

Inspection of a good school: Broomfield Primary School

School Lane, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 7DN

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Outcome

Broomfield Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that the school's six 'Rs' (responsible, respectful, ready, reflective, resourceful and resilient) are the virtues they want to have when they leave in Year 6. Older pupils particularly embrace this ethos. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as team captains, play leaders and school councillors. They are exemplary role models for younger pupils.

Pupils learn, achieve and behave well, including the youngest children in the Reception Year. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils celebrate each other's success, especially through the much-valued bookmark awards. When a few pupils struggle to regulate their behaviour, staff deal with issues calmly, kindly and effectively.

Pupils approach their learning about different faiths, lifestyles and points of view with enthusiasm and energy. They apply this learning in how they treat each other on a daily basis. Bullying happens occasionally, but pupils are very confident in staff to deal with it. Pupils know how to raise any worries or concerns they have. They feel safe and are safe.

Pupils are accessing an increasing number of trips, visits, visiting speakers and extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils are effusive about the sports clubs and competitions this year. A small but significant minority of parents and pupils would like more opportunities of this kind.

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

Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils who attend the school has increased. Standards in reading and mathematics dropped prior to the national lockdowns. Since then, the headteacher has galvanised leaders and staff to secure significant improvement.

Leaders have substantially improved their curriculum, including in reading, mathematics and science. This curriculum from the Reception Year through to Year 6 is, in the main,

planned in detail, organised logically and appropriately resourced. Staff have received good-quality training and support to deliver the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils access a range of high-quality learning opportunities. They learn and achieve well.

On occasion, teachers are not confident to provide pupils with opportunities to apply their learning in more complex ways. In a very small number of subjects, planning and staff training are less developed. Here, pupils complete tasks and enjoy learning but do not develop a rich understanding of the curriculum content as leaders intend.

Staff deliver the school's chosen phonics and reading programmes well. Pupils access high-quality daily phonics sessions, one-to-one reading with adults, and wider reading opportunities. Staff are adept at identifying and supporting pupils who are struggling. This starts with the youngest children in the Reception Year classes. Pupils go on to read fluently and independently. Pupils of all ages and abilities read at home for pleasure.

Leaders provide good-quality guidance for staff to ensure that pupils' needs are appropriately identified and supported in lessons and during social times. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils with the most complex needs get more specialist support. This includes for some of the pupils who join mid-way through the year.

Leaders and governors invest heavily in pupils' wider well-being and behaviour. This includes well-organised training for staff, leaders and governors in a range of different programmes to support pupils' mental and emotional health. Pupils value the calm and thoughtful approach that staff have towards behaviour. Leaders for SEND, mental health and learning mentors work closely to support pupils who need additional help and support. Pupils get timely and effective support to regulate their behaviour, make friends and keep themselves safe.

Staff proactively collaborate with each other, to best support pupils in their care. Staff are effusive in their praise for the headteacher and leaders. They feel that they are well supported by leaders to manage their workload and that leaders are mindful of their work-life balance.

Collectively, leaders and governors have worked closely with the local authority to raise standards, improve the curriculum, and manage the increase in the numbers on roll. New governance arrangements over the last year are providing increasingly precise support and challenge to leaders. However, aspects of leaders' and governors' monitoring are less developed. On occasion, they rely on information provided to them, without sufficient checks and balances on the accuracy of this information.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work tenaciously to provide support for the most vulnerable pupils. Staff are well trained and refer all concerns about pupils to leaders. Leaders piece together this information to ensure that pupils get access to the right services in a timely way.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate way.

The pre-employment checks made on staff and visitors are undertaken appropriately and in line with legal guidance. Some minor administrative changes were made to the single central record of checks during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and governors manage the day-to-day running of the school very well. However, in some aspects of their work, there are gaps in leaders' and governors' strategic monitoring. This includes in areas such as the persistent absence of some groups of pupils and the use of additional funding. Leaders and governors need to establish monitoring systems to ensure that they are able to review where they could make provision even more efficient and effective.
- On occasion, staff are not confident to help pupils to apply learning in more complex ways. Additionally, in a very small number of subjects, teachers are not well trained enough to deliver the intended curriculum. Therefore, pupils learn the intended curriculum but sometimes find the work too easy or do not develop the complex understanding that leaders intend. Leaders should ensure that planning, assessment, staff training and leaders' monitoring work collectively to ensure that pupils are learning these subjects as fully as they should.

Background

When we have judged a school to be 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

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 | 115292 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 10284255 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 361 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Tim Hodge and Clive Darvill (co-chairs) |
| Headteacher | Heather Shelley |
| Website | www.broomfield.essex.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- School leaders are not currently making use of any alternate provision.
- The school is in the final stage of an agreed process with the local authority to expand the numbers of pupils on roll. By September 2023 there will be two classes in each year group.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school clubs. These are run by school staff and managed by school leaders.
- The school shares a site with a nursery provider. It is inspected separately.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, senior leaders, governors, the co-chairs of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with senior leaders and subject leaders, conducted lesson visits, spoke to pupils, and scrutinised pupils' work. This includes in the Reception Year, where the inspector observed small group-focused activities, child-initiated play and phonics sessions. The inspector heard a selection of pupils read to a familiar adult. The inspector also reviewed planning and pupils' work in science.
- The inspector also reviewed minutes of governor meetings, leaders' development plans, school policies and leaders' monitoring documentation.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed records. The inspector checked the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. She also spoke to governors, leaders and staff.
- The inspector took account of 83 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector took account of 41 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. The inspector also spoke to a selection of staff.
- The inspector took account of 112 responses to the Ofsted survey for pupils. The inspector also spoke to a range of pupils while on site during the inspection.

Inspection team

Kim Pigram, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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