

Inspection of Brambleside Primary School

Cleveland Avenue, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN16 9NZ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 October 2021

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Early years provision | Good |
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| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and are kind to one another. Bullying is very rare. If it occurs, staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils know there are adults they can turn to if they have any worries at school or outside of school. They feel safe at school.

Pupils are keen to talk about their learning. They take pride in their work. They record their written work exceptionally neatly. Pupils love the great range of books they read as a class. They enjoy the subject quizzes that check what they can remember. Pupils concentrate and work hard during lessons.

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make sure that disadvantaged pupils do not miss out on any visits or activities that add so much to school life. They make sure that pupils learn about stories in the news. For instance, pupils raised £6200 for Kettering Hospital, inspired by the efforts of Captain Sir Tom Moore.

Pupils leave Brambleside very well prepared for their secondary education.

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

Strong leadership has raised the quality of education in the school. Leaders have put in place a thoughtfully planned and well-sequenced curriculum. It is unique to Brambleside. Subject plans show the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn term by term. These plans highlight how the new things pupils learn build on what they already know and can do. In design technology, the connections between past, current and future learning are not yet as secure as in other subjects.

Throughout the school, there is consistency in how teachers deliver the curriculum. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. This enables them to give clear explanations of the concepts they are teaching. Teachers make the aims of each lesson explicit to pupils. They share examples of completed work so that pupils know what a great piece of work looks like. They check closely on how all pupils are doing in lessons. If an individual is struggling, they give one-to-one help. If there is a more general misunderstanding, teachers unpick the issue with the whole class.

Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to review their learning and show what they know. For example, pupils drew on their knowledge of grid references and coordinates when studying the Lake District. Teachers regularly quiz the pupils to check how well pupils remember key knowledge. This helps teachers to know just how effectively they are teaching the curriculum.

In the Reception classes, adults plan the curriculum so that pupils are well prepared for their later learning. They take account of the different needs of individual

children. There is a strong focus on helping children gain confidence and make friendships. Children work and play together well.

Leaders make sure that reading is a top priority. The teaching of phonics is well organised and effective. Staff check closely on how pupils are getting on. They give prompt support if pupils show signs of falling behind. From Year 2 onwards, teachers focus on helping pupils read fluently and with expression. They set targets for the number of words pupils can read in a minute. This focus on fluency increases pupils' enjoyment of books. Leaders have invested in a rich range of fiction and non-fiction. These books are giving pupils a love of reading. They also ensure that pupils learn about, and reflect upon, important ethical and social issues.

Pupils with SEND are fully involved in school life. Teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the pupils' needs if required. In some lessons, written support that precisely matches the needs of individuals would enable pupils with SEND to work with even greater independence.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum extends far beyond the academic. Pupils' personal development is woven through the curriculum. Pupils learn about British values as well as different cultures and societies. Older pupils particularly enjoyed learning about the Windrush generation. Right from the Reception classes, pupils have opportunities to perform to an audience in a range of creative contexts.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel senior leaders value them and act to reduce unnecessary work. Governors are knowledgeable about their responsibilities. They keep a close eye on how well the school is doing. Their actions are always focused on making things better for the pupils at Brambleside.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors place a high importance on keeping pupils safe. It is central to their work. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when working online. Staff are alert to any signs that pupils are at risk of harm. Leaders act swiftly when concerns are reported. Systems for keeping pupils safe are robust. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure children and their families get the support that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the connections between past, current and future learning are not yet as secure as in others. This means that pupils do not progress equally as well through the curriculum in all subjects. This is specifically the case in design

and technology. Leaders should ensure that pupils learn the intended knowledge and skills in the design technology curriculum as well as they do in other subjects.

- On occasions, pupils with SEND require adult support to help them to access the intended learning during lessons. This is often appropriate, but it can also lead to pupils becoming overly dependent upon adult help. Leaders should find ways of providing written support, or other forms of scaffolding, that match the needs of individuals. This would enable pupils with SEND to work with still greater independence.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

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| Unique reference number | 141632 |
| Local authority | North Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 10200075 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 411 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Bill Parker |
| Headteacher | Drew Brown |
| Website | www.brambleside.northants.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23–24 January 2018 |

Information about this school

- A new Chair of the governing body was appointed in 2019.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 school leaders and have taken it into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion manager, subject leaders, and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive they met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead.

- Inspectors reviewed the responses that were submitted by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 57 free-text responses. They also considered the 23 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Anthony O'Malley, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Paul Lowther | Ofsted Inspector |
| Susan Hughes | Ofsted Inspector |

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