

Inspection of Birley Spa Primary Academy

Jermyn Crescent, Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S12 4QE

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and respectful. They follow the rules. A small number of pupils are occasionally restless in class. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils, including some of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is difficult to manage. Staff are handling these issues better than they were. Pupils trust teachers and teaching assistants. Bullying is rare. Pupils get the help they need so they are safe.

Older pupils have a fair bit of knowledge missing. This is because, in many subjects, the right things have not been taught at the right time. Many older pupils have not had enough practice to become proficient at reading, writing and mathematics. They are beginning to catch up more quickly. Teachers are now teaching the right things and doing it well. The pupils are working hard.

Younger pupils who fall behind in their reading often do not catch up quickly. Some phonics teaching is not of the highest quality. Some pupils do not get enough practice reading. Most pupils across the school enjoy reading. They have begun to read more often.

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

The school has been through a period of turmoil. Pupils' behaviour deteriorated because of the lack of consistency in leadership. Pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 have declined. The trust and senior leaders have steadied the ship. Staff morale has been restored. Behaviour is much improved. Pupils are beginning to receive a better quality of education.

The multi-academy trust has secured much-needed help from an executive headteacher. Partnership with a strong school in the trust, which is also led by the executive headteacher, is a great help. Trustees, governors and trust leaders keep a close eye on progress.

Improved behaviour and strong relationships with adults help pupils to feel safe and work hard. A few pupils disrupt lessons from time to time. Systems are in place to deal with this. Order is restored quickly.

A number of parents and carers expressed concern about bullying. However, bullying is rare. Staff are getting better at managing the small number of pupils, including those with SEND, who find relationships challenging. In the past, a few pupils have annoyed the most challenged pupils on occasion to get a reaction. Staff keep these pupils safe. They minimise the negative effects on other pupils.

Provision for pupils with SEND has not been managed well until recently. Leaders did not take timely action to help pupils. The current special educational needs coordinator is bringing about rapid improvements. Pupils in the resourced provision have a positive experience. A team effort helps pupils with SEND to integrate with

other pupils. Leaders help pupils with SEND to access all subjects of the curriculum.

Leaders have improved the mathematics curriculum. The curriculum is planned in detail. This helps teachers to be methodical, teaching each concept in the right order. Teachers have been well trained. Pupils are becoming more fluent in calculating. Older pupils have missed out on some mathematics learning because of previous weaker provision. Teachers are successfully helping pupils to make more rapid progress.

History, geography, science, art and religious education (RE) are not as well planned. Leaders have begun to improve the curriculum. Teachers have planned interesting topics. They are clearer about what pupils should learn by the end of each topic. However, leaders have not considered the order in which to teach content from the early years to Year 6. This means that pupils have missed important learning. For example, some pupils in key stage 2 did not know that computers did not exist in the time of Henry VIII.

Pupils experience a varied and balanced curriculum. They enjoy activities such as yoga sessions, residential and other visits, and a range of clubs. The school council gives pupils responsibility, as does the recently formed eco-council and play-leaders initiative.

Leaders have introduced an ambitious early reading curriculum. However, phonics is not consistently well taught. Reading books are well matched to pupils' developing knowledge. However, some pupils do not get enough practice. Too many pupils in the early years and key stage 1 are not catching up rapidly enough.

Some aspects of the early years curriculum are well planned, especially mathematics. Leaders do not make sure that pupils learn enough across all areas of learning. For example, pupils develop some scientific knowledge but little historical or geographic knowledge. Plans are not specific enough about what children should learn. The way the curriculum is taught is stronger in Reception than in Nursery.

Pupils' attendance remains below average.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are comprehensively trained. They understand the potential risks to pupils in the local community. For example, staff have been trained in the 'Prevent' duty. They know to look out for pupils that may be at risk of harm from domestic violence. Staff know to whom they should report concerns and how.

Leaders take action to help pupils who are at risk of harm and abuse. They make timely referrals to the local authority. They are persistent in following up concerns.

