

# Inspection of a good school: Unicorn Primary School

Creswell Drive, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3AL

---

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 July 2024

## **Outcome**

Unicorn Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Victoria Elvines. This school is part of Compass Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Stuart Ellis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ann Medhurst. There is also an executive headteacher, Sue Robertson, who is responsible for this school and three others.

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

Pupils feel safe here and build positive working relationships with the staff team. Children in the early years work and play well alongside one another. They are proud of their achievements. Mostly, pupils focus on their work and are attentive in class. This means that typically, learning is not disrupted and classrooms are mostly calm and orderly.

The school ensures there are many opportunities to encourage pupils to become global citizens, effective communicators, lifelong learners and champions of healthy lifestyles. Overnight stays, for example, at school camps and residential visits to Dorset and Shropshire boost pupils' confidence and encourage their independence. Taking on roles of responsibility including as school librarians, team captains and play leaders encourage pupils' leadership skills.

The school encourages pupils to develop their talents and interests. Leaders organise a range of extracurricular activities, for example ballet, Ju Jitsu and korfbal, theatrical performances and sporting competitions.

Pupils and staff are happy at this school. As a result, staff generally stay and work at the school a long time.

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

Since the previous inspection the school has taken effective action to strengthen the school's curriculum. School leaders have in place a curriculum that is broad and builds pupils' knowledge and skills cumulatively over time. Curriculum thinking clearly defines

what pupils should know and be able to do. This includes the important vocabulary and skills that children in the early years and older pupils, need to know to prepare them for their next stage of learning.

The school works together with other schools in the trust to strengthen the subject curriculums and to deliver training. In class, teachers present information clearly and in the order needed to build and re-enforce pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Pupils regularly practise and recall what they know and can do which helps them to remember it long term. Typically, pupils recall confidently what they remember from their prior learning. Occasionally, pupils' retrieval of their prior learning is not as secure where checks on what pupils have retained in their long-term memory are not as thorough. Consequently, gaps and misconceptions are, on occasion, not identified or addressed quickly.

Children in Reception begin to learn phonics from the start. The approach to teaching phonics and early reading is consistently applied by adults. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know, they have regular opportunities to practise their decoding skills. Pupils reading skills are regularly checked. For any pupils who are identified as weaker readers, extra support is put in place to help them keep up. This helps pupils to read with fluency and confidence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as their peers. The school makes adaptations to teaching and resources, and to the wider curriculum which ensures that all pupils are included in all aspects of school life.

The school has recently updated the school's behaviour policy. This has included training for staff on understanding and managing complex behaviour. This training has helped staff to apply a range of different strategies. Additional personalised support is provided for pupils who need extra help to manage their conduct.

The majority of pupils attend school regularly. For any pupils who do not, leaders make sure that they understand the reasons why and work with parents and pupils to provide tailored support. As a result of this work, attendance rates typically improve over time.

The school promotes fundamental British values through a range of activities, such as electing pupils to the school's parliament or helping to decide school rules and rewards. Pupils are taught to keep safe online and offline. This is delivered through a broad and diverse curriculum as well as visiting experts, such as the Police.

Those responsible for governance including trust leaders and trustees, have put a review structure in place that enables effective scrutiny and challenge of the school's work. This ensures that decisions made and actions taken have a positive impact on the school's development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Occasionally, where checks on pupils' learning are not routinely thorough, gaps in pupils' recall and understanding are not identified and addressed quickly. Leaders should ensure that in all subjects, through routinely checking what pupils know and remember, teachers strengthen and deepen pupils' knowledge and identify and address any gaps or misconceptions.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2019.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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>	142300
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345999
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	433
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ann Medhurst
<b>Headteacher</b>	Victoria Elvines
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.unicornprimary-compass.org">www.unicornprimary-compass.org</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Compass Academy Trust.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point in time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples

of pupils' work. The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects as part of this inspection.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks; 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.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, teachers and the wider school team.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body and other members of the governing body.
- He also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Kieran Bird, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024