

South Brent Primary School

Totnes Road, South Brent, Devon, TQ10 9JN

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Achievement is good. All pupils make good progress in English and mathematics.
- As a result of the recent reorganisation of leadership at the school, and the appointment of a substantive head of school, standards are improving rapidly. Staff, governors and trust directors share a fierce ambition for continual improvement.
- Teaching over time is good across the school because it effectively helps all groups of pupils to learn and achieve well.
- The needs of pupils who are at risk of not doing so well are met extremely well. The very high quality of care shown to all pupils is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils display positive attitudes towards each other. They feel safe, are happy and proud of their school.
- Systems for checking pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are rigorous.
- Information gathered is used to good effect by leaders, directors and governors to improve the school's work.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, as a result of effective monitoring. This ensures that leaders are supported and challenged to improve further.
- Children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy learning and achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Written comments on pupils' work do not always provide clear and useful advice, so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Parents are not always kept well informed about their children's progress or changes at the school.
- Teachers do not always challenge pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 sessions of learning and observed nine teachers, including some small-group teaching of sounds that letters make. An inspector observed a Thrive session, which supports pupils' emotional health and well-being, with a small group of pupils and additional literacy and numeracy support being delivered by teachers and teaching assistants. The executive headteacher and head of school joined inspectors to observe some lessons.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in their books, and spoke to some about their work and other aspects of school. An inspector attended a Key Stage 2 assembly.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chief Executive Officer, executive headteacher, head of school and other members of staff regarding pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation including records of the quality of teaching, the school's information on pupils' progress, the sports funding action plan, the school improvement plan and records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and with an external consultant working with the Primary Academies Trust (PAT).
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire and the most recent parent view survey undertaken by the school. Four letters from parents were also received and considered during the inspection. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Linda Rafferty

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Brent Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 November 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The school became part of the Primary Academies Trust (PAT) in 2011. The trust, and the school, underwent a complete restructure in September 2013. This included the appointment of a substantive head of school. A Chief Executive Officer has overall leadership responsibility for the eight schools within the Primary Academies Trust.
- The school has experienced significant changes in staffing, including at senior level, since opening as an academy.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught together, as are some in Years 5 and 6. All other pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught in single-year classes.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational and who need extra support is above average. The proportion of those who need more extra support or who have a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is average. In this school this funding supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- In 2013, the school failed to meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A significant number of pupils with additional needs joined the Year 6 class at the school during 2012/13.
- A privately managed breakfast and after-school club for the pupils takes place at the old school centre but is inspected separately. A Sure Start children's centre uses some of the school's facilities during the week and is also subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, in order to raise pupils' achievement, by making sure that teachers:
 - sharpen the comments teachers write in pupils' books, so they are clear and help pupils to appreciate how to improve their work
 - check that pupils are working towards their goals in literacy and mathematics when planning and teaching other subjects.
- Improve engagement with parents to ensure that they are fully involved with their children's education, have a clear understanding of how well their children are progressing and are aware of any changes at the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- In all classes, pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement is not yet outstanding because standards in the past in writing have been below those achieved in reading and mathematics. However, the school has successfully addressed this issue and pupils are now making similar progress in all three subjects. As a result, standards in writing are improving rapidly. By the time pupils leave in Year 6 they reach standards that are average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- When children join the school in the Reception class, a significant proportion arrives with skills and understanding that are below those expected for their age. This is especially the case in aspects of literacy and numeracy and personal, social and emotional development. As a result of good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress and begin Key Stage 1 with much stronger skills and abilities that are nearer to, or exceed, those expected for their age.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Teaching assistants complement the work done in lessons well with support activities for individuals and small groups. This is especially the case for pupils who need additional support with their emotional well-being. These pupils are supported with regular group sessions, helping them to gain confidence and make good progress. This is an inclusive school where discrimination is not tolerated. All pupils are valued as individuals, ensuring everyone is encouraged and given an equal chance to be the best they can be.
- The most able pupils are achieving well. Inspection evidence shows that increasing numbers of pupils are attaining the highest levels at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The results in the most recent Year 1 check on pupils' understanding of letters and sounds were above the national average. Pupils, who were listened to reading by an inspector, demonstrated a good understanding of how they could use their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. A love of reading is promoted across the school.
- The additional funding is used well to support eligible pupils and to include them fully in the wide range of school activities. The gap in attainment between eligible Year 6 pupils in 2013 and their peers was approximately 18 months behind in both English and mathematics. However, although this was wider than in the previous year, it was reflective of the much lower starting points for pupils in the 2013 cohort. School records show that the progress of eligible pupils across the school is at least similar to their peers and gaps in attainment are rapidly closing.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching, including of reading, writing and mathematics, is good. Discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of the work in their books show that teaching has been good over time.
- Throughout the school, teachers work hard to inspire the pupils. The pretend capture of the Year 2 class mascot by pirates excited children to eagerly find 'treasure words' in the garden and build sentences in order to release him. Through this they demonstrated an excellent understanding of their vocabulary skills and an ability to work as part of a team.
- Teachers usually plan activities that make sure all pupils are given work that is set at the correct level, and gets the best out of them. This means that pupils are quickly moved forward in their learning and has secured the good achievement.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' progress in order to judge the extent of their understanding of the skills and knowledge that they are being taught. They adjust activities when necessary, tackling any misconceptions, so that all pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly and accurately marked. However, teaching is not yet outstanding because the written guidance provided is not always clear enough and focused on how it could be improved. This limits pupils' opportunities to use any advice to effectively make even better

progress.

