

# Inspection of Brandon Primary Academy

Carr Avenue, Brandon, Durham, County Durham DH7 8NL

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|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 10 and 11 December 2024                                            |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b>                                                        |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The executive headteacher of this school is Christopher Baines. This school is part of the Advance Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kelvin Simpson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Boddy. There is also a head of school, Katie McGough, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to attend Brandon Primary Academy. They benefit from the nurturing and ambitious environment. The school's 'Brandon Promise' helps to remind pupils of the school values. Together, pupils recite one of the lines, 'I can achieve more than I ever imagined possible.' Pupils are motivated to try their best.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum is tailored to meet their needs and celebrate the local heritage. The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils are keen to do well in lessons. They are rightly proud of the work they produce. Children in the early years benefit from carefully chosen activities to develop their knowledge and skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) profit from the effective adaptations made to lessons. Pupils achieve well.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being. Parents and carers appreciate the effective pastoral and practical support the school provides for pupils. There is a strong sense of belonging among the school community. Pupils are safe here. The school teaches pupils diligently to understand the importance of staying safe online and in the community.

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

The school has recently made significant changes to the curriculum. Lessons are well sequenced. Staff prioritise the important knowledge pupils need to know and remember. The school provides regular opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. This helps pupils to remember their learning in the long term. The school has prioritised pupils' understanding of new vocabulary. Staff are highly skilled at doing this across all lessons and conversations. As a result, pupils talk about their learning with clarity and confidence.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. They are included in the life of the school. The school's curriculum helps them to be successful in lessons. Pupils with SEND benefit from tailored interventions led by highly trained staff. The trust has provided extensive professional development for staff so that they have the knowledge and skills to support pupils. While most pupils with SEND benefit from well-tailored support and quality teaching, for some, there is room to improve how quickly the school responds to their emerging and changing needs. When this is not done in a timely manner, pupils miss out on learning or struggle to engage with education successfully.

Children begin learning to read from the beginning of Reception. The recent change to the early reading curriculum is having a positive impact. Most children learn to read quickly and fluently. Pupils who struggle with reading are supported with timely additional sessions. The school inspires a love of reading for pupils. They are excited by the recent developments to the school library. Pupils enjoy the books read to them by their class teacher.

Children make a strong start in the early years. The curriculum is designed carefully to meet children's needs. The school provides well-designed and engaging activities to support children's language development, social skills and independence. Children become

engrossed in learning, for example developing their pincer grip while making seasonal crafts, or strengthening large muscles while building 'Santa's sleigh' with their friends. Children confidently discuss their learning. They enjoy exploring the well-resourced classroom. Children are well-prepared for Year 1.

Pupils behave well. They understand and follow the high expectations of conduct around school. In lessons, pupils are engaged and motivated to do well. The school's efforts to improve attendance are beginning to have an impact. Most pupils know it is important to attend school regularly and on time. However, some pupils still do not attend school often enough. As a result, they miss important learning and experiences.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences and develop their character. Pupils relish the chance to participate in the many extra-curricular clubs. Pupils build their sense of responsibility and confidence through leadership roles, such as anti-bullying champions and school ambassadors. Pupils are proud to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. However, some pupils have a limited understanding of other religions and some aspects of equalities. This means some pupils do not have enough knowledge and understanding to demonstrate respect in the way they should.

The school is committed to providing its pupils with the best education. Staff at all levels share the values and vision of the trust. Trustees and governors hold leaders to account effectively. Staff benefit from the high-quality professional development provided by the trust. Staff feel valued, and their workload is managed carefully.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school does not review the needs of pupils with SEND as quickly and precisely as it could. This means that some pupils with SEND do not receive the support they need to engage with education successfully as quickly as they might. The school should ensure that there is a systematic and timely approach to reviewing pupils' needs and that this informs improved support for pupils with SEND.
- The school's work to improve attendance has not helped some pupils to attend regularly enough. These pupils do not develop their knowledge as well as they should. The school should continue to strengthen and develop their attendance processes to improve pupils' attendance more consistently.
- Some pupils have a limited understanding of other religions and some aspects of equalities. This means some pupils do not have enough knowledge and understanding to demonstrate appropriate respect consistently. The school should ensure that they

develop pupils' understanding of diversity, fundamental British values and difference in the world.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked-after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

|                                            |                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 148858                                                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Durham                                                                   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10346786                                                                 |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter                                                        |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11                                                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 289                                                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees                                                        |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Alan Boddy                                                               |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                    | Kelvin Simpson                                                           |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Christopher Baines                                                       |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.brandonprimary.org.uk">www.brandonprimary.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected                                                 |

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Advance Learning Partnership in 2022.
- The breakfast and after-school provision is delivered by an external provider.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school does not currently have provision for two-year-olds.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 spoke to senior leaders, including representatives from the board of trustees and members of the academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about pupils' learning in some other subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils from different year groups reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met the SEND coordinator, spoke to pupils with SEND and reviewed plans to support these pupils. They visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported.
- Inspectors visited the early years provision to check safeguarding arrangements and discuss learning with children and leaders.
- Inspectors observed behaviour at the start of the day, at lunchtimes and in lessons.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.

## Inspection team

Georgina Chinaka, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vic Good-Bruce

Ofsted Inspector

Jacqueline Mowat

Ofsted Inspector

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