

Brookhurst Primary School

Brookhurst Road, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 0EH

Inspection dates

15–16 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Outstanding leadership places pupils at the heart of the school. As a result, pupils thrive, grow and develop into well-rounded citizens for the future.
- The headteacher's drive and ambition are at the centre of the high expectations which permeate throughout all aspects of the school's work.
- This ambition is shared by a highly effective governing body, who are astute and insightful and are closely involved in the life of the school. They use a wide range of skills and expertise to challenge and support the school effectively.
- There is a strong team spirit among all staff. They lead by example and foster caring relationships, so pupils are ready to learn in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are happy, confident and enjoy school. They take great pride in sharing their achievements and are extremely proud of their school.
- Provision in the early years is outstanding. Children are supported by highly focused staff who plan rigorously to enable all children to make rapid progress.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan, deliver and assess lessons. They work well as a team to ensure that no pupil falls behind. However, teaching does not always challenge the most able pupils to enable them to work at greater depth. Work in pupils' books is not consistently well presented.
- The varied and diverse curriculum offers pupils many exciting opportunities to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is strong.
- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that they need to challenge the most able pupils further so that they achieve even higher standards in their work.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is as a result of effective teaching and close monitoring.
- Pupils feel very safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the school and the way it educates and cares for their children.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teaching fully challenges the most able pupils to learn so that they achieve the highest possible outcomes
 - the most able pupils have more opportunities to develop independently in writing, so that they become less reliant on teachers' scaffolding of activities.
- Develop the same high, consistent approach to presentation and handwriting as seen in some areas of the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and her team have built a strong ethos that thrives throughout the school. They all share the drive for continual improvement and success, which enables the school to be a vibrant and happy environment where pupils, staff, leaders and parents all work together collaboratively.
- The headteacher and governors maintain a persistent focus on improving outcomes for all pupils. They check pupils' progress regularly and have developed an accurate view of pupils' performance. As a result of close tracking, teachers are able to respond promptly to address any underachievement and plan interventions to support pupils to make better progress.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have developed appropriate plans to support improvement which they review rigorously and systematically. This ensures that they know fully how their work is impacting on learning.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders carry out regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the standard of work in books. These processes have helped them to have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are progressing so that no pupils fall behind.
- Performance management arrangements are rigorous and robust. They are highly focused and outcomes are scrutinised closely by the senior leaders and governors. Teachers report that feedback from senior leaders, especially through performance management, improves teaching and their practice. The school has invested well in developing their support staff, who have developed their practice so that their work has greater impact on learning.
- The leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the use of the funding are highly effective. Well-targeted teaching and high levels of support from teaching assistants ensure that pupils make good progress. Leaders have developed effective systems to ensure that they know pupils' needs very well. They place a great emphasis on pupils, staff and parents working in partnership, which ensures that pupils' needs are well understood. This highly effective work has been showcased throughout the local authority. Where necessary, leaders have developed strong links with external partners, seeking further advice, support and training that ensures that staff have appropriate skills.
- Leaders and governors track the impact of the use of pupil premium funding rigorously to improve provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. They have a clear understanding of which of their targeted interventions have the greatest impact on learning. They are also quick to change and modify less effective interventions. Although numbers of disadvantaged pupils are low, disadvantaged pupils make good progress, often matching their peers and other pupils nationally.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used innovatively. Initiatives within the school are highly successful. In 2016/17, pupils are participating in more external competitions than ever before. Leaders in this area

are relentless in their pursuit to ensure that pupils keep themselves fit and healthy. Targeted activities help develop gifted and talented pupils along with more focused opportunities to develop the confidence of more reluctant pupils. This ensures that all pupils are given opportunities to play an active part in the sporting life of the school. Leaders have developed opportunities to promote health and well-being effectively for the whole community, for example they offer a weekly after-school running club for parents.

