

Inspection of Brandling Primary School

Mulberry Street, Felling, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE10 0JB

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at Brandling Primary School. They treat each other kindly and with respect. They believe that teachers care about them and explain that school is like 'a family'. Older pupils act as 'hoody buddies' and play with younger pupils at breaktime. Pupils, parents and staff agree that bullying is not a problem at this school. If it happens, staff tackle it quickly and effectively. Pupils explain that they should challenge bullying if they see it, as they should take care of each other.

The quality of the curriculum and how it is delivered is not good enough. The new headteacher does have a very accurate view of the school's priorities. She is making clear improvements with the support of other leaders. Many positive actions have already been taken, but some of these new changes are still in their infancy. Leaders are in the process of improving the curriculum across many areas of the school. However, for some subjects, curriculum leaders are not clear about exactly what they want pupils to know, including in the early years. Some activities in the classroom do not help pupils to focus on important knowledge or move through the curriculum quickly enough.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They are keen to learn and engaged. If there is low-level disruption, it is dealt with by teachers. Pupils are resilient and willing to give things a go. They explain that mistakes are a chance to improve.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The new headteacher has prioritised early reading. The impact is clear to see. Younger pupils have daily phonics lessons in small groups. They are reading books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Leaders have ensured that staff have been trained in how to teach phonics effectively. Pupils who are struggling receive regular, effective support to help them keep up.

Subject leaders are reviewing their curriculum plans. They want to make sure that pupils build on what they already know systematically. In some areas, such as science and early reading, this process is further ahead. In other subjects, leaders have not identified clearly enough exactly what they want pupils to learn. In early years, leaders have not thought carefully enough about how children will build knowledge progressively. Currently, pupils are not achieving well enough in subjects across the curriculum. This is also the case for children in the early years.

Many teachers deliver new information clearly and check exactly what pupils know. This is not happening consistently. Some teachers are not uncovering gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly enough. In some subjects, assessment is not matched closely to the curriculum. It does not allow teachers to identify what gaps pupils may have. Leaders are already taking action to address this.

In the early years, leaders have provided an effective new outdoor space. Children now have access to an engaging environment which encourages learning. However, leaders do not have robust systems for checking which activities children are accessing and what they are learning. Staff are nurturing to children. Children enjoy stories and songs regularly. They are taught to share and be kind. Some staff encourage children to use ambitious vocabulary and ask them questions. However, this level of support is not consistent.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being effectively supported to access the curriculum. For example, staff use British sign language to make sure that deaf pupils can learn alongside their peers. However, staff are not providing the same level of effective support to some other pupils with SEND. Some support that pupils receive is not closely focused on meeting their specific needs.

Leaders' commitment to pupils' wider development is a considerable strength of the school. Pupils explain the importance of respect. They celebrate difference and diversity. The 'young interpreters' scheme allows older pupils who speak English as an additional language to act as support to younger pupils who speak the same language. They also provide school tours to new families who share their native language. They give assemblies about their home culture. This is one of a range of opportunities to develop pupils' self-confidence.

Leaders are committed to supporting the mental well-being of pupils. Pupils learn about how to manage their emotions. The family support worker provides a much-valued service to families and pupils who need additional support. Leaders ensure the school is a caring and inclusive environment.

The school has been through a period of turbulence and transition of leadership. The headteacher has skilfully balanced priorities for improvement alongside consideration for staff. Staff feel they are well supported and that there are now avenues where their concerns would be listened to. Parents feel involved in the life of the school. They appreciate the positive improvements. Staff feel proud to work at this school. The headteacher and her team are having a positive impact on the quality of education at school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, both in the community and online. Leaders have ensured that pupils know how to report any worries they have. Pupils feel safe in school, and all have a trusted adult.

Staff are clear about what action they should take if they have concerns about pupils' well-being. They are encouraged to report all concerns. Safeguarding has a high priority around school. Leaders act promptly in response to any issues. Logs confirm this. Leaders are proactive in supporting families, not just pupils. Leaders

work closely with a range of external agencies to ensure that families get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some curriculum planning, leaders have not identified exactly what they want pupils to know. This is also true in the early years. This means that pupils are not always able to remember key knowledge. Leaders should ensure that they clearly identify exactly what they want pupils to learn and remember.
- In some subjects, assessment is not matched closely to the curriculum. Some teachers do not systematically check what pupils know in lessons. This means that teachers cannot quickly identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should ensure that assessment systems are closely matched to the new curriculum. Leaders should also ensure that questioning and retrieval in lessons allow teachers to uncover and respond to gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Some activities are not well designed to allow pupils to learn and remember key knowledge. This means that pupils are not able to move through the curriculum confidently and quickly. Leaders should ensure that activities in lessons are clearly focused on what they want pupils to know.
- A few staff are still developing their expertise across a range of areas, including curriculum development, early reading and SEND. More robust systems are now in place. However, they have not had the chance to embed. This means that provision in these areas is inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that staff are able to access the appropriate range of professional development.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	108359
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10211945
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ed Bartley
Headteacher	Aimi Clennell
Website	www.brandlingprimaryschool.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant leadership changes since the previous inspection. The new headteacher was seconded to the school in September 2021 and was formally appointed as the permanent headteacher in March 2022.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with speech and language needs. There are five pupils, from varying age groups, in the specially resourced provision who are integrated into mainstream lessons.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspectors deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with a range of school leaders and school improvement partners from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans for science and spoke to leaders.
- An inspector spoke with the special educational needs coordinator by phone. They also looked at a range of education, health and care plans and individual education plans.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for early years and looked at a range of documentation and planning.
- Inspectors checked the single central record. They met with leaders in charge of safeguarding and checked logs of actions taken to keep pupils safe. They checked documents relating to safe recruitment.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff, formally and informally, during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke to a range of pupils during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour and personal development. They looked at planning for personal, social, health and relationships education.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, risk assessments, exclusions data and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors met with governors, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff questionnaire and Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Katie Spurr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lynn George

Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Fallon

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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