

Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School

Howlett Drive, Brinsworth, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 5HT

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although leaders and governors have acted to stem the decline in reading and mathematics progress, they have not ensured that progress in writing is consistent across the school.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- Although teaching in mathematics is improving, not enough is being done to ensure that the most able are making as much progress as they could.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and, therefore, they do not make as much progress as they should.
- Letter formation and handwriting are not taught consistently in line with the school's policy. This means that pupils' written work is not always neat and tidy.
- Outcomes in the early years require improvement. Although children settle well and are well cared for, they are not prepared well enough for the start of Year 1. Not enough attention is given to developing early reading and writing skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The new head of school, working with trust leaders, has galvanised staff to create an ambitious team. Together, they have ensured that pupils' personal development is well supported.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are strengths of the school. They are happy, polite, attend school regularly and conduct themselves well.
- Pupils are well cared for, and safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- There is some effective teaching, particularly in upper key stage 2.
- The broad and balanced curriculum ensures that pupils are taught a suitable range of subjects. Pupils enjoy the choice of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures that they make similar progress to other pupils.
- Working with the trust, the governing body has effectively supported the recruitment of strong leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching and pupils' progress in writing so that pupils can demonstrate sustained success in writing at length by:
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to write longer pieces of work
 - improving teachers' skills at better understanding the writing sequence
 - providing a more systematic teaching of handwriting and letter formation
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of presentation are always high
 - ensuring that pupils adhere to the grammar and punctuation rules that they have been taught.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years so that children are better prepared for Year 1 by:
 - ensuring that planned provision provides more consistently challenging activities for the children, particularly the most and least able
 - ensuring that letter formation is taught more effectively and that teachers encourage children to write letters and simple words neatly
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities for children to develop and practise reading and writing skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new head of school, supported by the executive headteacher, is providing strong leadership. She has successfully led the school through a period of substantial staff change. A significant proportion of the teachers and some senior leaders have been appointed recently. The success of these appointments is reflected in the ambitious expectations of leaders and the fact that the school is a calm and well-ordered learning environment.
- The curriculum is well thought out; there is an appropriate balance between the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics and creative opportunities. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy healthy lifestyles. They said that the school has helped them to understand the importance of regular exercise as part of their daily routine. They value the after-school clubs and sporting activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through the curriculum. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their enjoyment of a range of subjects, including sports and the arts. For example, pupils who attend the after-school choir enjoyed performing for parents and carers at a recent concert.
- Leaders use additional funding for those pupils with SEND effectively. Leaders' well-thought-out provision makes sure that these pupils have appropriate, and sometimes good, support in classes. This ensures that these pupils are fully included in the life of the school and it contributes to this group of pupils making similar progress to their peers.
- The primary school sport premium funding is used well. Pupils have a range of opportunities to take part in sport with specialist coaching. For example, pupils can learn a wide range of sports and participate in competitive games in lessons and after school.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. It has improved attendance for these pupils. Like other pupils, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving in reading and mathematics, but pupils do not make enough progress in writing across the school.
- Middle leadership is a developing strength of the school. Middle leaders are ambitious to do their best and to ensure that pupils get the best range of learning experiences possible. Working in thematic teams, they have shaped the experiences available to pupils. For example, the creative arts team has ensured that art and music are appropriately resourced and that topics have been chosen to interest pupils.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development convincingly. They identified a declining trend in reading and mathematics progress and have focused on improving the teaching in these areas. In particular, the introduction of new whole-school approaches has strengthened the teaching of reading and mathematics. This is showing positive signs of impact on pupils' improving progress. Leaders are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that the most able pupils are appropriately stretched and challenged in all mathematics lessons.

