

# Braintcroft Primary School

Warren Road, Neasden, London, NW2 7LL

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher has high ambitions for the school which she has led through a period of considerable and sustained improvement.
- The team of senior and subject leaders share and support well the headteacher's drive for improvement particularly in teaching.
- The strong and effective governing body shares the headteacher's ambitions for the school. It continually challenges her to bring about further improvements.
- The pupils' progress has improved in English and mathematics as teaching is increasingly good and outstanding. Strong teamwork supports teachers in providing consistent experiences for pupils within year groups.
- School leaders have taken swift and effective action to increase attainment in reading following a dip in Year 6 test results last year.
- The school's deeply held values contribute greatly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The strong focus on the children's language and personal development in the Nursery and Reception lays firm foundations for their future successful learning.
- Pupils are very keen to learn and try hard at all times. They feel safe in school because of the careful attention paid to their well-being.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good because pupils understand precisely what is expected of them.
- Pupils greatly enjoy studying topics in depth in the 'connected curriculum'. These provide plentiful opportunities for developing their writing in interesting contexts.
- The headteacher focuses staff on giving all pupils a chance to succeed whatever their learning or language needs.
- Initial reading skills develop well through effective phonics (letters and the sounds they make) teaching and carefully targeted programmes to help pupils if they fall behind.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- When teaching is less successful it is generally because teachers do not check the pupils' understanding carefully.
- Teachers do not always give pupils time to respond to their comments in their marking in mathematics.
- Sessions to develop wider reading skills are not consistent in meeting the needs of all pupils. The school has not yet been successful in encouraging all pupils at Key Stage 2 to read sufficiently often at home.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, five of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online parent questionnaire Parent View and held informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account the results of a survey undertaken by the school during the last academic year.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also took account of the 40 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors listened to the reading of a sample of pupils in Year 2.

## Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kalwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Jeanie Underwood	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high. A quarter of the pupils are from Black African backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. Many are at early stages of learning English.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for a well above-average proportion of the pupils. This is extra government funding given to schools to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average. Their needs are varied.
- Many more pupils than in most other primary schools join or leave part-way through their primary school education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding by making sure that:
  - teachers use questioning to check the pupils' understanding
  - pupils have the opportunity to respond to their teacher's suggestions for improving their work in mathematics.
- Raise achievement in reading by making sure that:
  - sessions to develop wider reading skills focus activities sharply on the next steps in each pupil's learning
  - pupils at Key Stage 2 read more widely and more often at home.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Progress is now good and accelerating so that attainment is broadly average and rising. There is no significant variation in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups. More-able pupils are challenged and make good progress. Attainment by the end of Year 2 has been steadily rising to an average level, providing a firmer platform for success at Key Stage 2. However, having risen in 2012 Year 6 test results fell back in 2013 in reading to a low level and much lower than in writing and mathematics.
- School data indicate that the fall in reading results was not typical. Nevertheless, leaders have taken action decisively to improve teaching in sessions to develop wider reading skills. This has been generally successful, although in a small number of classes, teachers do not make sure that tasks to be undertaken by pupils are closely matched to the next steps in their learning. Furthermore, the school does not encourage all pupils at Key Stage 2 to read widely at home.
- Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills well below the levels typical for their age and many have limited English. They make good progress and the majority reach expected levels for their age by the end of Reception. The continual opportunities for talk help those new to English to become confident learners as their language develops.
- Writing has improved considerably since the previous inspection and pupils now make good progress across the school. They develop extended pieces of writing in stages and have many regular and purposeful opportunities for writing within their topics.
- The pupils' number skills develop systematically as they move through the school. Their understanding is further enhanced by applying these regularly to solving mathematical problems. Pupils greatly value achieving their mental arithmetic 'passport' targets as their recall of facts becomes more rapid and accurate.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress as others. Additional programmes are matched well to their needs and their progress carefully checked to identify if changes are needed.
- Pupils new to English are immersed in an environment of talk and language from the Nursery upwards. This helps them and newcomers to the school to develop their language skills quickly and make good progress once they have become fluent and settled.
- Those eligible for support through the pupil premium make at least good progress and the gap between their attainment and that of others in each year group is closing. Year 6 pupils in 2013 were six months behind others in reading and writing and two terms behind in mathematics. These gaps were narrower than those seen nationally.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils remain focused and engaged because teachers make lessons interesting by the resources they use. Teachers focus sharply on the different groups in their classes by making sure they pitch their teaching and activities closely to their learning needs. Teachers regularly stop lessons to share examples of good work for pupils to see as models of what they might achieve and adapt tasks in the light of the pupils' progress.
- Teamwork between adults and joint planning are the key features of the at least good teaching in Nursery and Reception. Children are quickly engrossed in a wide range of interesting activities both inside and outdoors covering all areas of learning. This includes each child in Reception having an identified area where they can plant what they choose and watch it grow.
- The strong team of teaching assistants and other adults makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They work closely with individuals and small groups in lessons. They are also trained well to lead sessions on specific programmes for pupils with special educational needs or for pupils who have fallen behind in their reading.
- Whenever they undertake a piece of writing, pupils use their individual targets to help improve