- Teachers have placed a great emphasis on improving the standards in writing, which has resulted in improved progress being made across the school. The work that pupils have completed in their books demonstrates the good progress they are making.
- Pupils understand what teachers expect them to achieve in English and mathematics and know how to use this information to improve their work. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils to seek these literacy and numeracy goals in other subjects, which limits their progress.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are eligible for additional funding. They do this by working closely with them, whether in class, on individual programmes, or in small groups. This is monitored closely by the class teacher, and supported by the effective special needs team, to ensure all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils and most parents agree that teaching is good and pupils enjoy school, which is demonstrated in their positive attitudes towards their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are keen learners and are proud to represent their school.
- Pupils arrive at lessons promptly, ready to learn, organise the equipment they need quickly and quietly, engage with their work and settle quickly. They are highly respectful, courteous and the relationships between pupils and adults are exceptionally strong. There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. All ages mix together well, both around the school and in the playground.
- Pupils make strong contributions to the school and wider community. They are keen to undertake responsibilities at the school, such as play leaders and as members of the school council.
- Effective behaviour policies are understood fully by staff, and pupils understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour. On rare occasions when there is low-level inappropriate behaviour, such as pupils chatting socially to each other, teachers quickly help pupils refocus back to their work.
- Behaviour is almost always good. However, on a few occasions, some pupils lose concentration and fail to settle to their work quickly; this is why behaviour is not outstanding.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are positive about how well the school cares for them and keeps them safe, a view shared by almost all parents. This is reflected in their attendance, which has improved and is now average. This has followed some concerted work by leaders to impress on parents the importance of regular attendance on achievement.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and understood the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. They understand what they need to do if they encounter bullying, but say that the adults in the school support them very well and always deal with any problems that they may have quickly and effectively.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership team, trust directors and local governors have a clear vision to improve standards by continually improving the quality of teaching across the school. Leadership and management are not yet outstanding, because not enough teaching is outstanding to ensure that pupils' achievement is consistently strong over time.
- The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well through very systematic and rigorous checking of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching by school leaders. The head of school has a very clear picture of what must be done next, and is supported very well by the senior leaders across the Primary Academies Trust. The highly effective and targeted involvement of the trust provides school leaders with mutual support focused on continual improvement.

- Leaders at all levels, including those who are leading a subject area, are fully involved in checking performance across the school. Regular scrutiny of books, lesson observations and information on pupils' progress is used effectively to monitor teachers' targets and performance. Recent improvements in the teaching of writing have rapidly improved progress in the subject.
- Very effective procedures for setting targets for teachers provide support, constructive criticism and appropriate training for teachers' work in the classroom. Actions to bring about improvement are always followed through to see if they are successful. This ensures that areas for improvement are identified and that salary progression is linked to improvements in pupils' achievement. As a result, the quality of teaching is now consistently good, with more elements that are outstanding.
- The school provides high-quality care and guidance. This results in pupils' positive attitudes towards school. Enthusiastic attitudes towards learning underpin pupils' improving achievement. This is an inclusive school that is effective in promoting equal opportunity and eliminating possible discrimination.
- The wide range of subjects taught provides many opportunities for pupils to extend their experiences of the local and wider community. Residential trips, visits and visitors enhance the lessons, widening the pupils' view of the world. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is core to all of the subjects offered. This is further enhanced through activities such as running the Fair Trade Snack Bar or taking part in school productions.
- The school holds regular events for parents to help them to support their children's learning. However, a significant proportion of parents feel that they are not being kept well informed about how well their child is progressing and changes at the school. Parents report that this has especially been the case following the restructure at the start of this academic year.
- The school uses the additional sports funding to provide experiences in a range of sports for all pupils through the curriculum and through additional extra-curricular activities. This has resulted in increased participation in sports, with three times as many pupils than previously taking part in physical activities at the school, improving their physical well-being. An 'activity leader' for lunchtimes is introducing a range of alternative activities such as cheerleading and Frisbee.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The trust directors provide strong strategic challenge across the trust. Local governors are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and areas where it can improve within the context of the school and the community it serves. They work closely with the head of school to ensure that the school maximises the benefits to be gained from being part of the trust, especially in accessing training for themselves and the teachers. Governors are clear about the close link between teachers' targets for improvement and subsequent increases in pay. Governors know how well the school performs when compared with other schools. They make close checks on how additional funding for sports and other additional funding is used and its impact on improving pupils' outcomes. They make sure that statutory responsibilities, such as safeguarding requirements, are fully in place and effective.

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

Unique reference number	137647
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	439905

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The Primary Academy Trust Board of Directors
Chair of local governing body	Jacqui Hopper
Chief executive officer	Gary Chown
Head of school	Nick Burstow
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01364 72203
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