- Leaders ensure that all pupils experience an exciting curriculum. Pupils are inspired to know more about the world around them. The development of pupils' skills and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics is complemented across other subject areas. There is a strong emphasis on developing every aspect of the curriculum, including music. The school offers many opportunities to learn to play an instrument, perform in the school choir or join the school orchestra. Pupils have excellent enrichment opportunities that contribute to them developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about receiving multiple opportunities to engage with their local community and beyond. The school provides many trips, visits and extra-curricular activities. Whether singing in the school choir or taking part in one of a number of residential trips, pupils access a wide range of rich learning experiences to which staff are fully committed.
- Leaders are outward-facing and ensure that staff receive relevant training, bringing up-to-date best practice to the school's work. For example, one focus within this year's school improvement plan has been to develop metacognition across the school. Relevant research and training has been undertaken and this has already had a positive impact on pupils' learning. The local authority has recognised the headteacher's skilled leadership and utilised this to support improvements in other schools within the local area.

Governance of the school

- Governance is very effective and a strength of the school. Governors are rightly proud of the school and passionate in their commitment to pupils and the wider community.
- Governors know the school well. They have a relentless focus on school improvement. They have a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to challenge and support the school's leadership effectively. They do this by having a clear understanding of the strategic vision of the school.
- Governors know that teaching is good. They make regular visits to school and engage in purposeful activities to help evaluate the work of the school.
- Governor committees provide a regular focus on pupils' progress and curriculum provision. Termly summaries or 'nutshells' help to ensure that they analyse and evaluate relevant information. This reflects their determination to secure ongoing improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Safeguarding procedures and policies are in place. Information about a wide range of pupil welfare matters is recorded carefully by staff, reviewed thoroughly and acted on by senior leaders. Information is shared promptly with outside agencies, such as the police and social services, whenever necessary. The support offered by the school for pupils who have a multi-agency plan makes a very positive difference to the lives of these pupils and their families.
- Staff learn regularly about child protection. Leaders ensure that staff have regular updates about current safeguarding issues. Leaders share good practice and learning from a range of local and national organisations. As a result, staff are robust in their actions to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Leaders carry out rigorous checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. Governors support this work by checking leaders' actions and ensuring that their own knowledge is up to date by accessing relevant training. This contributes highly to the school's unyielding attitude that puts pupils' safety first.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have created a positive, safe learning environment which helps motivate pupils to learn. Staff build strong relationships with all pupils, which helps pupils to feel confident to question and explore their learning fully. As a result, pupils are resourceful and resilient and have developed strong learning behaviours.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning and work collaboratively. In the majority of lessons, learning is managed effectively. Teachers display good subject knowledge, which enables them to question and probe children's knowledge and understanding appropriately. They are ably assisted by effective support staff. Teachers use a range of resources to support learning, including the effective use of technology to enhance their explanations. Where this practice is the strongest, pupils are confident and display good knowledge and understanding and use a range of skills effectively.
- Leaders and teachers have developed an appropriate assessment system to help guide their work. This underpins learning across the school and helps to ensure that most groups have work set at challenging and appropriate levels. There are some inconsistencies in the level of work for most-able pupils, and, as a result, they are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Teachers promote skills in mathematics systematically across the school. They build upon areas of learning by teaching concepts discretely and then providing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills in different learning contexts connected to the wider curriculum. Pupils' learning is supported by a good range of apparatus which supports their thinking before moving them on to more abstract number work. For example, in Year 5, pupils were observed solving number problems collaboratively in a PE (physical education) lesson. Inspectors observed pupils finding fractions of numbers using apparatus, before moving on to the written method, therefore ensuring that pupils' understanding was fully explored.
- There is a strong reading culture across the school. Inspectors were able to see evidence of high standards across the age range. For example, pupils in Year 4 were

able to read with great expression and had a good understanding of their reading. Across the school, pupils discussed their likes and dislikes and were confident in expressing their opinions about what they had read. In Year 6, pupils shared their love of reading, which is being developed through an extra-curricular reading club. Pupils told inspectors that they were captivated by the current text choices. These examples show how teachers select and organise a range of interesting learning activities to extend and develop reading skills.

