

Broad Oak Community Primary School

Scotsford Road, Broad Oak, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8UD

Inspection dates	21–22 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders' self-evaluation is overgenerous and does not focus enough on those areas that need improving.
- School improvement planning does not address those aspects of the school that need improving most.
- Governors have not been focused enough on outcomes for pupils and do not have a clear enough understanding of what the strengths and weaknesses of the school are.
- Because school improvement planning is not focused enough, governors are not fully able to hold school leaders to account.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good across the school. Because of this, opportunities for pupils to make the progress they should are missed.
- Middle leaders do not have a strong enough impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Sometimes pupils are unclear about what they are learning and why, or what they could do to improve their work.
- Pupils do not consistently make the good progress they are capable of. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who are capable of achieving at higher levels are not challenged to do so because expectations are not high enough.
- When teaching does not motivate pupils enough, they become disengaged. Often this leads to unreceptive participation or low-level off-task behaviours.
- The attendance of some pupils could be better.

The school has the following strengths

- The school benefits from a strong partnership with two other federated schools.
- Because of the quality of the curriculum, pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Their social and emotional needs are well met.
- Because expectations are high and the quality of teaching meets their needs well, children get off to a very good start in the Reception class.
- Disadvantaged pupils do well in this school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that outcomes for pupils improve to become good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of the progress pupils can make, especially those pupils capable of achieving at higher levels
 - teachers' feedback better enables pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work
 - the quality of teachers' questioning consistently challenges pupils to deepen their understanding and make connections in their learning
 - passive attitudes to learning or low-level off-task behaviours from pupils are not tolerated and challenged head on
 - the roles middle leaders have in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and assessment become more established, so that staff are better supported in improving their practice.
- Ensure that school leaders' self-evaluation is more consistent and balanced, so those areas that need developing are fully acknowledged and become a priority.
- Ensure that school improvement planning focuses on the right priorities for the school and is presented in a format that enables governors to fully hold school leaders to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to show how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders' self-evaluation is not as robust as it could be. Although leaders know the school well, they are overgenerous in their assessments of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Because of this, there is not enough focus on those areas that need addressing most.
 - Because of overgenerous self-evaluation, school improvement planning is not as effective as it could be and does not fully acknowledge or concentrate on those areas that need improving most. Governors in particular are not served well by the way self-assessment and improvement planning are linked, leading to confusion about what the strengths of the school really are.
 - School leaders aspire for the best quality of education possible for pupils in this school. The executive headteacher is supported well by the head of school. Together, they have begun to address the legacy of uncertainty left by the changes in strategic leadership in recent years, including changes in the structure of the federation partnership.
 - Staff at all levels are very supportive of the senior leadership team. They are reflective and aware that outcomes for pupils are not as good as they might be. Because of this, there is a collegiate feel to the school and a sense that staff are working hard to improve things.
 - The federation with two other local schools is a strength and school leaders are beginning to develop more fully the collaboration between them. The impact of this, particularly in developing the roles of middle leaders, is beginning to have an effect on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, more work is required on this to ensure that middle leadership is more widely developed.
 - Pupils benefit from a suitably broad and balanced curriculum which is supplemented by a good range of special events, educational visits and extra-curricular opportunities. The school has maintained its own swimming pool and this is put to good use in the summer months, although older pupils complained it was not deep enough for diving or 'underwater exploration'.
 - Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strong, as is the promotion of fundamental British values. During the inspection, the school was holding a special 'diversity week'. The impact of this was very profound, with pupils benefiting from a range of activities, including an inspirational assembly given by a visitor with cerebral palsy.
 - Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds do well here. Because of low numbers, it is difficult to evaluate the impact of extra funding for disadvantaged pupils or compare their performance to other pupils within the school or nationally, but it is clear that the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs are catered for well.
 - The school makes good use of the extra funding given to promote physical education and sports in primary schools. Pupils have benefited from participation in local inter-school sporting events and tournaments. A range of after-school sports clubs are also available throughout the year.
 - Parents are very clear in their support for the school, its leaders and staff at all levels. They particularly appreciate the pastoral care offered to their children. One parent told the inspector his daughter 'runs into school, but ambles out'. Another told the inspector that staff are welcoming and caring, and that school leaders are visible and available when there are concerns.
 - Until recently, the support of the local authority has been 'light touch'. Since the school's national test and assessment results were published last year, the local authority has been involved more, providing support and advice. The impact of this has been varied in its usefulness to school leaders. Care should be taken in coming months to ensure that any further support focuses on the right areas, so that leaders are better supported to bring about the rapid changes required to make this a good or better school.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governors have a high profile in the school and across the federation as a whole. They carry out their roles with enthusiasm and visit the school often to ensure that leaders and staff are supported in their efforts to bring about improvement.
 - Governors do not always ensure that their statutory duties to publish up-to-date information for parents on the school's website are carried out. At the time of the inspection, key information about the latest Key Stage 2 exam and assessment results were not published.
 - Because self-evaluation is overgenerous, governors are not well informed about the strengths and, more importantly, those areas that need improving in the school. This is especially the case when evaluating the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics in each year group or by comparing the school's end of key stage outcomes with other schools nationally.

