

Inspection of Middle Street Primary School

37 Middle Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 1AL

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is helped to feel part of Middle Street Primary School. Pupils describe how they 'have freedom but also responsibility'. They take these responsibilities seriously and strive to meet them through demonstrating the school's values of kindness, respect and ambition in all they do. The school's exceptional personal development programme gives pupils ample opportunity to do this. Pupils help their classmates learn about a range of faiths and take on roles as school council members or play leaders. Parents recognise these very positive aspects of the school, with one saying, 'The school values of kindness, respect and ambition feel genuinely lived.'

Pupils feel happy, included and safe. They know that their views, which they are encouraged to develop and express, are heard and valued. Staff know pupils well and understand their needs and preferences. Relationships are warm and respectful throughout the school.

Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They know that they are expected to try their best, and they do. They are keen to learn, and respond positively to the tasks set for them by their teachers. Pupils attain well, particularly in reading, and are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

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

An ambitious, carefully sequenced curriculum is in place across the school from Reception to Year 6. Priority has been given to specific aspects of pupils' learning to help pupils learn well across every subject. For example, key vocabulary is identified and taught in all subjects. This is to ensure pupils have a secure grasp of these important words and can use them in their thinking and discussions with precision and clarity. This starts in early years, where a focus on communication underpins all activities and interactions so that children are immersed in rich language throughout the day.

Additional time is given to ensure the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and then shared with staff. Consequently, pupils with SEND are given the help they need to learn well across the curriculum and to be successful.

Helping pupils learn to read quickly and effectively is prioritised. Pupils demonstrate an interest in a wide range of authors and texts and read regularly across the school's curriculum. Learning to read starts straight away in Reception, with a sharp focus on phonics. Staff throughout the school are well trained and help pupils practise their reading with carefully selected books. Any pupils who find it more difficult to read are identified through regular checks and given the help that they need to catch up quickly.

The school has developed a range of ways for checking that pupils are learning the intended curriculum. In some subjects, these checks have not been in place for long

enough to help teachers adapt and refine their curriculum sequences. The school knows that this process will help identify where knowledge needs reinforcing or where curriculum changes are needed. Work is ongoing to ensure leaders across the school have the expertise they need to check and evaluate the learning in every subject.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They confidently demonstrate their knowledge both when working independently and when working in partnership with others. Mostly, they take pride in their work. The school is an orderly environment, and routines around the staggered playtimes operate smoothly. Pupils are kind to each other. They are understanding towards others who may need occasional help to manage their emotions or behaviour.

The school is a cohesive community. Everyone is welcomed, included and valued. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are encouraged to take part in the additional opportunities of clubs and visits that the school provides. Pupils benefit from the extensive programme offered through the school's comprehensive personal development curriculum. Pupils enjoy trips to London by train to explore museums or to see shows. This has inspired a current pupil version of the stage show 'The Lion King'. Pupils also learn about their own environment through their regular 'beach school' learning experiences. Time is taken to help pupils learn about each other's faiths and beliefs through events such as the 'around the world' celebration day. Here, families from different countries set up stalls to share and celebrate their ethnicity and backgrounds.

A few pupils do not come to school as often as they should, or arrive late. The school regularly and carefully analyses attendance information. Staff foster strong relationships with parents and carers to understand and address any barriers to attendance. Some improvement is evident. However, leaders recognise the importance of continuing to work with parents to develop strong habits of attendance so that pupils do not miss out on important learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not always precisely checking what pupils know and remember in some of the foundation subjects. This means the school is not yet clear on where further refinements or adaptations to the curriculum in these subjects are needed to help pupils learn more effectively. The school should continue to ensure leaders and staff have the knowledge and expertise to check and evaluate the impact of the curriculum to help pupils achieve well across all subjects.

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	114369
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10321790
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	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Oli Sharpe
Headteacher	Rob Cooper
Website	www.middlestreet.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2020.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with school leaders. The lead inspector also talked to representatives of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys and considered a letter from a parent.
- The inspectors talked to staff to gather their views about the school, including around their workload and well-being. The inspectors met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons, playtimes and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector

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