

Inspection of Brayford Academy

Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 7QJ

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

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?

Brayford Academy is a small, supportive school. Leaders have created a nurturing ethos and parents say the school is like a big family.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils meet these expectations. Bullying is extremely rare, but pupils are confident that if it does happen, leaders will deal with it quickly. In the pre-school unit, children play well together and enjoy learning.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of extracurricular clubs, including archery and choir. Pupils take part in many trips, for example in visiting London and Exmoor. Pupils take on responsibilities with pride, including being a reading buddy for a younger pupil and helping with clubs at lunchtime.

There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are well cared for and they feel happy and safe. As a result, they enjoy coming to school.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum is well planned in all subjects. They have set out the key knowledge they want pupils to know and remember in all subjects.

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about books. The reading books shared in class are carefully chosen to reflect cultures from around the world. Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children begin their phonics learning in the pre-school unit. They start to learn to read as soon as they start in Reception Year. Most pupils read well with fluency and accuracy. However, assessment is not used as well as it could be. As a result, a small number of pupils do not read books that match the sounds they know. They struggle to read their books fluently. Most staff feel confident to teach reading.

Teachers help pupils to practise and remember prior knowledge, skills and vocabulary across most subjects well. However, in some areas, staff do not check that all pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, a small number of pupils do not build their knowledge well over time.

In the early years, children experience all areas of the curriculum through carefully planned activities. Children quickly learn to follow routines. Children learn well with each other and start to become independent.

There is a very calm and respectful atmosphere around the school. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and low-level disruption in classes is rare. Pupils are positive and show responsible attitudes towards adults and pupils.

Personal development is a strength of Brayford Academy. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to hold roles of responsibility. Pupils are proud to be eco rangers and school councillors. Pupils carry out these duties with maturity. Parents enthuse about the variety of clubs, visits and trips. These opportunities give the pupils practical skills. Leaders learn about life in other countries, including India and Japan. This helps pupils to understand the diversity of cultures, faiths and backgrounds. Pupils learn about respect and are developing into kind and caring citizens. Pupils understand the importance of democracy, tolerance and justice. They passionately believe that everyone should be treated equally.

Leaders and staff work well together to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They gather information to identify pupils' needs from parents and external specialists. In classrooms, teachers make suitable adaptations for pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers and they thrive.

Leaders prioritise developing pupils' emotional well-being as well as their physical health. Experienced staff provide effective social and emotional support for pupils when needed.

Governors and trustees have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. Staff told us they love working at Brayford Academy. They appreciate all that leaders do to develop staff knowledge and skills. Staff and governors value the training they receive. Leaders are conscious of staff workload and consider ways to help them manage this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff know how to recognise signs of abuse. All staff and governors receive frequent and relevant safeguarding training. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. Leaders are relentless in their work with external agencies. They check staff recruitment thoroughly.

Pupils know that adults will listen to them if they have any concerns, and that they will help them. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online, and they have a clear understanding of personal boundaries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not used well enough in some areas to check that all pupils have remembered the knowledge that they have been taught. As result, some pupils

do not build their knowledge well over time. Leaders need to ensure that all staff use assessment effectively across all subjects to inform future learning.

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	141761
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10268676
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Ginnings
Headteacher	Ian Thomas (executive headteacher) Sara Leggott (head of school)
Website	www.brayford.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Brayford Academy is part of TEAM multi-academy trust. The school joined the trust in 2015.
- A substantive head of school was appointed in September 2022.
- The school runs a pre-school setting, which includes provision for two-year olds.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the vice-chair of trustees, members of the local governing body, senior leaders and staff.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors checked the single central record of adults working in the school and looked at safeguarding records. Inspectors reviewed attendance records.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and music. 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 considered samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and the pastoral lead to consider the quality of provision for vulnerable pupils and those pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and around school.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by considering responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 20 free-text comments from parents.
- Inspectors gathered the views of a range of pupils through discussions.
- Inspectors gathered the views of staff through discussions.

Inspection team

Sarah Ryder, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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