- Teachers develop pupils' writing skills by enabling them to write purposefully in a range of styles, by linking writing through the themed topics. This is complemented by a range of discrete opportunities to learn about grammar, punctuation and spelling. Where teaching is strongest, teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to explore and develop their ideas through discussion and collaborative learning. For example, in Year 5, pupils created ways to improve their sentences collaboratively, testing each other with appropriate examples and supporting each other with corrections when needed. Pupils' writing shows that they can use their skills well. However, sometimes teachers' scaffolding and support can inhibit the most able pupils from writing independently and in greater depth.
- By the time pupils enter upper key stage 2, they have great pride in their work because their teachers have high expectations of presentation. However, in other areas of the school, expectations in presentation are less consistent. Teachers do not always insist that pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are neat and well organised.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's overarching motto, 'Right Start – Bright Future', is played out in all aspects of the school's work. Leaders ensure that this message drives the school forward. As a result of pupils, staff and parents working together, pupils develop high levels of confidence, self-esteem and self-confidence. This clearly supports their attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils and parents speak fondly of the nurturing relationships that exist throughout the school. Parents typically commented, 'Every teacher leaves a lasting impression on each child.' Pupils are courteous, positive and have pride in their school. Relationships and friendships are key themes throughout a pupil's life in the school. Whenever a new pupil starts at the school, they are quickly teamed up with a 'personal buddy' who looks out for them and cares for them. Inspectors watched how Year 6 boys comforted and helped a younger child who they noticed had hurt himself on the playground, taking great care to ensure that he felt safe and well cared for. Parents echoed this by sharing how the buddy system has been a strength in developing the personal skills of their children.
- Pupils are given the chance to take additional responsibilities and develop leadership skills, for example becoming members of the 'Pupil Parliament', 'Eco Team' or 'friendship buddies' during playtimes. Although leaders support the development of these opportunities, it is the pupils themselves who take the lead, ensuring that they

are effective. For example, pupils have to apply for the friendship buddy system and are interviewed and assessed for their suitability. Such activities support pupils' sense of responsibility and help ensure that they leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- Pupils are able to demonstrate what they understand by British values. The Pupil Parliament is a strong feature of the school and helps support pupils to develop an understanding of how democracy, tolerance and mutual respect are core values within their school and wider community. Pupils reported that members of parliament are charged with looking at all aspects of school life and typically commented, 'They are like mini inspectors.' Pupils talked how the parliament supports behaviour throughout school and how they debate areas of change and issues that affect their lives in school.
- Leaders, including governors, promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural education extremely well. As a result of the ethos, school-shared values and the curriculum, pupils' understanding of different cultures or faiths and moral understanding beyond their immediate experience are very well developed.
- Pupils feel extremely safe in school. They report that bullying is very rare and that playtimes and lunchtimes are happy times. Evidence collected during the inspection supports this view.
- Pupils access a wide range of opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves safe. They ask thoughtful and honest questions about things that concern them, for example in work around e-safety, pupils were given opportunities to discuss and ask questions around child exploitation. They talked confidently about how they had learned about keeping themselves safe on the inside as well as on the outside, showing a real understanding of key issues in keeping themselves safe. This culture is promoted across a range of subject areas. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy as a result of key work undertaken within the school. Leaders have actively increased opportunities for sport, engaged parents and support healthy eating by monitoring their own school meal service. This has been in response to published information about high obesity rates in the local area.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders have clear behavioural expectations that are robustly and consistently implemented across the school. Pupils are kind and considerate and courteous to one another and work alongside each other to share ideas and check the quality of their work. They routinely held doors open for inspectors and asked us how we were enjoying our time at their school. They were keen to discuss their school with us and talked with great pride about all aspects of school life.
- Staff have highly effective relationships with all pupils. These relationships have created a culture of openness in which pupils can learn safely and are not afraid to 'have a go'. Pupils overwhelmingly told inspectors that the best thing about school was that 'teachers all help us and provide us with the tools to help us with our learning.'
- Pupils are highly appreciative of the interesting lessons and opportunities that their teachers plan and provide them with. They spoke fondly of their love for music, art and drama and a range of extra-curricular activities that they enjoy. All of these factors

help create an atmosphere that is purposeful, calm and productive.

- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is much lower than that nationally, which reflects pupils' positive views and experiences in coming to the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, most pupils at key stage 2, including disadvantaged pupils, made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys, including most-able boys, did not make as much progress as other groups, particularly in reading. At key stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving expected standards was higher than nationally in reading, writing and mathematics and reflected strong progress from their starting points.
- The majority of children begin at the school with skills that are typical for their age. In two out of the last three years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2016 was higher than the national average. Leaders recognised the dip in the 2015 results and took swift action by restructuring the school in 2016, enabling pupils to catch up.
- The proportion of pupils passing the national phonics screening check in Year 1 has remained above the national average for the last two years. Pupils read a wide range of books regularly and the majority of children leave Year 2 reading with good comprehension skills and read accurately and fluently.
- During their time in key stage 1, the majority of current pupils are making good progress. Teachers build on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills carefully from the early years. The school's assessment information shows that a good proportion of pupils are working at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As pupils move into key stage 2, this progress is continued. From their starting points, most pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Information from the school and book scrutiny support this and show that the dip in progress for boys in 2016 was specific to that cohort. School information shows that pupils are attaining well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils working at the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics is variable.
- Through careful tracking, targeted teaching and careful planning of next steps, the school ensures that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress over time and achieve well.
- Leaders track the progress and attainment of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics carefully. Leaders have extended the assessment system to track attainment in the wider curriculum subjects and have begun to track progress in these areas.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not making as strong progress across reading, writing and mathematics as other groups within the school. School information and book scrutiny show that work set for these children varies in the level of challenge and pupils are not always given sufficiently regular opportunities to apply their learning and work at greater depth.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leadership in the early years is outstanding. Leaders are committed to high expectations and have communicated a clear vision to staff and parents about what good learning should look like. As a result of the incisive leadership, robust assessments and careful planning, children make good and often rapid progress from their different starting points.
- Funding is specifically targeted to ensure that the specific needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met. As a result, these pupils make good progress in their early school life. For example, in 2016, all disadvantaged pupils achieved the early learning goals in 11 out of the 17 areas.
- Staff continually review the impact of provision and reflect upon their practice. The team benefit from the expertise of the leader whose practice is widely recognised within the local authority.
- Staff have strong relationships with parents and this ensures that parental involvement is high. The use of an online shared learning portal between staff and parents ensures that learning at home and at school is captured carefully. This enables staff to set next steps and share these effectively with home. Parents typically commented that this supportive approach has 'turned reading at home from a daily ordeal into a pleasurable experience'.
- The early years team provide a stimulating, purposeful environment for all children which enables children to be inquisitive and curious learners. Behaviour is exemplary and children show high levels of concentration in their active learning. Staff are highly skilled, talking to and questioning children with great accuracy, which helps develop the children's understanding and confidence in their learning.
- Children settle quickly into learning routines in the early years and staff utilise their skills to target children's next steps. For example, the use of challenge trays enables children to carry out open-ended learning tasks. This helps to consolidate and extend their learning through a variety of different contexts. This targeted approach not only helps children to make strong and rapid progress but also ensures that children become independent learners, which prepares them well for the transition into Year 1.
- Children's safety, well-being and welfare are given a high priority. Staff follow policies, procedures and practices consistently. At the time of the inspection, there were no breaches to the statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	105018
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10024295

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Cond
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Davidson
Telephone number	0151 334 4348
Website	www.brookhurst.eschools.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@brookhurst.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Brookhurst Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly the same as the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is lower than the national average.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club.

- The school has achieved a number of awards, including Healthy Schools, Eco-Schools Silver Award and Green Flag Award.
- The school works within a cluster of other local schools to provide training opportunities for staff. The headteacher supports other schools to improve their work.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in the school. The headteacher accompanied the lead inspector on a number of observations on the first morning of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector also met three members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair.
- The lead inspector met the school's improvement partner.
- The lead inspector talked to a group of pupils on the second day of the inspection and the inspection team talked to pupils in lessons and at breaktime about their learning.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they dropped their children off at school. Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading and talked to them about their reading. Inspectors examined the quality of work in a wide range of books extensively. They discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupil achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 35 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and 32 free text responses.

Inspection team

James Blackwell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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