- Due to school improvement planning not being as effective as it could be, governors are not able to monitor the improvements that are required with any degree of accuracy. This in turn leaves them ill-equipped to hold school leaders fully to account.
- The arrangements for safeguarding and child protection are effective. Governors and staff at every level treat their duties in this area very seriously, have attended appropriate training and are proactive in their approach to keeping children safe and secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is mixed and not consistently good or better. Because of this, pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of. This is especially the case in Key Stage 2, where uneven progress in previous years means too much catching up is required by the time pupils enter their final year.
- In lessons where teaching, learning and assessment are strong, teachers excite and inspire pupils to fully engage with their learning. This was the case where pupils were writing an opening to a story. Their enthusiasm for the task was plain to see, with the class teacher skilfully structuring learning in a way that ensured that pupils of all abilities were successful and made progress.
- However, in too many lessons, teachers miss opportunities to ensure that pupils are making the progress they are capable of because the level of challenge is not high enough, especially for those pupils capable of achieving at higher levels.
- In some lessons, pupils were unclear of exactly what they were learning and why, leading to a loss of focus and reducing possibilities for them to make as much progress as they might have.
- In other lessons, pupils told the inspector they found the work they had been set too easy. This was especially the case in mathematics, although the inspector witnessed one mathematics lesson in upper Key Stage 2 which challenged pupils extremely well.
- In one lesson, pupils' initial enthusiasm for a task had worn off before they embarked on it, due to over-long teacher input which induced a passive, disengaged approach from some pupils and low-level off-task behaviours from others.
- Raising the quality of feedback from teachers so that pupils are clear about how to improve their work has been a focus since the start of this school year. Teachers are beginning to use the school's new policy for this in a more effective manner and pupils are now benefiting from more consistent verbal and written advice.
- School leaders have also identified that the quality of teachers' questioning could sometimes be more effective in order to confirm pupils' understanding and add further challenge for those who are achieving well. Although the picture was mixed, progress is being made with this, with some good examples of questioning seen during classroom visits across all phases of the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are confident and well mannered. They play together well and are respectful to adults and each other.
- Pupils' physical and emotional needs are met well and relationships between staff and pupils are harmonious. The inspection was punctuated by a number of instances where pupils applauded the work of others, including during an assembly.
- Pupils told the inspector that bullying does not exist, although a small number of parents appeared to contradict this opinion in the online Ofsted parent questionnaire. Pupils also told the inspector they feel very safe in school and learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet or different aspects of social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. School leaders now monitor and record instances of poor behaviour in a more systematic way and ensure that appropriate support is put in place for those few pupils who need it. Because of this, fewer instances of poor behaviour are now seen in classrooms.
- Pupils also told me that sometimes behaviour in classrooms disrupts their learning. School leaders confirmed that pupils need to take more responsibility for their learning and behaviour. This aspect

should improve as the quality of teaching, learning and assessment improves.

- In the past, attendance has not been as good as it could be. The school is aware of this and is working with parents to reduce the levels of both persistent and overall absence, the levels of which have fallen since this time last year, but still need reducing further.