- Staff morale is high. All the staff that inspectors spoke with were positive about the school's work and recent improvements.
- Most parents are very positive about the school and their children's experiences at the school. Many spoke constructively about the open attitude of the staff. However, some are concerned about the many staff changes and how this is impacting on their children's learning.
- The trust knows the school well and has been instrumental in supporting the recruitment of effective teachers and leaders.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school. They have been well supported by the trust to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to both challenge and support the work of the school.
- A clear annual calendar of potential governor activity is provided by the trust. This is helping to focus the work of the governing body, so they understand the expectations of their role.
- Governors have a largely accurate view of the strengths of the school and the most important areas that still need to improve. They regularly question leaders about the impact of school development work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a strong culture of care and respect. They have ensured that staff keep up to date with the most recent guidance and legislation, including the 'Prevent' duty and child protection training.
- Checks on staff, including safe recruitment procedures, are conducted rigorously. A single central record, showing that all appropriate checks have been conducted, is securely and efficiently maintained.
- The site is well kept and safe. Risk assessments for the site and for educational activities are in place, which identify any risks and the controls in place to minimise risks.
- Leaders keep safeguarding records appropriately and an electronic system is used to maintain and analyse these. Records show the school's strong commitment to keeping children safe. Good links with parents and carers and external agencies are evident and effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although recent appointments have strengthened the quality of teaching in upper key stage 2, not all teaching is effective enough to secure good progress for all pupils.
- The more effective teaching takes account of what pupils already know, understand and can do. This is underpinned by well-understood and established routines, which

ensure that all classroom activities run smoothly. Pupils move quickly and efficiently between different activities.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. A positive atmosphere fosters positive attitudes to learning in most classrooms.
- New whole-school approaches to the teaching of reading and mathematics are helping pupils to learn more effectively. Although teachers and additional adults have had appropriate training to introduce these new approaches, a few still lack confidence and specialist subject knowledge in phonics.
- In writing, pupils' progress across the school is variable. Inconsistencies mean that many younger pupils require regular help and support when forming simple letters. Others struggle to draft sentences, build paragraphs or write accurately. Many pupils struggle to spell simple words. In a few cases, pupils' experience of writing is a little disjointed, which limits the development of understanding. Not all staff ensure that pupils use correct punctuation and grammar in their writing.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Pupils develop secure phonics knowledge by the end of key stage 1. Most pupils are taught to read accurately and confidently. Pupils say that they are enjoying the new books that have been introduced with the new approach.
- In mathematics, lessons give pupils regular opportunities to develop mathematical fluency by learning or recalling number facts, using reasoning and applying their understanding to solve problems. However, some work is too easy for the most able pupils. On the occasions when they are presented with appropriately challenging work, pupils engage particularly well.
- Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are taught alongside others, in small groups or individually, and this ensures that they make similar progress to their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are polite and kind to each other and to visitors. Pupils speak positively about their experiences at the school. They say that they enjoy school and are confident that staff care for and look after them. They know that staff at the school are there to help if they ever have a problem.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they take good care of the resources and the site. There are many informative displays, both in and out of the classrooms, that encourage pupils to be good members of the school community. For example, pupils take pride in their roles as sports leaders and school councillors.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say bullying is very rare at the school. They also say that on those rare occasions when it does take place, it is promptly dealt with. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe; they have a good understanding of cyber bullying and online dangers.

- The school actively promotes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet. They talk positively about the benefits of regular exercise and physical education lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils happily and cheerfully come into school each morning. Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. They are keen to learn and readily follow adults' directions. At breaktimes and lunchtime, pupils are well supervised. They follow well-established routines, which ensure smooth transitions back into lessons.
- Pupils understand the rules and consequences of any inappropriate behaviour. Pupils say that they love their lessons and they say their learning is never disturbed by poor behaviour.
- Pupils come to school on time and are ready and eager to learn. Pupils' attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils with low attendance has decreased this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' test results at the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics were broadly average in 2018. However, these results reflected a declining trend in reading and mathematics progress over time. Leaders recognised this and have taken appropriate steps to address this decline and, consequently, progress in reading and mathematics is improving. Progress in writing across the school is variable. Not enough pupils are reaching the expected standard from their differing starting points.
- A new programme to support reading, with quality, age-appropriate texts, is having a positive impact on pupils' reading progress. Pupils learn to tackle unknown words using phonics skills and read with fluency and expression.
- Outcomes in mathematics are improving. A new approach to teaching mathematics helps pupils move from counting using real objects to more abstract understanding. Pupils' ability to fluently recall number facts, such as times tables, is developing well. However, some pupils find work a little too easy at times. The school's new approach is providing pupils with more regular opportunities to apply their mathematics skills to problem solving and reasoning. Overall, the new approach is not yet fully embedded.
- Key stage 1 pupils' reading and mathematics test results in 2018 were in line with national averages. Most Year 2 pupils achieved the standards expected for their age. Pupils achieved appropriately in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. The new reading approach is helping pupils to extend their reading skills and understanding throughout key stage 1.
- Standards in writing are not yet good enough. In key stage 1, many pupils struggle to form letters correctly or compose simple sentences accurately. Younger pupils do not write at length often enough. Basic spelling and punctuation mistakes are common. Sometimes, pupils' handwriting is not at the standard that it should be.

