

Brixington Primary Academy

Address: Brixington Lane, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 4JQ

Unique reference number (URN): 142044

Inspection report: 21 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an **open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility** and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils attend well. They want to be at school because they enjoy learning in the calm and friendly atmosphere. Leaders have a clear understanding of the reasons for a recent decline in attendance. The school has worked closely with pupils and families to reduce the barriers to attendance which some pupils face. Leaders' approach is effective and rates of pupils' absence have begun to improve.

Pupils behave well and follow the school's rules and routines. They display positive attitudes to their learning and are enthusiastic and determined to improve their work and deepen their knowledge. Pupils who struggle to behave as the school expects get the additional support they need to improve their behaviour. Expert staff in 'The Bridge' and 'The Bubble' provisions help pupils to learn how to manage their feelings and behaviour. This means that **learning is rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.** The number of pupils removed from lessons as a result of poor behaviour has declined as a result of this successful approach.

The rare instances of bullying are not allowed to persist. Pupils and parents have absolute confidence that any bullying or friendship issues are dealt with promptly and effectively. The school promotes acceptance of, and respect for, others. Pupils' behaviour usually reflects this. This means that school is an environment in which pupils feel safe and that they belong.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and of how well it is taught. They provide staff with high-quality professional learning to improve their expertise. For example, new approaches to the teaching of writing have had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' written work.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils, including for those attending the specially-resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified exactly what they expect pupils to learn at each stage. They have considered pupils' needs when designing the curriculum. Pupils with SEND get support for the specific needs and barriers to learning that they face. This helps most pupils with SEND to make suitable progress from their starting points.

Teachers generally know how best to teach the curriculum so that pupils can learn well. However, staff do not consistently teach phonics with enough precision to enable pupils to master the knowledge that they need. Leaders are aware of this and have begun to improve staff's confidence and expertise in teaching phonics to older pupils. **Leaders identify those pupils who need help to become fluent readers or who have gaps in important mathematical knowledge or handwriting.** Staff mostly provide appropriate support to help pupils to catch up with their peers. They usually identify and correct errors and misconceptions promptly and check that pupils remember important concepts. However, at times, teachers do not accurately identify pupils' starting points and the gaps in their knowledge which hinders their learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a curriculum that enables children in the early years to make positive progress from their varying starting points and be ready for learning in Year 1. This includes children in the newly-opened provision for 2-year-olds. Activities, such as outdoor rope play, sound walks and structured mark making, build children's foundational skills for reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum is responsive to children's needs. Their speech, language and communication needs are prioritised in line with increased proportions of children entering the early years with language delay. Children are supported through targeted interventions to strengthen their language knowledge and skills when needed. High-quality modelling of language by staff builds children's vocabulary and communication well.

Staff have the expertise to provide children with the education and care they need. Leaders ensure that all staff know the intended learning from all activities in the provision and the specific skills that children need extra help to develop. As a result, children thrive. Most children achieve a good level of development by the end of their time in early years. Staff prioritise reading so children begin to learn phonics as soon as they are ready. They continue to develop their knowledge of reading at an age- appropriate level.

Children are happy and safe. Staff teach children how to make healthy choices and develop their independence. Staff model calm behaviour, support children with problem solving and help them to understand and manage their feelings.

Children with additional needs are identified swiftly. Staff know children very well and provide precise support to ensure that they are fully included in activities and can succeed. They work closely with parents and carers so that children are supported by both home and school to reduce any barriers they face.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders and staff accurately identify additional barriers which impact on pupils' learning or wellbeing. Typically, the school provides effective support to reduce these barriers over time.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well understood by leaders and staff alike. The support provided to pupils with SEND typically enables them to make suitable progress through the curriculum and to participate in the wider life of the school. Pupils who attend the resource base for pupils with SEND follow a curriculum which is well suited to their particular needs, while also being broad and ambitious for what they can achieve.

Leaders use the additional funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils to provide well-targeted support to reduce barriers to achievement. For example, some families get additional support to ensure that their children attend well and benefit from both the education and wider development that the school offers.

Pupils get effective support for their pastoral needs, including through the school's 'The Bubble' and 'The Bridge' provisions. Through such provisions, pupils learn to manage their

feelings. The school makes appropriate use of alternative provision, enabling the few pupils who attend to receive more specialised support than the school can provide.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders understand the quality of the school's provision. They have identified areas that could improve further and have a coherent approach to bringing about change where needed.

Those responsible for governance have the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil the duties expected of them, such as to keep pupils safe and to check the impact of the school's use of additional funding. They hold leaders to account and support them to bring about necessary changes.

Typically, staff are positive about working at the school. Leaders take into account the impact on staff workload and wellbeing when introducing initiatives. They have acted to reduce workload where possible. Staff benefit from a well-structured programme of professional learning which is aligned to areas that leaders want to improve. This empowers staff to make appropriate decisions about how best to teach and how to make adaptations so that pupils can learn well. Staff who support pupils in 'The Bridge' provision and the specially-resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from specific training which helps them to support pupils effectively.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They feel that their children are well known by staff, valued and nurtured. Parents find staff approachable and responsive to any concerns they may raise. Leaders actively seek the views of parents, staff and pupils. They consider these views when they make decisions about the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

A detailed programme of personal development enables pupils to develop in many ways beyond the subjects that they learn. There is particular emphasis on pupils' social development, including getting along with others and managing conflict. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, including friendship and relationships within their families, in an age-appropriate way. They understand how to stay safe in and out of school, including when online.