The record of checks to make sure adults are suitable to work with children is

complete.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The phonics programme is ambitious in terms of pace and content. Some staff teach phonics well. Books are precisely matched to pupils' developing phonics knowledge. However, the delivery of the phonics programme is not of a consistently high quality. Pupils, especially those who have fallen behind, do not get enough practice reading aloud. Leaders should make sure that all staff are trained to a high standard. Leaders should check regularly that all staff deliver the programme in the agreed way, so pupils make rapid progress. Staff should ensure that all pupils practise reading aloud every day. Leaders should ensure that those pupils who present barriers to learning receive a tailored programme that works.
- Leaders have made a promising start to redeveloping the curriculum. However, leaders have not considered, in sufficient detail, the order in which the content of each subject should be delivered. Leaders should make sure that for every subject, the design of the curriculum enables pupils to acquire knowledge progressively and cumulatively. They should ensure that pupils earlier in their learning journey develop the knowledge that is essential to them later in their school life. Leaders should support subject leaders to develop the necessary depth of subject knowledge to enable them to design a high-quality curriculum.
- Children in the early years receive a generally broad and balanced curriculum. However, leaders are not precise enough about what children should learn in every area of learning that will provide a firm foundation on which to build in Year 1. Leaders should ensure that the development of the whole-school curriculum includes progression from Nursery.
- Staff expertise across the early years is variable. Some curriculum implementation is excellent, such as the delivery of a high-quality early mathematics programme in Reception. The quality and arrangement of resources is not consistently strong. The youngest children are not as well challenged as the older children. Adult/child interactions vary in their effectiveness. Checks on the quality of provision have not been effective. Leaders should ensure that all staff daily teach in a way that makes suitable demands on children, so children of all ages enjoy being challenged. Leaders should ensure that resources, especially those in the Nursery, are of high quality and arranged in a way that encourages children to concentrate and sustain interest. Leaders should check that all adults consistently engage with pupils in a way that enhances learning and encourages talk.
- Behaviour has improved but is not yet good. Leaders should carry out their well-considered plans so that low-level disruption is reduced to the absolute minimum.
- Leaders do much to promote the personal development of pupils. Though pupils show respect, their understanding of diversity is limited. Plans to introduce a carefully thought out personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum have not yet been implemented. Pupils have limited opportunities to discuss and debate topics. Leaders should ensure that pupils are better prepared for life in

modern Britain by implementing a quality PSHE and RE curriculum. They should ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to discuss and debate a range of topics relevant to life in modern Britain.

- Attendance figures have been consistently below the national average over the past few years. Persistent absence figures are too high. Leaders have begun to implement more effective procedures that are beginning to make a difference. They should now ensure that procedures are applied with vigour so that attendance rises, and the persistent absence of all groups of pupils falls.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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

Unique reference number	143965
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10119930
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	426
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Blois
Headteacher	Louise Pink
Website	www.birleyspaacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Birley Spa Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in February 2017. When its predecessor school, Birley Spa Primary School, was last inspected it was judged to be good overall. The school is part of the LEAD Multi-academy Trust.
- The school has specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils with autism spectrum disorder. The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

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

- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, a trustee of the multi-academy trust, members of the academy governing board and directors of the trust.
- We held discussions with many pupils, formally and informally, to find out what it is like to be a pupil at the school. We listened to several pupils reading aloud to members of staff. Pupils were observed at social times around the school building and in the school grounds.

- Discussions took place with several parents. We considered the responses of 47 parents to the Ofsted survey, Parent View. We also considered the written responses of 33 parents.
- We scrutinised a range of documents, including the self-evaluation document, the academy improvement plan and records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance and SEND.
- We did deep dives in mathematics, history, science and religious education. We held discussions with subject leaders, examined curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and scrutinised pupils' workbooks for each deep dive.
- We scrutinised the record of checks on the suitability of adults to work at the school. We checked safeguarding training records and checked with a number of staff that they understand and act on their safeguarding and child protection duties. We held discussions with the designated safeguarding lead and checked child protection records. We discussed with pupils whether they feel safe in the school and how much they learn about how to stay safe. We discussed safeguarding with governors. Safeguarding policy documents were checked.

Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Cathy Morgan

Ofsted Inspector

Steve Shaw

Her 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019