

# Bridge Hall Primary School

Cuddington Crescent, Bridge Hall, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8LX

## Inspection dates

21 to 22 May 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have worked tirelessly to address the areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning have improved.
- Governors hold senior leaders stringently to account and have high aspirations for the school, which they know exceptionally well.
- Pupils' progress is good and has dramatically improved in recent years, especially in key stage 2. At the end of Year 6 in 2018, pupils made strong progress in writing and mathematics. Their progress in reading was very strong.
- Additional funding, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, is used effectively. As a result, these pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- Most teaching is good. However, teachers rarely observe and learn from the best teaching practice in the school. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement are not high enough.
- Pupils love to read. Across the school, their reading skills are very well-developed. The phonics skills and knowledge of some younger pupils are not as strong as they could be.
- Children in the early years benefit from excellent indoor and outside learning and playing areas. Most make strong progress in the different areas of learning. At times, children are not challenged enough to make stronger progress.
- Pupils' benefit from an interesting and carefully planned curriculum, which secures their engagement and ensures their good progress.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, as well as their appreciation of British values, is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are respectful, well-mannered and appreciative of their excellent school facilities. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Attendance is improving but remains below average.
- The physical education and sport funding is well spent to develop the skills of staff to teach various sporting activities and engage pupils in a broad range of sporting activities.
- Most parents and carers are very complimentary about the school. They say that their children are happy, safe and make good progress.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and in so doing raise pupils' achievement, especially in key stage 1, by:
  - ensuring that teachers always have the highest possible expectations of pupils' achievement
  - improving teachers' skills in teaching phonics, including in the early years
  - enabling teachers to learn from the strongest teaching practice in the school and beyond.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years by challenging children to achieve to their absolute best in all areas of learning.
- Improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- For the last 12 months, the school has been led and managed by an acting headteacher, previously the deputy headteacher. The headteacher is exceptionally well-organised and determined to succeed. Together with the assistant headteacher, and with the strong backing of governors, she has tirelessly worked to address the areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection, most of which have been resolved.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been many staffing changes. In addition, key staff have been out of school for extended periods. However, due to leaders' and governors' hard work and determination, the tide has turned. Leaders' and governors' decisive action has stabilised the school, ensuring that all aspects of provision, including leadership and the quality of teaching and learning, are good.
- All staff are set challenging targets as part of their performance management. All of which are linked to training and development and improving teaching and learning. Training in areas such as phonics is helping to improve teaching, with only a few weaker aspects remaining. Senior leaders regularly assess the quality of work in pupils' books, talk to pupils about their learning and give teachers good advice on how to improve their practice.
- Subject leaders are developing their roles effectively. The science leader is particularly effective in helping teachers to develop pupils' investigative skills and knowledge of scientific principles. However, few opportunities are available for teachers to learn from the practice of the strongest, most experienced teachers in the school and further afield.
- Staff morale is very high. Staff form a cohesive team, eager to support the school in achieving its objectives, which include ensuring that Bridge Hall School is a place where '...achievement and effort are celebrated in equal measure and everyone can strive to reach their potential'. All staff are of the view that the school has improved since the previous inspection. Those who completed the inspection questionnaire indicated that they are motivated and respected. Teachers who spoke with inspectors stated that professional development encourages, challenges and supports their improvement.
- Additional funding is used effectively. For example, funding to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used well and is helping to secure pupils' strong progress in a range of subjects. Pupil premium funding is improving the progress of disadvantaged pupils, especially in reading, which was well above average at the end of Year 6 in 2018. Currently, pupils' progress is consistently strong across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The physical education and sport fund is used well to increase pupils' involvement in physical activities and encourage their participation in competitive sports. Funding supports training for play leaders, who organise games during breaks and lunchtime, and initiatives such as 'smile a mile', which is executed on the school's 'trim trail' and is helping to keep pupils healthy. Pupils regularly attend table tennis, netball, dodgeball, 'boxercise' and Zumba clubs and enjoy dance and football. Teachers and teaching assistants benefit from professional coaching and training to improve their skills and

confidence in teaching a broad range of sporting activities, including gymnastics and multi-skills.

- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development most successfully. This was evident during the inspection as pupils participated in many different activities linked to Diversity Week. Pupils learned about Maori art, honed their rhythmic skills on African drums and refined their guitar playing skills. Pupils understand the basic principles of most religions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. They respect others' beliefs and regularly raise funding for charities and good causes. Pupils benefit from visits to Stockport museums and local places of interest. Such activities help to develop pupils into mature and active citizens.
- Teachers and leaders ensure that pupils have a strong appreciation of British values. They commemorate national events such as Remembrance Day and write thoughtful poetry about those who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars. They have a strong appreciation of the importance of fair play and knowledge of British institutions, including the monarchy and parliament. Pupils celebrate the increasingly diverse nature of the school and treat others with respect and dignity.
- Pupils have access to a stimulating curriculum which engages their interests and promotes their reading, writing and mathematics skills well across most subjects. Year 6 pupils enjoy their annual Isle of Man residential learning and the importance of team-building activities. Year 2 pupils relish visits to Weaver Hall, which is linked to their study of Victorian England. All pupils enjoy celebrating events, such as World Book Day and Saint Valentine's Day.
- Most parents speak very highly about the school and indicate that their children are looked after well and are making good progress. Parents who spoke with inspectors said that communication, pupils' behaviour and their children's progress are good. They were highly complimentary about SEND support and typically commented that, 'This school is really good and has a lot of time for the children and parents.'

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is strong and effective. Governors have worked tirelessly with leaders, closely following various improvement plans, aiming to achieve a good inspection rating for the school. Their commitment and perseverance have paid off.
- Governors hold senior leaders closely to account for both pupils' performance and the quality of teaching. They know that teaching is good because they regularly visit school and observe teaching first-hand. Governors spend time with pupils, talking to them about their learning and listening to them read.
- Governors know how additional funding, including for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, is spent. They ensure that leaders use funding effectively to include all pupils in educational visits and extra-curricular activities and know that the differences between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally are continuing to diminish.
- Governors have taken decisive action to recruit teaching staff and have managed disruptions well. In addition, they have taken prompt action to employ a substantive headteacher and early years leader, both of whom are due to start at the school in

September 2019.

- Several governors, including those recently appointed, have much experience, including in education, to bring to the school. Others have a good knowledge and understanding of the local matters. All of which help to ensure that the school is effective and highly regarded in the community.
- Governors are trained well and ensure that their knowledge and understanding of issues in education are current. Most have had 'Prevent' duty training, which is part of the government's agenda to tackle radicalisation and extremism.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy published on its website.
- Most staff have had 'Prevent' duty training, and those new to post are in the process of completing their training in this area.
- Clear procedures are in place for reporting and recording concerns. Staff are vigilant at spotting signs of neglect and/or abuse. Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Appropriate checks are made on staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety and security of school premises and to make sure that pupils are safe when on educational visits.
- Staff are conversant with the latest government guidance on keeping children safe in education, as well as with the school's safeguarding and associated policies. Inspection evidence indicates that induction procedures are closely linked to the school's strong safeguarding culture.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Across the school, teaching over time is good. Teachers plan activities to ensure that pupils enjoy learning, make good progress and attain well. Teachers are proud of their classrooms, which are stimulating places to learn. Displays encourage pupils to be proud of their achievements.
- Most teachers use effective questioning to check what pupils know and clarify any misunderstanding. They are increasingly using information on pupils' prior performance to provide different learning activities which are well matched to pupils' different skills and abilities.
- Phonics teaching is not as strong as other subjects. As a result, a below-average proportion of pupils were secure in their phonics skills and knowledge at the national phonics screening check in 2018. Strengths include pupils following a regular system and being taught to incorporate new sounds into words and sentences. These skills are not consistent. Teachers develop pupils' reading skills exceptionally well. Many pupils are avid readers who regularly challenge themselves to read difficult books. Teachers

ensure that pupils understand what they have read. Pupils' comprehension skills are strong. The less able pupils benefit from effective support that focuses on developing their skills of inferring what the text means. Pupils routinely review books, succinctly identifying plot, key characters and their motivations. Teachers ensure pupils read regularly and have a good appreciation of the work of different authors and genres.

- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They are supportive and encouraging. This was evident in art when pupils were practising their 'dabbing' technique as they produced paintings in the style of traditional Maori artists. Both the teacher and teaching assistant provided support for pupils but were careful to let pupils explore different techniques and experiment with colour to produce individual, vibrant and well-executed pieces of art.
- Writing is improving across the school. Teachers' and teaching assistants' recent training is paying off. Effective teaching moves learning forward with a sense of urgency and enhances pupils' understanding of grammar and different literary techniques. This was shown in a Year 6 class as pupils prepared to write a newspaper article for the annual Manchester 'Pride' event. Prior teaching had prepared the pupils for this style of writing. They were familiar with 'journalese' and knew that their article was likely to use rhetorical questions as well as puns and homophones. They produced interesting headlines, including 'Be "Pride" of who you are'.
- Mathematics teaching is strong and develops pupils' calculation and problem-solving skills well. Teachers' focus on pupils' different skills and abilities. The emphasis on teaching times tables is having a positive impact and is improving pupils' fluency in this area. This was evident in a lower key stage 2 class as pupils completed sums such as  $8 \times 7$  and  $9 \times 11$ , and then quickly worked out the inverse of these numbers.
- Teachers motivate pupils to try their hardest and believe in their own abilities. Pupils who spoke with inspectors indicated that they usually chose the most difficult challenges because it makes learning more interesting. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough, especially in key stage 1, where pupils' progress is not as strong as it could be.
- All teachers give feedback to pupils in line with the school's feedback and assessment policy. Workbooks indicate that most pupils take note of teachers' advice, which they use to improve their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly resilient in their learning. They are prepared to take risks and know that mistakes are an integral part of learning. Pupils are increasingly veering towards the more challenging aspects of learning.
- Pupils are engaged in learning when they find it interesting and challenging. Senior leaders have developed various initiatives to improve pupils' confidence, for example work to promote pupils' emotional and mental health, and pastoral support when needed.

- Pupils have many opportunities to develop and refine their leadership skills. They do this through teamwork and orientation activities during residential learning in Year 6. There are also opportunities for pupils to take on other leadership roles. They put democratic principles into practice as members of the pupil voice group and in the work they do with peers and leaders to ensure that the school is calm and harmonious.
- Pupils are encouraged to be active citizens. For example, older pupils have completed young ambassadors training and are now change for life champions. Across all years, pupils support children in the early years, lead structured activities during breaktimes and lunchtimes and after school.
- Pupils say they always feel safe in school. They are confident to share their concerns with staff, secure in the knowledge that such concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Pupils have a good understanding of fire safety, and some Year 6 pupils are fire cadets. Pupils can identify safe and unsafe situations, which they learn about during internet safety week and from visitors who help to develop their appreciation of potential hazards.
- All pupils who spoke with inspectors demonstrated a good understanding of internet safety. Pupils know that they should only visit websites which are age appropriate and that they should never share personal information with strangers when online. Older pupils said that they would never download a 'rogue link' and that they always check with parents if they are unsure about the safety of a web page.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that bullying is rare and indicated that if there is offensive name-calling that adults always 'Get it sorted'. All pupils know what racism is and say that it never happens at school. Older pupils have a good understanding of homophobic bullying, which they say rarely, if ever, happens.
- The breakfast club ensures that pupils get off to a good start in the morning. Pupils are encouraged to eat a healthy breakfast and participate in card games. Pupils also enjoy catching up with their friends and competing in table-top football matches.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave sensibly and safely when playing outside. Camaraderie is strong in the enclosed sports area where pupils usually play football. Pupils take turns when using various climbing and balancing apparatus and share various resources and play equipment. Their good behaviour contributes to the calm and cordial nature of outside areas.
- Pupils are polite and studious and very welcoming to visitors. They routinely greet visitors, staff and each other respectfully and ensure that the school buildings, which are pristine, are looked after well.
- All parents who spoke with inspectors were of the view that pupils' behaviour is good, as were pupils and staff. Some parents described their children's previous challenging behaviour as having 'transformed'.
- A small number of pupils have difficulty managing their own behaviour. However, the school mentor and other staff work closely with these pupils, helping them to devise coping strategies, which pupils implement when they find it difficult to cope in lessons.

