

Inspection of a good school: Branfil Primary School

Cedar Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2LW

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

Branfil Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a kind and friendly place. Staff at Branfil take every opportunity to model the school's values of love, explore, aspire, respect and nurture. This helps pupils to understand how these values can positively shape their conduct and the way that they speak to others. In class and in the playground, pupils try hard to live out these values. Pupils are happy at school and they enjoy their time here.

The school's curriculum has been intelligently designed to ensure that it provides pupils with a broad, balanced and aspirational education. Right from the start of early years, leaders have high expectations for the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. Carefully planned support ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn the school's curriculum well.

Positive behaviour in lessons supports pupils' learning. Pupils know that, if they have a concern, a trusted adult would be on hand to help them to resolve any worries. Pupils work well together and they support each other. Lunchtimes are fun and pupils play well with one another. Pupils enjoy the range of activities that they can take part in during their social times.

Leaders ensure that all school staff understand their role in looking after pupils' well-being. Pupils are kept safe.

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

Leaders have devised a curriculum that meets or exceeds the aims of the national curriculum. They have planned learning to build up pupils' knowledge and skills sequentially.

Leaders' aspirational aims for pupils' learning are typically well embedded in what pupils learn in their classrooms, including in early years. The positive impact this has on pupils' learning is clear in the quality of their work and their secure recall of subject content.

In lessons, teaching activities ensure that pupils are knowing and remembering more about key ideas in a subject. However, occasionally, there are times when some of the choices of teaching activities are not focused with precision on making sure that pupils develop and retain a deep understanding of subject content. This can, in these instances, affect how the curriculum supports pupils to acquire a greater depth of knowledge across some subjects.

The ambitious early reading curriculum starts at the beginning of the Reception Year. Leaders have considered carefully how to best support pupils to learn to read. They have put in place effective approaches to the teaching of phonics. This includes ensuring that all staff receive training to allow them to successfully deliver the chosen phonics scheme. Assessment is used well to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff then fill those gaps through the well-planned and timely use of additional catch-up sessions for pupils. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading throughout their time at the school. Leaders make sure that pupils experience a rich and diverse range of texts. Pupils enjoy reading. Like in early reading, assessment is carefully used across the rest of the curriculum to support pupils to learn effectively.

In lessons, teachers make sure that pupils with SEND are well supported, providing adaptations to ensure that pupils learn the curriculum and take part fully in lessons. Pupils with additional needs are consistently at the forefront of leaders' work to improve the education on offer. Leaders devise clear plans of support for pupils with SEND and these are adapted, as needed, to ensure that pupils receive suitable help and learn well. Parents and carers, pupils and teachers are all involved in creating pupils' individual plans.

Pupils are kind and polite. They learn and play well with each other. This is because leaders have developed clear and well-understood systems for reporting and managing behaviour, from early years all the way through to Year 6. These systems are understood by all. Staff know their role in supporting positive behaviour. Pupils attend well. Rates of attendance are above the national average and persistent absence is low. This is because leaders use transparent and well-understood strategies with parents to support pupils come to school regularly.

Leaders have thought thoroughly about supporting pupils' personal development. They put in place rich wider experiences for pupils to learn from, including, for instance, through the creation of numerous school leadership opportunities for pupils. Pupils appreciate these and carry out their roles diligently and with pride. Pupils also take part in fundraising activities for both their school and the local community. The school plans a variety of educational visits, clubs and other experiences to make sure that pupils have experiences that go beyond those they might otherwise have.

Staff feel well supported and know that their well-being is considered in leaders' decision-making. Leaders prioritise professional development to support staff in carrying out their roles. The governing body works well with the school leadership team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some teaching, pupils occasionally complete activities that are not as effective as they could be in supporting them to secure a depth of understanding in some subject content. This means that, in these instances, pupils' knowledge of key ideas in a subject is less deep and detailed as leaders would like it to be. Where this is the case, the school should refine and strengthen how teaching activities enable more pupils to master the full curriculum and attain a greater depth of knowledge.

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 July 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium](#)

[funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135588
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10313892
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	579
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kim McWilliam
Headteacher	Natalie Sansom
Website	http://branfil.havering.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates a breakfast and an after-school club.
- Leaders use no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. He held discussions with representatives of the local authority and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. The inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning, and met with subject leaders and teachers.

- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector spoke to pupils during lesson visits. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to staff about behaviour and about their workload in the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Luke Stubbles, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024