
- Governors and trust officers provide the right level of challenge and support to leaders. They know the school well and have refined their systems to ensure that they receive the right information on the school's performance.
- Absence remains too high. Leaders are working to address this, but improvements have not yet been secured.
- Pupils' progress has strengthened because, typically, learning is carefully sequenced. However, when this is not the case, progress weakens.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Staff plan work carefully to meet pupils' needs and offer strong support to those who fall behind. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged to attain at a high standard.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff, leaders and parents work as a cohesive team to identify and remove barriers to these pupils' success.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well. The progress that these pupils make has strengthened throughout the school.
- Staff in the early years know the children well and offer them a good start to their early education. The majority of pupils achieve a good level of development which leaves them well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the levels of attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Ensure that the most able pupils are routinely challenged so that greater proportions attain at a high standard.
- Ensure that the inconsistencies in quality of teaching are ironed out so that pupils consistently build on their prior knowledge and understanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably assisted by his senior team, is skilled, passionate and determined. He has a clear vision for the school and has set about achieving it in sensible and steady steps. After a period of decline and turbulence, Battle Primary Academy is going from strength to strength.
- Middle leaders are capable and ambitious. They receive strong guidance from senior leaders and are taking a greater responsibility for the development of the school. For example, middle leaders have revitalised the mathematics curriculum, ensuring that the changes made are carefully monitored and effective. Leadership capacity has grown, which has been instrumental in the development of the school.
- Staff are supported well to achieve their best. Targets and training are personalised and carefully monitored. Teachers and support staff appreciate the guidance and feedback they receive and are motivated to consistently develop their work. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved.
- Leaders seek to promote staff well-being and are considerate of workload. Recent changes to the feedback policy are being trialled to avoid unnecessary, additional work and have been implemented after considerable consultation with staff. Leaders' ambition to prioritise the right things is helping staff to focus on what really matters to pupils while maintaining a positive work-life balance.
- Leaders have reviewed and improved systems for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND. There is a strong partnership between families, the school and external agencies. Teachers are supported to make considered and well-suited adaptations to pupils' work so that they can access and understand their tasks. As a result, these pupils make strong progress.
- Additional funding to promote physical education (PE) and sport is well spent. Leaders have identified a range of activities to help improve staff knowledge and skills, and to increase pupil participation. As a result, the quality of PE teaching has improved throughout the school.
- Leaders use assessment information well to gain an understanding of pupils' performance and identify any groups that need support. For example, following analysis of pupils' progress in mathematics, additional teaching was provided to help address gaps in these pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils who fall behind quickly catch up with their peers.
- The curriculum is carefully considered and well planned, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to research, evaluate and debate. For example, pupils looked at the positive and negative impacts of the Commonwealth and how this has changed over history, reflecting on challenging topics such as the maltreatment of the Windrush generation. In geography, pupils considered the environmental process and human impact of earthquakes, learning the science of plate tectonics and considering the impact of natural disasters on both less and more economically developed countries. The curriculum broadens pupils' understanding of the world around them and contributes greatly to the enthusiasm for learning that permeates the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors support the school leaders effectively and there is a positive and transparent relationship between them. Governors have developed their understanding of the school's performance information and possess a clear knowledge of how well the school is performing. As a result, they quickly pick up on emerging weaknesses and challenge leaders to improve these.
- The multi-academy trust knows the school well and has been instrumental in recruiting the headteacher, senior leaders and a strong teaching staff. In doing so it has helped to stabilise the staffing, leading to an improvement in quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Trust officers, rightly, have faith in the leadership team of the school, offering light-touch support to help review and refine systems in the school. As a result, the pace of change is steady, consistent and sustainable.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive valuable training which helps them to recognise when families need support and quickly pass on concerns to leaders. Regular updates to training and staff quizzes keep safeguarding at the forefront of everyone's thinking. When concerns arise, these are shared quickly and appropriately by leaders who work with a range of external agencies to get families the help they need.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, Year 1 pupils recently visited the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in Swanage and learned how to stay safe around open water. Older pupils possess a strong understanding of the danger posed by social media and careless use of the internet. Pupils are well prepared to navigate dangers because they are able to identify and evaluate risks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and pupils enjoy warm relationships. Teachers value pupils' contributions and allow them time to explain their thinking. Often, teachers will share the best examples with the rest of the class which helps other pupils to structure their work when they find things hard. Classrooms are typically calm, focused and purposeful environments where sharing and collaboration are valued.
- In mathematics, pupils are taught to use efficient methods of calculation and to present their working in a neat and logical manner. Pupils happily discuss their thinking in mathematics and are able to solve an increasingly complex range of problems. Typically, pupils make strong progress in mathematics.
- Teachers question pupils well, using this to identify and rectify any misunderstandings that pupils have. Teachers assess pupils' understanding regularly and use this to set tasks at the right level for them. As a result, work is closely matched to pupils' needs.
- Specialist teachers in music, art and PE contribute greatly to the quality of teaching in these subjects. For example, in art, pupils learn to paint, draw and sculpt with a range of media and are inspired by the work of others in the newly created art studio. Pupil

outcomes are of a high standard in these subjects because teachers guide and challenge pupils effectively.

- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well in class through the coaching programme. Well-trained peers hold mature conversations with pupils to help identify and overcome challenges in their learning. Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress throughout the school.
- Pupils read books which are closely matched to their ability. Thoughtful additional support, such as extra reading practice after school holidays and additional phonics instruction, is provided for pupils who are not attaining at the standard expected for their age. As a result, these pupils catch up quickly.
- Teachers carefully consider what they want pupils to know and understand. They develop series of lessons which help pupils to gain key knowledge, and then use and apply their skills. Staff possess considerable subject knowledge across the foundation and science curriculum, providing support for each other when needed. As a result, standards across the wider curriculum have risen dramatically. However, in some classes, pupils' prior learning is not built upon in a logical manner which prevents pupils from making greater progress.
- In most classes, lessons are well planned to meet pupils' needs. On some occasions, teachers simplify tasks and support pupils too much. This prevents pupils, particularly the most able, from working at the level that they are capable of.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In this diverse and cosmopolitan community, pupils learn to appreciate and value the similarities in each other's culture, belief and heritage. For example, pupils have set up a multi-faith prayer group, allowing those from all religions to pray together and share their spiritual experiences and beliefs. This adds greatly to pupils' personal development and leaves them very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- 'Hot chocolate Friday' allows pupils the opportunity to give feedback to leaders. Pupils are nominated to share a hot drink with leaders and talk about their views of the school and to discuss their learning. This adds to pupils' understanding of community and democracy.
- Pupils learn to make healthy lifestyle choices. They understand the effects of drugs and alcohol on the body as well as the positive impact that healthy food and an active lifestyle can have. They are well prepared to make healthy choices in the future.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride and value their school. The site is devoid of litter and corridors are tidy. Pupils are proud of the setting and the strong start it gives them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In class pupils show great respect for their teachers and enthusiasm for their work. Classes are typically warm and respectful environments where pupils discuss their thinking and share their opinions, safe in the knowledge they will be heard and respected.
- Pupils' behaviour at lunchtime is strong because they understand the routines and enjoy the range of carefully structured physical activities. Pupils get on well with each other, safe in the knowledge that help is readily available from adults in the school should they need it.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average despite the significant efforts of leaders. Considerable support is put in place to help families to raise their child's attendance. Nevertheless, some parents do not share the high aspirations of staff at the school and, as a result, rates of persistent absence remain high.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that they have an adult to turn to should they need support. Most pupils assert that staff are good at ironing out any problems they may face in school. Pupils feel that bullying is not a problem at the school. However, some younger pupils are unsure about what constitutes bullying.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- High proportions of pupils in the school begin their education speaking English as an additional language. Strong support from staff and peers helps these pupils to integrate well and develop their communication and speech. Lower-than-average proportions of pupils attain the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Nevertheless, most pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make consistently strong progress from their different starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress has strengthened in the last year. A strong focus on support and additional teaching has ensured that gaps in pupils' understanding have been addressed. As a result, the progress these pupils make is beginning to match that of others in the school.
- Throughout the school, pupils have a secure understanding of calculation and carefully set out their working in a neat and methodical manner. They quickly get to grips with calculation and abstract concepts such as the link between fractions, decimals and percentages. As a result, pupils make strong progress in mathematics.
- Pupils write extensively and at length. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote playscripts about the Roman Empire, demarcating speech by using inverted commas. It takes time for some pupils to master these skills, particularly those who are learning English as an additional language. However, through regular support and practice, these pupils do remember grammatical rules and apply them consistently in their work.
- Pupils who fall behind in reading are supported well to catch up. A range of strategies is utilised to help pupils to practice their skills and make strong progress. Phonics teaching is strong and, as a result, pupils throughout the school read unfamiliar words

with confidence. As they get older, pupils read for pleasure and enjoy rich discussions about their books. Pupils possess strong literacy skills and develop a love of reading.

- Standards in the wider curriculum are high. Pupils enjoy the broad and interesting curriculum and can explain what they have learned and remembered. For example, pupils in Year 5 choreographed 'shadow dances' and evaluated their work in their topic books. In science, pupils in Year 3 studied the anatomy of flowering plants and carefully plotted diagrams to show their findings. Most pupils across the school make strong progress across the foundation and science curriculum. However, when teachers do not sequence learning carefully, pupils' progress weakens.
- Pupils are supported well to attain at the expected standard for their age. This has been particularly successful for pupils who fall behind. Nevertheless, the most able pupils are not routinely challenged and low proportions of pupils attain at a high standard.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the early years provision. They check the quality of teaching and learning regularly, and work with the staff team well to secure improvements. Enhancements to the outside area have enlivened the learning environment and are greatly appreciated by the children. The provision offers children a good start to their early education.
- Provision in the early years is thoughtfully planned and structured by teachers and support staff. Staff take time to get to know children and families, and plan tasks which match children's interests. As a result, children engage well with a range of motivating, well-planned activities.
- Pupils enter the early years with skills and understanding below what is typically expected for their age. By the time they leave, most children have attained a good level of development. This represents strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have worked hard to make strong links with parents. This includes guidance for parents to learn how to support their children to read, write and count. Currently, this support is accessed by a small proportion of parents but with great benefits to those who do.
- The links between Nursery and Reception have a positive impact, particularly on younger children who mimic the positive behaviour of their older peers. Children play well together and focus on their tasks. The early years setting provides children with a safe and positive start to their early education.

School details

Unique reference number	139066
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10088163

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Sponsored converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Stephen Daniels
Headteacher	Nathan Butler-Broad
Telephone number	01189 375421
Website	www.netacademies.net/battle/
Email address	admin@battleprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November–1 December 2016

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- This school is sponsored by the NET Academies Trust
- About two thirds of pupils are known to speak English as an additional language, using a wide range of other languages at home.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND and/or an education, health and care plan is slightly below the national average.
- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have joined the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 26 parts of lessons, some with senior leaders.
- In addition to discussions with parents, 30 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised to gather information on: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance; systems for managing the performance of teachers; behaviour and safety of pupils; safeguarding; the progress and attainment of pupils, and curriculum leadership.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website to evaluate the quality of information for parents and whether the school meets statutory publishing requirements.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils to gather their views and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors, and held a telephone call with the Chief Executive Officer of the Net Academies Trust.

Inspection team

Daniel Lambert, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Shaughnessy	Ofsted Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019