Pupils know the fundamental British values, showing a particularly detailed understanding of democratic decision making and the importance of sharing their opinions. Leaders promote pupils' cultural and spiritual development through activities such as assemblies from faith leaders and visits to different places of worship.

Leaders check which pupils take part in school trips, including residential visits. They know that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, participate in a rich set of experiences. However, they do not check that all pupils have meaningful opportunities to develop their talents and interests through the many clubs that the school offers.

Pupils understand the link between food choices, physical activity and overall health. They learn how to identify and manage their feelings and the importance of this to their wellbeing and positive mental health. The school provides extensive pastoral support which helps pupils to thrive. Pupils trust staff to help them with any difficulties. Parents and carers appreciate the care that staff provide.

Pupils love using the play equipment and games available at social times. This helps pupils to be active and gives them ways to develop their social skills through co-operative play. Pupils are proud of working with leaders to develop an inviting space in the playground for those who prefer a quieter environment.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not achieve well enough. Their outcomes in national assessments are below what is typical nationally at the end of key stage 2 and in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Although leaders have implemented positive steps to address historic gaps in pupils' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics, these improvements are not reflected in published outcomes. Pupils' starting points and the gaps they have in their knowledge are not accurately identified or consistently addressed which means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

A significant minority of pupils join the school in key stage 2. These pupils have less time to consolidate important curriculum knowledge and skills. Typically, they achieve less well than those who attend the school for longer.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and who have an education, health and care plan, including those in the specially-resourced provision for pupils with SEND, make positive progress towards the targets linked to their specific needs.

Current pupils' work demonstrates developing skills in handwriting, reading and mathematics, alongside increasing knowledge across most other curriculum areas. However, staff do not consistently teach phonics with enough precision to enable pupils to build the knowledge that they need.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils feel welcome and included at this school. They are taught how to build and maintain positive friendships. Pupils who join the school part way through their education feel included and valued from the start. Pupils treat one another and the school environment with respect. A range of opportunities and experiences support pupils' wider development, beyond the subjects that they learn. For instance, pupils have opportunities to search for fossils on local beaches and to visit London.

Pupils enjoy learning. For example, they talk with great enthusiasm about the new mathematical concepts they have learned and the books they read. However, outcomes in national tests show that pupils have not achieved well enough over time.

The school works closely with pupils and their parents and carers to reduce barriers to wellbeing. There is extensive support for pupils who find it hard to manage their feelings. Pupils who need additional help to reduce barriers to learning receive appropriate support. Their needs are precisely identified and well catered for within the mainstream school and the specially-resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils typically show their positive attitudes to learning in their responses in lessons and in the quality of work that they produce. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that any instances of bullying are dealt with promptly by school staff and so do not persist. Pupils feel safe at school. They trust that staff will help them if they are experiencing any difficulties.

Most pupils attend school well. They arrive at school with enthusiasm for the day ahead. The start of the day routines help most pupils to begin learning straight away. Pupils, including the youngest children, who struggle with the transition into school from home, have extra support to help them to settle in. Their early reluctance to attend quickly turns to enthusiastic engagement as a result of support from skilled staff .

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and closed promptly, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, so that pupils achieve highly.
- Leaders should ensure that all pupils, including those who may face barriers to their learning or wellbeing, participate in, and can benefit from, the wealth of personal development opportunities which the school provides.

About this inspection

This school is part of First Federation Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul Walker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alex Walmsley.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with senior and middle leaders, trustees, members of the local governing body, and a selection of school staff and pupils during the inspection. They also considered the views of parents and carers, pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted surveys issued at the time of the inspection. Inspectors visited lessons, including those in the specially-

resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A selection of pupils' work was also reviewed by the inspection team.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school includes provision within a resource base for pupils with SEND. This provision is for up to 8 pupils and caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school makes use of two alternative provisions, both of which are unregistered.

The school has undergone significant changes since the previous inspection. The structure has changed to mixed-aged classes, the school has opened nursery provision for 2-year-olds and has established a resource base for pupils with SEND.

Headteacher : Stuart Dyer

Lead inspector:

Sarah Favager-Dalton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Richard Vaughan, Ofsted Inspector

Sophie Laing, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

338

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

420

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

20.97%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.03%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.50%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	49%	61%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	53%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	46%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	48%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	66%	74%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	67%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	68%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	65%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	73%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	62%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	60%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	27%	46%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	21%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	36%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	25%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	46%	62%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	29%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	57%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	58%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	43%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	35%	60%	Below
2024/25 (revised)	29%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	36%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	40%	59%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	27%	68%	-41 pp
2024/25 (revised)	21%	69%	-48 pp
2023/24 (final)	36%	67%	-32 pp
2022/23 (final)	25%	66%	-41 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	46%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (revised)	29%	81%	-52 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	80%	-23 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	58%	78%	-19 pp
2024/25 (revised)	43%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	75%	77%	-2 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	35%	80%	-44 pp
2024/25 (revised)	29%	81%	-52 pp
2023/24 (final)	36%	79%	-44 pp
2022/23 (final)	40%	79%	-39 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.4%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.7%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	15.7%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	10.3%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	14.0%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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