its quality. They diligently respond to their teacher's suggestions in marking on how their writing could be improved. Suggestions for improvement are usually provided in the marking of their mathematics work but pupils are not always given the time to respond to them.

- Skilled questioning is a key feature of the most effective teaching. Teachers question pupils to check their understanding and to provide additional challenge for more-able pupils. They move learning on quickly while making sure pupils have time to think about their answers and their responses. However, when teaching is not at its most effective in a small number of lessons, learning slows when teachers do not use questioning to check the pupils' understanding closely enough and move on before everyone is ready.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Children begin to share, cooperate and play together well in Nursery and Reception. Relationships are strong so they are happy, settled, well focused and know the routines and expectations. Most are confident and quite happy to talk about their learning.
- Pupils treat others with respect and courtesy, and are very polite and well mannered. They are very clear about the impact of their actions on others. They take great care to help newcomers to settle in quickly and try to make sure no-one is left out. Pupils from different backgrounds work and play together amicably. This results in a calm and purposeful learning environment.
- Pupils are proud of their school and how it helps them to learn. Their enjoyment is reflected in steadily improving attendance. Most are very keen to learn although a small number let their standards slip at times when teaching does not retain their attention. Nevertheless, because staff consistently implement policies for rewards and sanctions, learning is rarely interrupted.
- Pupils say how safe they feel in school, which is a view very much supported by their parents and carers. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying including cyber bullying. They are confident there is no bullying and they know they can approach adults if the need arises. They are taught how to keep themselves safe through e-safety and fire safety training.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides the school with a very clear direction, based on a relentless drive to improve teaching and learning. Senior and subject leaders operating within a thoughtfully developed and effective leadership structure make a significant contribution to helping drive up standards. They are developed well to carry out their roles through subject-specific training and by working closely alongside more experienced staff. Formal procedures for managing the performance of teachers are rigorously carried out so only teaching that leads to pupils making good or better progress is rewarded financially.
- Close engagement with the local authority is supporting the school well in its drive for improvement. This includes checking management systems and their impact and supporting the development of teaching and the skills of subject leaders.
- The school's success in achieving equality of opportunity is seen by any differences in achievement by different groups being small or closing rapidly. The pupil premium is used well to fund additional staff for small-group work and individual support during and after school.
- The school strives continually to strengthen the partnership with home. Many opportunities are provided for parents and carers to find out about the school's expectations and to attend workshops to help them support their children's learning.
- The organisation of subjects and teaching focuses sharply on developing key skills of literacy and numeracy. Alongside this, topic themes are carefully designed to broaden and deepen the pupils' experiences by linking learning between subjects. Their experiences are widened by off-site visits and visitors into school.
- By playing a part in developing the school's values and reflecting on its characteristics as a Rights Respecting School pupils are very reflective about beliefs and values. They learn about

other people and their beliefs by celebrating religious festivals, Black History Month and International Day. Through a wide range of activities pupils respond positively to a range of artistic and cultural opportunities provided by the school. They raise funds for several charities and learn to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

- New sports funding is being used to bring in further staff expertise to build on the effective specialist teaching already in the school. This is already leading to increased participation in clubs and activities at lunchtime and in 'shake and wake' sessions before school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors gain a very sharp understanding of the school through visits to classes and interviewing pupils. This enables them to check the progress of action to meet the school's priorities for improvement and gives them a clear picture of the action being taken to improve teaching. They understand precisely how the headteacher uses formal processes to manage the performance of teachers and how she acts swiftly to tackle any underperformance. Their regular training, including in understanding assessment data, means they are able to ask pertinent questions such as about the fall in reading results and what action school leaders are taking. Governors continually seek the best value for their spending decisions and check the impact of the pupil premium on eligible pupils. They are rigorous in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are implemented fully and through discussions with pupils know they feel very safe in school. They are also involving the school council in looking at how the playground could be improved.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101532
<b>Local authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	425525

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	769
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Francis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kim Beat
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8452 2413
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8208 2369
<b>Email address</b>	admin@braintcroft.brent.sch.uk

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