

Inspection of Bratton Fleming Community Primary School

Station Road, Bratton Fleming, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 4SB

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
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 at Bratton Fleming are respectful and considerate. The ethos of the school is rooted in nine 'family values', including friendship and trust. Leaders and governors have high expectations of everyone. They challenge the school to live up to its motto: 'Pride in all we do'.

Bullying is very rare. Pupils hold one another to high standards of behaviour. Staff address any lapses in behaviour effectively. As a result, the atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful. Pupils are happy and they feel safe.

Pupils are active in the local community. For example, they routinely attend events at the village church. Staff arrange for pupils to have memorable experiences, such as a visit to Exmoor Zoo. Older pupils benefit from a residential trip to London, where they visit cultural and historic sites.

Lots of new staff, including a new headteacher, have joined the school in recent months. Everyone is getting to know one another. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and there have been some recent changes to how this is organised. Pupils, including the children in the Reception class, are adapting well to the new arrangements.

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

Leaders rightly identify reading as their first curriculum priority. They make sure that pupils make steady progress with learning to read, even during periods of disruption. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders strengthened the curriculum for early reading to reduce the chance that pupils would fall behind.

Children in the Reception class start learning phonics straightaway. They learn the sounds associated with letters confidently. Leaders have effective arrangements in place to help each child to keep up. Pupils continue to receive extra support for as long as they need it. All staff receive training which helps them to take the same systematic approach.

The teaching of mathematics is well organised. The curriculum is ambitious and pupils relish this. They are determined to attempt difficult problems. Over time, teachers have benefited from useful training. They put their insights into practice well. As a result, pupils build new learning on firm foundations. They are well prepared for future learning.

Where pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, these are identified quickly and accurately. This means that children begin to receive support from the start of the Reception Year. The curriculum is adapted according to the different needs of pupils. For example, specialist staff help pupils to develop their skills in

movement and balance. Pupils who find communication and interaction difficult are supported to work in small-group situations.

The new headteacher, supported by leaders at the multi-academy trust, has initiated a review of the school's wider curriculum and how pupils' learning is assessed. Leaders recognise that, in a few subjects, the curriculum does not help pupils to remember and build on what they learn. Teachers' subject knowledge is sometimes insecure. This makes it difficult for them to plan effective sequences of learning for pupils, or to emphasise the right things. Consequently, pupils are not clear on the differences between some subjects, such as history and geography, and they do not remember essential knowledge well.

Pupils attend school regularly and are keen to learn. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils gain useful knowledge which they apply to everyday situations. This helps them with their personal safety when outside of school, or when online. Pupils develop good character. They reflect maturely on moral dilemmas, understanding that issues can be complex.

Staff appreciate the headteacher's 'open door policy'. Leaders help staff to manage their workload effectively, for example by adapting policies where necessary. The multi-academy trust provides valuable opportunities for peer support and collaboration with colleagues in other trust schools. The local governing body has provided steadfast stewardship during a period of change for the school. Governors continue to play an active role in school life, supporting the headteacher and seeing the curriculum in action.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff undertake comprehensive safeguarding training when they join the school. Leaders make sure that keeping children safe is at the forefront of everyone's mind. There are regular meetings in which staff discuss any ongoing concerns.

Leaders work with safeguarding partners, such as the police and social workers, to provide support for families. There is a culture of working with, and listening to, the concerns of the local community. Leaders adapt the PSHE curriculum to address any new risks arising locally.

The new headteacher is reviewing the school's systems with a view to strengthening them further.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not yet given enough thought to the order in which pupils should learn the curriculum. This makes it difficult for pupils to build on and secure essential knowledge. Leaders should provide a well-sequenced curriculum in every subject and check that pupils learn it successfully.
- Teachers lack the subject knowledge they need to teach some subjects with rigour. As a result, pupils do not gain a clear understanding of how different subjects work. Leaders should help teachers to develop their disciplinary knowledge. This will help to ensure that pupils understand what makes each subject distinct.

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

Unique reference number	145809
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10241598
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nathalie Ingles
Headteacher	Lyn Brimson
Website	www.primaryschoolsnorthdevon.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bratton Fleming Community Primary converted to become an academy school in August 2018. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Ventrus Limited multi-academy trust. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. Pupils are organised into four mixed-age classes.
- There is provision for childcare before and after school which is run by the trustees.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders from the multi-academy trust, including the chief executive officer, and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and geography. 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 with senior staff about the curriculum and with pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector scrutinised the single central record and spoke with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. The inspection team held discussions with pupils and staff to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors took into account the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, and the responses to the questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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