School report

Inspection of Birchwood Grove Community Primary School, Burgess Hill

Birchwood Grove Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 0DP

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school. Staff know the pupils and their families well. Pupils say that they feel happy and enjoy all that the school offers. As one pupil said, 'This school is the best because my friends are here, the teachers are kind and they help us to learn.'

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and work hard. They are keen to do well. Pupils enjoy participating in various extra-curricular clubs such as cooking, art, drama, choir and the band. They also learn to appreciate the natural world. For example, in forest school pupils learn about the different types of berries that birds eat through the winter.

Leaders have woven the school's values throughout school life. For example, pupils learn to collaborate together and to be creative during playtimes. They enjoy exploring a playground full of exciting resources, such as dressing-up clothes and den-building materials. Pupils say this makes playtimes a really interesting part of the school day.

Pupils feel safe. They form strong relationships with trusted adults. Pupils usually behave well and they say that bullying is rare. They trust staff to sort out any incidents swiftly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have worked hard to develop an ambitious curriculum. It clearly sets out the important knowledge that pupils need to know and understand well. Learning is planned to build logically over time. Leaders have high aspirations. They want the curriculum to encourage pupils to think about what it is to be a human being. Leaders want to encourage pupils to make a difference, locally or globally, when they leave school and start work in the future.

Teachers plan carefully sequenced work. Staff make sure that pupils have a good knowledge of the key vocabulary and concepts that they need to understand in the different subjects. In the early years, staff are clear about what they want children to learn. Parents are pleased with how well they are informed about their child's learning. They appreciate information about how to support their child's early reading and mathematics development. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding to find out how well they have learned the curriculum. Leaders analyse the outcomes of these assessments to identify any pupils who may need further support with their learning.

Across the school, leaders prioritise reading. Staff are well trained. They have the necessary expertise to teach early reading skills successfully. Staff read to pupils every day from a range of high-quality texts. This carefully supports pupils' comprehension skills and vocabulary development. Pupils read with increasing

fluency. They use the well-stocked library on a regular basis. Pupils are proud of the 'diversity tree' in the library. It displays books that cover a wide range of subjects that reflect life in modern Britain.

Staff carefully identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Plans are put in place that ensure the majority of pupils with SEND learn well. However, a small number of these pupils are not always learning the curriculum in a step-by-step way. There are frequent interruptions to their learning because their behaviour is not always consistently well managed by staff.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is effective. There are many opportunities woven throughout the curriculum. There is a strong focus on ensuring that all pupils have a voice and contribute to the smooth running of the school. For instance, some pupils give their opinions through the school council. Many pupils in Year 6 are ambassadors and have a range of responsibilities including well-being, sports and the school environment. Pupils' learning is enriched by a wide range of activities. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about trips, such as the residential trip to the Isle of Wight.

Staff well-being is a priority for leaders. They make sure that the expectations regarding planning and assessment are manageable. Staff feel highly valued and supported. Those with governance responsibilities fulfil their roles exceptionally well. They support leaders to identify the appropriate school priorities and hold leaders to account for the quality of education provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare is the priority of all staff. Regular safeguarding training enables staff to be alert to any potential dangers that pupils might face. Leaders liaise closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils always receive the right help quickly.

Pupils learn how to recognise unsafe situations. They are aware of how substances, such as drugs and alcohol, can affect their well-being. Pupils know how to stay safe when online. They understand the importance of not divulging any personal information when they are using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not manage the behaviour of a small group of pupils with SEND effectively. This means these pupils are not learning as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that staff are well trained in behaviour management so pupils are fully engaged in their learning and achieve the best possible outcomes.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	125944
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10241216
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	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicci Lorusso and Emma Whitbourn
Headteacher	Sylvia White
Website	www.birchwoodgrove.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, computing, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, minutes of governor body meetings, school improvement plans, school policies and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to find out how the school supports pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum. This involved reviewing documentation to see how pupils with SEND were being supported.
- Inspectors considered 84 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 49 free-text comments. Inspectors considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Wilkins	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Bateman	Ofsted Inspector

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