

Inspection of a good school: Coombe Road Primary School

Milner Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4BP

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2023

Outcome

Coombe Road Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils happily attend this inclusive school. They show joy in their lessons and talk about what they know with enthusiasm. The pastoral care that pupils receive helps them to learn and to feel safe. Boomer, the therapy dog, and the 'just right' tower, help them to talk about their feelings so they are ready to learn. Pupils trust that adults in the school want what is best for them. As such, there is a culture of mutual respect and warmth throughout.

Pupils reflect the ambitions that leaders have for them in the way they never give up. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported. They benefit from the school's ethos that there are no limits to what they can achieve.

All pupils have clear understanding of what bullying is and the impact it can have. Bullying and discrimination occur rarely in this school. However, pupils know where to go to if they have any concerns, and staff respond to these quickly and well. Kindness pervades the school. During break and lunchtimes, pupils share and play well together. They understand and meet the high behaviour expectations that staff have for them.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils, including those with SEND, will achieve. They have thought carefully about what pupils need to know and in what order. Leaders have implemented a curriculum where pupils learn knowledge in a sequenced way. This helps pupils to access further knowledge. Within Reception, teachers ensure children have strong foundations of knowledge in phonics and number.

The SEND provision of this school is ambitious and highly effective. Leaders have trained staff to identify additional needs accurately. They know how to make appropriate changes to the curriculum so all pupils can keep up and achieve well.

While some end of key stage outcomes are low, leaders have put in place a new approach to assessment which helps staff to quickly spot when pupils fall behind. Staff take swift action to help pupils make up any gaps in learning. As a result, pupils are progressing well throughout the intended curriculum. From Reception onwards, there is a sharp focus on teaching pupils to read. Staff are experts in phonics and teach pupils to read well. Teachers provide extra activities when they spot any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge so pupils can keep up and become confident, fluent readers. Pupils love to read. Leaders have provided parents with workshops that help them to support their child to read. Pupils talk about books with enthusiasm and read a wide range of literature.

There are a small number of older pupils who are not fully prepared for life beyond primary school. Leaders are aware of this and are ensuring that pupils gain knowledge about a wide range of topics in modern Britain. Most pupils do show genuine respect for difference and understanding of its value in making everybody unique. Leaders have prioritised ensuring that clubs and enrichment opportunities are valuable to pupils. Pupils attend a wide range of clubs, such as young engineers, science club and craft club. The school council makes sure that pupils' voices inform what happens in the school. They learn about leadership through the school council and acting as 'buddies' to help younger pupils.

In Reception, children maintain high levels of focus and attention within class. They behave well and are prepared personally, as well as academically, for learning in Year 1. Children continue their positive attitude to learning through their time at school. Low-level disruption is extremely rare. As a result, classroom environments are calm and purposeful throughout the school. Staff consistently apply the school's 'behaviour regulation' approach well.

Persistent absence within the school is too high. This means some pupils are not able to benefit from what the school has to offer. Leaders are aware of this and are working with external agencies to improve attendance. While attendance of pupils is improving, some of the most vulnerable pupils are still not attending as well as they could.

Leaders and those responsible for governance have an ambitious vision for the school. They work alongside staff to ensure that the provision meets the needs of the community well. Leaders prioritise staff well-being and are effective in making sure that workload for staff is appropriate and manageable. Staff are proud to work at the school and describe it as a caring and considerate 'family'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with high-quality training so that they know how to spot when a pupil or their family may need help. Staff are swift in sharing all concerns with safeguarding leads. Leaders show tenacity and skill in securing the right help for pupils and their families. They work well with agencies to ensure the best possible impact.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of safeguarding. As such pupils' knowledge of how to identify risk and keep themselves safe is strong.

Governors have effective oversight of safeguarding. They assure themselves that checks on staff are robust and that records show timely and appropriate action from leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Persistent absence across the school is too high. This means some pupils do not fully benefit from all that the school has to offer. Leaders should now carefully consider what additional strategies and support these families need to further improve attendance.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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	114365
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10241678
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Freeman
Headteacher	Stuart Scrase
Website	www.coomberoad.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and chair of governors have taken up their posts since the last inspection.
- There is a before- and after-school club provision managed by the school which was part of the inspection.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider. Pupils currently attending the alternative provider do so full time.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. They also met with the chair of governors and three other members of the governing body.

- The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, they 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.
- The lead inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during play and lunchtimes.
- The lead inspector considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school improvement plan and minutes from governors' meetings.
- The lead inspector spoke to parents and carers and also took into account the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The lead inspector took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- The lead inspector evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with leaders, staff and pupils. They met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss the arrangements for safeguarding. During these meetings, the lead inspector scrutinised records and sampled case files to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. The lead inspector also examined the school's work to recruit and check on the suitability of staff, as well as checking the knowledge of staff about their responsibilities.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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