

Inspection of Brackenbury Primary School

Locks Hill, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex BN41 2LA

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are taught to be proud, brave and determined, and they are. They are proud of their work, determined to try hard, and have worked bravely with teachers to improve this school. Leaders value pupils' views as to how the school can keep improving. By following the 'Brackenbury Way' and being their 'Brackenbury Best', pupils know how to behave well. They listen to teachers, follow the school's rules and help each other.

Pupils live up to teachers' high aspirations for achievement. They work hard in lessons because they want to be good learners. Every pupil is encouraged to play their part in this inclusive school. Pupils enjoy taking an active role in local events, including by raising money for charity. They participate in clubs and visits and represent their school in sport and performance.

Pupils say that their days are 'super fun'. They learn many new things in lessons and enjoy their play. In the playground, there is an array of exciting nooks where pupils can relax, chat and play busily. They know what bullying is and the effect it can have. They know what to do if it happens. Incidents are rare but when they occur, teachers deal with them quickly.

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

Leaders' determined efforts have transformed this school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 agree with those parents who describe the 'dramatic improvement'. Learning is purposeful and relationships are respectful. Teachers and pupils alike enjoy being at school.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that builds upon what children learn in the early years. Here, they learn and develop strong skills that they can use with increasing independence. Pupils build the knowledge they need to succeed in well-ordered steps. Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children start learning phonics as soon as they begin in the Reception class. Teachers are quick to notice when children are not keeping up. Skilled staff provide extra support. This approach continues through the school. The school offers well-chosen books that entice readers of all ages to love reading. In every year group, teachers help pupils to learn the vocabulary that helps them with their topics. As part of their dinosaur topic, for example, Reception children relished learning the word 'palaeontologist'.

Leaders make sure that teachers are experts at teaching English and mathematics. Pupils develop number fluency because teachers provide plenty of opportunities for practice. Pupils become confident in basic skills. Reception children learn through play how to use the numbers their teacher has recently taught. In English, key stage 2 teachers model how to make writing interesting, as an author would. Teachers make incisive use of assessment in reading and mathematics. They accurately identify next steps for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers' assessment is not as sharp in writing for some of these pupils. Tasks do not consistently build upon what they know and can do.

The broader curriculum engages pupils' enthusiasm. They remember their learning because teachers present lessons clearly and make it interesting. Pupils with SEND are successfully included in class activities. Foundation subjects, such as art and history, are thoughtfully planned. Pupils achieve high standards. They are able to spot similarities between one event in history and another. In art, pupils are inspired by the work of different artists. They are rightly proud of their sketch books and enjoy using them when making local visits. A few subjects are not as fully developed. In these subjects, pupils' knowledge is less secure. Occasionally too, in some topics, there is not enough opportunity to deepen understanding. Leaders have plans in place to develop and refine the curriculum. They know exactly what they need to do.

Pupils learn about current world issues. They care about reducing plastic waste and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They learn about discrimination. When reflecting on racism, a group of pupils said, 'We are determined to make a change.' To that end they had written supportive letters to Black footballers who were targeted by racist abuse.

Governors make checks on the quality of the school's work by asking searching questions. These are informed by school visits. Governors talk to teachers and pupils to find out their views. Senior leaders often reflect upon how provision can be improved still further. Teachers appreciate the time that leaders give to develop their expertise. There is a strong sense of teamwork that runs throughout the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school maintains robust systems for recruiting staff, governors and contractors. All staff are well trained to identify and report safeguarding concerns. Teachers keep a careful eye to spot signs of concern. They know to report these swiftly to the designated leader. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and their parents share that view.

Leaders work effectively with parents and partner agencies. They make sure that children and families get the help they need in a timely way. Leaders refer to statutory agencies when it is appropriate to do so.

Pupils trust the adults in school to keep them safe. The curriculum ensures that pupils know what to do if they are worried. They are taught about the risks of being online and how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders' curricular aims have not resulted in coherent planning for Years 1 to 6. Pupils are not learning all they need to know in these subjects. Leaders have plans in place to sequence knowledge coherently. They need to complete this work so that pupils learn what is needed as they move through the school. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- In a few foundation subjects, the curriculum does not give enough opportunities for pupils to use and embed their knowledge. Leaders need to help teachers to focus on knowledge that is vital for pupils to learn and give them increased opportunities to apply it. This will enable all pupils to know, remember and be able to do even more.
- Some key stage 2 pupils with SEND do not have writing tasks that meet their needs. These pupils are not increasing fluency or developing independence as they should. Leaders need to ensure that teachers use their assessments sharply so that learning tasks are matched carefully to pupils' starting points.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	114413
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10211709
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shelley Baker
Headteacher	Lizzie Mullarky
Website	www.brackenburyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes to the school's leadership since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and deputy headteachers. They met with the chair of governors and members of the governing body. They also met with the local authority's attached adviser and head of school standards.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and history. Inspectors discussed curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in other subjects and talked to them about their learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to examine records and actions. This included sampling case files to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. The team inspector reviewed checks on the safer recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about behaviour in the school and their experiences of school.
- Inspectors talked to the special educational needs coordinator and checked the plans teachers had made for pupils with SEND. Inspectors checked how these plans were being used by teachers.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate and considered 49 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including written free-text comments. They also considered 22 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and 32 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clare Wilkins

Ofsted Inspector

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