

Inspection of Braintcroft E-Act Primary Academy

Warren Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 7LL

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are both happy and safe at this larger-than-average primary school. Leaders have gone to great lengths to ensure that all feel valued and cared for as members of the school 'family'. Pupils enjoy learning because their teachers provide opportunities that are both meaningful and exciting. Leaders make sure that pupils learn about a variety of careers. They want pupils to have ambitious goals for their future lives and to develop enquiring minds.

Leaders have high expectations of everyone. They encourage all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to work towards the same learning goals in each subject. Pupils learn effectively and produce work of high quality because staff are skilled in removing any barriers to pupils' success.

Pupils are polite and well behaved. They rarely need to be reminded to follow the high expectations for their conduct and attitudes. This is because all adults play their part in promoting positive behaviour. Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are uncommon. If they do occur, they are quickly dealt with by any adult that pupils tell.

Leaders prioritise celebrating diversity. They make sure everyone feels included. One way that leaders promote this aim is through holding an 'international day'. Pupils excitedly recalled sharing food, music and traditional clothes from their own culture with others.

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

Leaders have put in place a well-planned and sequenced curriculum that builds on learning from the early years onwards. They have a clear rationale for what should be taught, when and why. For example, in physical education (PE), teachers break down important learning into smaller chunks. This means that pupils progressively develop their physical skills as well as their understanding of rules, strategy and tactics. In mathematics, teachers provide a wide range of number and shape-related activities in the early years from day one. Children quickly learn to count, measure and name shapes. These early interactions with mathematics lay the foundations that children need to succeed later on in the mathematics curriculum.

However, in some curriculum areas, leaders are still working on making sure that pupils' understanding of subject content is deepening securely over time. For example, in history, the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge of significant events in world history, including the civil rights movement and the slave trade. However, the development of pupils' chronological understanding is not promoted as successfully. Leaders have plans in place to address the aspects of the curriculum that need strengthening. They are particularly focusing on ensuring that teachers have the necessary expertise in helping pupils to increase their knowledge in logical and manageable steps.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Pupils learn to read with books that closely match the sounds they know. Leaders have made sure that all staff receive regular training in the school's phonics programme. As a result, most staff are highly skilled at teaching pupils to decode, read fluently and catch up quickly if they fall behind. However, a small number of staff are less consistent in the way they support pupils to read well.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. This is because leaders and staff identify and break down any barriers to pupils' success. Pupils who join the school at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language receive well-targeted support. They are immediately taught vocabulary that enables them to communicate their needs and engage in school life. This means that they are then quickly included in every aspect of the curriculum.

Leaders have created a calm and purposeful school environment. At break and lunchtimes, pupils play harmoniously together. They respect each other and respond swiftly to instructions. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning in lessons are equally positive. Teachers use purposeful strategies at the beginning and end of units of learning to check that pupils remember important knowledge. This approach, together with checks during lessons, allows teachers to quickly address any gaps in learning.

Pupils have access to a varied range of high-quality opportunities and experiences to further enhance the curriculum. Clubs on offer include gardening, history, curling and many other sports. Most pupils attend at least one of these clubs. Leaders put careful thought into the selection of wider enrichment activities. They make sure that they are meaningful, both in promoting pupils' personal development and learning. For example, to complement what they have learned in English, all Year 6 pupils attend a West End musical.

Pupils are taught about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They learn about difference but go on to explore further the wider issues of discrimination that remain today. Pupils are taught about how to keep healthy, for instance by learning about hidden sugars and what is in the food they eat.

Staff said they are part of a 'big happy family' with a strong caring ethos based on respect fostered by leaders. They regard senior leaders as responsive to any concerns and supportive of their workload. Staff morale and well-being are high.

Trustees understand their respective roles. They perform governance review days each term as one way of holding school leaders to account. Trustees understand the context of the school and perform their statutory duties effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure all staff receive regular and up-to-date training to keep pupils safe. Staff know what signs may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They also know how to report any concerns. Leaders liaise closely with external agencies, such as the community police, to secure the help that pupils at risk need.

Older pupils learn about the dangers of gang involvement and knife crime. They know to tell an adult in the school if they were worried or felt unsafe.

Trustees ensure that all pre-employment checks on the suitability of staff are completed effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders train and support staff to deliver the systematic synthetic phonics programme as intended. As a result, most staff have the expertise to help pupils learn to read well. A small number of staff are less consistent in utilising strategies to support pupils with decoding. As part of their priority to make sure that all pupils learn to read quickly and fluently, leaders should continue to strengthen all staff's expertise in teaching phonics.
- In some wider curriculum subjects, teachers are less secure in ensuring that pupils develop the knowledge they need to achieve leaders' long-term curriculum goals. This means that, at times, pupils are not always supported to make meaningful links between their prior and current learning. Leaders should continue to provide staff with support and guidance on how to deliver the curriculum and, in turn, make sure that all pupils know and remember more of the intended curriculum.

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.

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

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| Unique reference number | 145718 |
| Local authority | Brent |
| Inspection number | 10241340 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 665 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Lord Jim Knight |
| Headteacher | Andrea Rosewell |
| Website | braintcroftacademy.e-act.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Braintcroft E-Act Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Braintcroft Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, religious education, PE and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to find out how the school supports pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum. This involved reviewing documentation to see how pupils with SEND were being supported.
- Inspectors met with the regional education director, the national primary director and the interim chief executive officer.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' personal development. They also held discussions with several groups of pupils about their views of their school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through Ofsted's online Parent View survey.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alison Colenso, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Alison Martin | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jeff Cole | Ofsted Inspector |
| David Bryant | Ofsted Inspector |

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