- School behaviour logs indicate that any infringements of the school rules are diligently recorded, and appropriate action is taken. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' behaviour is typically good over time.
- Currently, pupils' attendance is below average. However, school data shows that attendance is improving. Various strategies are in place to encourage parents to ensure that their children regularly attend school. In addition, good attendance is celebrated and awarded. Staff remain vigilant and are constantly exploring ways to improve attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- Pupils' progress is strong and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. At the end of Year 6 in 2018, the results of national assessments showed that progress in writing and mathematics was average, and above average in reading.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests has greatly improved and in 2018 was above average at both the expected and higher standard in reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Their attainment in writing and mathematics was above average at the expected standard and below at the higher standard.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 was not as good as in key stage 2. Attainment at the expected standard was below average in all subjects and no pupils attained at greater depth. Several factors contributed to pupils' low attainment, which was much weaker than in previous years. The cohort was very small and included a relatively large proportion of pupils with SEND. In addition, the quality of teaching in key stage 1 had not been consistently good over time. Pupils, now in Year 3, are receiving the support they need and are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching in key stage 1 is much improved. Inspection evidence, including work in pupils' books and the school's own data and assessment information, indicates that current pupils' progress is strong across the school and in a range of subjects, including reading, writing, mathematics, science and humanities.
- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in reading. Those who read for inspectors did so with excellent intonation and confidence. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of authors and genres. Pupils enjoy competing for reading prizes, which they acquire for reading regularly both at school and at home.
- The proportion of pupils secure in their phonics skills and knowledge at the national phonics screening in 2018 was below average. As teachers and teaching assistants are taking a more consistent approach to teaching phonics, pupils' skills are improving.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, as shown in their workbooks. Teachers are increasingly ensuring that pupils of all abilities are consistently challenged, particularly in key stage 2. Pupils use operations fluently to calculate long division and multiplication sums. They are skilled at changing fractions to decimals and percentages and regularly apply their skills to problem-solving activities. Pupils have a good appreciation of the importance of mathematics in everyday life. For example, pupils use their well-developed skills to calculate the cost of household energy and water bills and groceries.



- Pupils' progress in writing is good, especially in key stage 2. Workbooks provide evidence of writing for different purposes. For example, in science pupils write accurate descriptions of the planets, including what they are comprised of and their relationship to the sun, and they record their findings. In English they produce poignant texts in the style of the war poets and persuasive writing on different topics.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2018, disadvantaged pupils made strong progress in all subjects. Their progress in reading was substantial. Pupils' attainment was good. For example, the proportion who achieved the expected and higher standard in reading matched that of other pupils nationally. All pupils attained at least the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Currently, disadvantaged pupils' progress is good in almost all classes.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress. They are looked after effectively by teachers and teaching assistants who are appropriately trained and have a comprehensive understanding of pupils' individual learning needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is trained well and works with a wide range of specialists to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. Small group reading sessions for pupils who find reading difficult are highly effective. Less-able readers are using their phonics skills with increasing confidence to sound out and read unfamiliar words.
- Overall, the most able pupils make good progress, but at times teachers' expectations are not high enough and this restricts pupils' progress. Pupils performed well in Year 6 in 2018 and were well equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful learners in high school.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Recently, there have been disruptions to the leadership and management of the early years provision, which is currently managed by a temporary early years leader. Despite this difficulty leadership since the previous inspection has been effective in improving provision. A substantive leader has been employed and will take up post at the beginning of the next academic year.
- Teaching is good and staff have very strong bonds with children. They have a good understanding of how young children learn. Children benefit from good and highly stimulating indoor and outside learning and play areas, which are closely linked to the different areas of learning. Children are inquisitive and happy to engage in reading, writing and creative activities. They enjoy building and construction activities, as well as role-play, and they like to explore the properties of sand and water.
- Children are cooperative and curious. Most have acquired the characteristics of effective learning, which they demonstrate during independent learning activities and when listening to adults during structured activities.
- Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with weak skills in different areas of learning. Children's speaking and listening skills are weaker than those typical for their age, as are their social skills. However, children get off to a good start and most acquire the reading, writing and number skills they need for the next stage of their learning in Year 1.
- While the proportion of children who attained a good level of development was below