Outcomes for pupils

requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not enough pupils make the progress they should. This is especially the case in Key Stage 2 where the school's own progress information indicates that Year 6 pupils, once again, might not make as much progress as the school would have hoped for later this year, when their different starting points at the end of Key Stage 1 are considered.
- The school's new pupil progress tracking system shows that current progress in reading and mathematics is stronger than that for writing. It also shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 are on track to improve on the disappointing outcomes seen in last year's results.
- Progress of pupils in the recent past is testament to a legacy of weaker teaching, learning and assessment. Last year's Key Stage 2 national test and assessment results saw the school performing in the bottom 5% for progress measures of schools nationally in writing and mathematics, and in the bottom 20% for reading.
- The progress of pupils who might be expected to achieve at higher levels is not as strong as the school would like, with the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels, particularly in mathematics and writing, below national averages.
- The progress children make in the early years is very good. High expectation and accurate assessment of the next steps each child needs to take ensure that all children are supported and challenged appropriately. Most children will be well prepared for their move up to Year 1 later this year.
- The phonics (letters and the sounds they make) skills of pupils are sound, with the outcomes in Year 1 national screening checks showing most pupils meeting the expected standard. However, the outcomes of the Year 2 check saw a small number of pupils still not meeting the expected standard.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special education needs do well. Although small numbers in each cohort make comparisons unhelpful, it is clear that these pupils' needs are being met well.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the Reception Class because of the high quality of care and very effective provision delivered by teaching and support staff.
- The early years is led well. Staff work together as a cohesive team and take maximum advantage of the small cohort size afforded by the lower than average numbers of children who enter this school at the start of each year.
- Because of the quality of provision on offer, most children are already well on track to achieve a good level of development this year, indicating that they will be well prepared for their move into Year 1 when it comes.
- Staff know the children well and have a clear idea of their needs and varying levels of development on joining the school. The early years leader told me 'children are ready to learn as soon as they start'. Accordingly, no time is wasted in providing interesting and stimulating learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom.
- Expectation is high. Assessment procedures are well developed and inform next steps in learning for each individual. Because of this, children are challenged appropriately and consequently make good progress.
- The inspector was struck by the mature attitude and high levels of concentration shown by most children. This was especially the case when the class teacher delivered a short input before children wrote facts about their special visitor to an assembly. Good-quality and well-targeted questioning ensured that children were able to remember key information, and to share and further develop their own opinions, before setting off with a high degree of enthusiasm for the task in hand.
- Children are confident, behave well and display good attitudes to learning and to each other. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are provided for very well, as are those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Parents were very complimentary about the care and support their children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They told the inspector that communication is very good, that their children have

settled well and that they appreciate the opportunities staff give them to find out about how well their children are progressing.

School details

Unique reference number	114390
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10011101

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simone Foy and Sam Gleadow, joint chair of governors
Headteacher	Shirley Frankis (executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01435 862951
Website	www.broadoak.e-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@broadoak.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 June 2011

Information about this school

- Broad Oak Community Primary School is smaller than most other primary schools.
- The school is part of a federation with two other local primary schools, with one executive headteacher and one overarching governing body.
- The school meets the government’s floor standards, which are the minimum expected for pupils’ attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding) is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at school support level is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or those whose first language is not believed to be English, is very low.
- Children in the school’s Reception class attend full time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector conducted a learning walk around the school visiting all classrooms, accompanied by the executive headteacher.
- The inspector also observed four lessons across the school, all jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, the executive headteacher and the head of school, the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage and governors, including the joint Chairs of the Governing Body.
- A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of pupils' work, heard pupils read and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector observed the executive headteacher and the head of school carry out a scrutiny of pupils' books.
- The inspector considered the views of parents, taking into account 35 responses on the online parent questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also considered the freetext responses submitted by parents. Responses in the 17 online questionnaires returned by staff were also considered.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents including those to do with safeguarding, attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of visits by the local authority, information about pupils' outcomes provided by the school, the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school's improvement plan.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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