- Across the school, pupils do not write at length enough in subjects other than English. As a result, standards of writing in these subjects are often not as high as they could be.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve good outcomes in art and music. For example, Year 2 pupils who were learning to play the recorder know some notes and can play a simple tune.
- Taking their starting points into account, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils achieve similarly to other pupils in the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children settle well into the Nursery and Reception classes when they join the school. Children become confident, independent learners who work well together. Parents who spoke to inspectors said they valued the care provided by staff. Parents are confident that their children are safe and happy in school.
- Although they are cared for effectively, children are not always taught well enough. Too few achieve or exceed the standards expected by the time they leave Reception. Many still struggle with communication, reading, writing and mathematics. Children's writing skills are underdeveloped. They are not taught to confidently and accurately form letters and write simple words. Consequently, children are not prepared well enough for Year 1.
- Most children enter Nursery or Reception with levels of skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. Speech and language are specific barriers for some children. Developing children's language skills is a priority, but sometimes adults do not consistently model spoken responses accurately.
- Staff have created a positive and productive climate for learning, where children enjoy their learning. However, activities sometimes lack sufficient challenge or are not well matched to the needs of all abilities of children, particularly the most and least able. Opportunities to apply and develop basic reading and writing skills are underdeveloped in all areas of the early years curriculum, inside and outside.
- Children are taught to recognise letters and the sounds they represent. They know the sounds that individual letters represent, but their skills at blending letter sounds are less well developed for some children. They lack fluency in their reading, which hinders their comprehension at times.
- The leadership and development of the early years are now back on track after being adversely affected by some staff changes. The early years leader is aware of the setting's strengths and areas for further development. She is enthusiastic and keen to secure improvement. For example, successful engagement with parents has led to more parents becoming involved in their children's learning. Parents regularly come into the setting to read with their children.

School details

Unique reference number	143057
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10089014

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	314
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Helen Bolton
Executive Headteacher	Ann-Marie Lee
Head of school	Caroline Oxborough
Telephone number	01709 828242
Website	www.brinsworthwhitehill.org
Email address	alee@brinsworthwhitehill.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school, but the number on roll has decreased over the past year.
- Pupils from Years 1 to 6 are taught in six single-aged classes and three mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average, but the proportions in each year group vary from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- Almost a third of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is slightly above average. The largest group represented are of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.

- The school became an academy with the Wickersley Partnership Trust in August 2016, when a new governing body was formed.
- The school has experienced considerable staff change over the past two years, with nine new teachers joining the school in the past year. In September 2018, the headteacher was promoted to become the executive headteacher and a new head of school was appointed. Two new assistant headteachers were recruited along with new classroom teachers. The school has also experienced several staff absences due to maternity leave.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching during 15 visits to classrooms to check on pupils' learning and progress. On some of the visits, inspectors were accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Reception and Year 1 read and spoke to pupils from across the school about their learning.
- Meetings were held with school staff, two groups of pupils, two members of the governing body and two representatives from the academy trust.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and an e-mail from a parent. Inspectors also looked at parents' responses to the school's recent questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start and end of the first day.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence, including monitoring records, the school development plans and the school's own assessment information showing progress.
- Policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Amraz Ali, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Greatrex	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Bentley	Ofsted Inspector

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