average in 2018, inspection evidence indicates that most children make good progress from their different starting points. However, children are not consistently challenged in writing, phonics and other areas of learning, including reading. As a result, they do not all attain the high standards of which they are capable. Senior leaders are acutely aware of this and are taking effective action to ensure that all children achieve to their absolute best.

- Additional funding is used appropriately to ensure that disadvantaged children and those with SEND make the same strong progress as their peers.
- Children's behaviour is good. They follow instructions closely and are alert when asked to stop activities and tidy up. Children play sensibly when outside and manage their own behaviour well. Children's behaviour can be outstanding, as demonstrated during an assembly where they were entranced by carnival music and amazed by dancers' movements. Children responded by clapping and joining in with the festivities.
- Children's calculation skills are developing well. This was evident during an outdoor activity where the Reception class children were asked to search for different items hidden around the play area. Children were encouraged to read out simple calculations, such as  $6+1$  and  $3+2$ . Some wrote down their calculations. The most able were eager to show that they could add  $5+5$ ,  $4+4$  and  $3+3$ , and pulled out all the stops when they added  $5+3$ .
- Children are very creative and enjoy art. Typically they are encouraged to develop their fine motor skills through handling brushes, pencils and crayons. Children especially enjoy painting and developing their artistry. This was exemplified in the Nursery class as children used mirrors to compose self-portraits and portraits of their peers. When completed, children confidently pointed out the likenesses, in hair and skin colour, that their paintings had captured of both themselves and their friends.
- All parents who spoke with inspectors were very positive about their children's learning and progress and said that their children are safe and looked after well. Parents commented that, 'The Nursery is brilliant,' and 'I have no worries at all. My child struggled with speaking but is coming on really well.'
- Staff look after children well, making sure that all welfare requirements are met. Safeguarding is effective. The same well-established procedures in operation in key stages 1 and 2 operate in the early years.

## School details

Unique reference number	106032
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10087826

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Trafford
Headteacher	Helen Styan
Telephone number	0161 480 7889
Website	<a href="http://www.bridgehall.stockport.sch.uk">www.bridgehall.stockport.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@bridgehall.stockport.sch.uk">headteacher@bridgehall.stockport.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14 to 15 February 2017

## Information about this school

- Bridge Hall Primary School is a smaller-than-average school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have an (EHC) plan.
- All children in the Reception class attend full-time. Most children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis.
- Several new teachers have been employed since the previous inspection. Both the senior leadership team and governing body have been reorganised.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. Four observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors read six text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and met informally with parents at the start of the school day. There were too few responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, to be considered. Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff were also considered as well as 34 responses to the pupils' survey.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with various school leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics, science and humanities. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for the early years provision, provision for pupils with SEND, safeguarding, attendance and behaviour.
- The school has a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body, and this formed part of the inspection.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching and reviews of its own performance, development plans, information about pupils' progress, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, and safeguarding documentation.

## Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Cropper

Ofsted Inspector

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