

Inspection of Brackensdale Primary School

Walthamstow Drive, Mackworth Estate, Derby, Derbyshire DE22 4BS

Inspection dates: 27–28 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils receive an inadequate education here.

Pupils whose lessons are in The Ark and The Phoenix classes get a good deal. They receive a curriculum that meets their needs, and high-quality care. They achieve well from their starting points.

The quality of education in the rest of the school is not good enough. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. In many subjects, sequences of lessons are poorly planned. Goals that leaders set for pupils are not ambitious. Pupils do not learn and recall as much as they should. Too few pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education as they move through the school.

Some lessons are interrupted by pupils' poor behaviour. Learning time is lost as a result.

Pupils generally enjoy school and play well together. They feel safe. They say that bullying is not a problem, and staff deal with it if it occurs.

Throughout the school, there is good support for pupils who are anxious or feeling sad. Links with companies such as Rolls Royce and enterprise days help pupils to think about their futures.

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

Senior leaders do not work effectively as a team. They have not put in place a well-planned and ambitious curriculum. They have not thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn and remember. Many subject leaders are new to their roles. They do not have the expertise to tackle the weaknesses in their area of responsibility. Other, more-experienced leaders have struggled to bring about necessary improvements. Leaders are only just beginning to focus on weaker areas, such as reading. They are relying on external support to bring about improvement. Staff have received too little training to help them to deliver the different subjects well. Morale among staff is low. Leadership of the enhanced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school.

Children in the early years get off to a good start in the Nursery. They play and learn happily together. Staff make sure that the tasks they set are right for the individual child. Developing children's language and literacy is at the heart of most activities. Caring adults look after children well. In the Reception classes, adults are not as skilled at supporting children's learning. The outdoor area offers little to encourage children to learn and play.

Teachers do not help pupils to become confident, fluent readers. The books that younger pupils read to practise their phonics are too hard for them. Teachers do not

keep a close eye on how often pupils read outside of school. Pupils told us that they did not enjoy reading and did not read often.

In mathematics and physical education (PE), the curriculum is well planned. Leaders are clear about the order in which pupils will learn new knowledge and skills. In other subjects, this is not the case. Teachers teach lessons without being aware of what pupils have learned before. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils. They give them work that is too easy for them. Sometimes, pupils make glaring errors, for example labelling continents incorrectly. Teachers do not notice these errors. When pupils do not use capital letters or punctuation, teachers do not show them how to add these in. Pupils' writing skills are weak. In science, pupils have very few opportunities to explore ideas or raise questions that interest them. In subjects such as science, history and geography, pupils do not learn well enough. Computing is not taught owing to a lack of suitable equipment. Pupils' achievement is low. This includes those pupils with SEND who are taught in the main school.

Pupils' behaviour is not good enough. Too often, low-level disruption in lessons interrupts learning. However, bullying is rare and, when it happens, staff deal with it without delay and in an effective way.

Leaders recognise the importance of widening pupils' experiences. They make sure that pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. Other areas of the curriculum develop pupils' understanding of values such as democracy, the rule of law and respect for others. Staff support pupils in developing 'Brackensdale's 6 Rs' (resourceful, respectful, resilient, reflective, risk taking and relationships). There is an interesting range of school clubs. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils have full access to these activities. Pupils' personal development is good.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there are clear arrangements for keeping pupils safe. Staff and pupils told us that they know what to do if they need help or have any concerns.

There are a number of specialist staff with the expertise to provide helpful services and support for pupils. Parents and carers value the assistance they get at difficult times for their families.

Pupils understand the potential dangers they face when online. Visits to the school by organisations such as the fire service and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) also help pupils understand how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects other than mathematics and PE, pupils experience a disjointed curriculum that prevents them achieving well. This is because, in most subject areas, leaders are not effective in their role. They lack subject and leadership expertise. Senior leaders should provide training and support so that all subject leaders understand what a good-quality curriculum in their area of responsibility looks like. Subject leaders must then have the opportunity to construct a curriculum that sets out clear, ambitious expectations of what teachers must ensure that pupils know and remember by the end of each year group, and how this will be delivered. Subject leaders should then check that it is being implemented effectively in all classes.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not receive a curriculum that teaches them the knowledge and skills they need in computing. This means that pupils are not being prepared properly for their adult life. Leaders should ensure that pupils are taught this subject in a way that delivers the aims of the national curriculum.
- There has been a lack of whole-staff training on phonics. Some staff do not teach phonics well. In the early stages of learning to read, reading books contain sounds that pupils do not know. Teachers do not check carefully that pupils read regularly. They do not promote a love of books. This means that pupils do not become young, fluent, enthusiastic readers. Leaders must make sure that all staff have the skills and knowledge to teach phonics and reading effectively. They should ensure that pupils have learned the grapheme-phoneme correspondences and exception words in the books they are given to read. They must also ensure that, throughout the school, they develop in pupils an enjoyment of books.
- Senior leaders do not work as an effective team. This has contributed to low morale among staff. The governing body has not been effective in resolving these issues. Senior leaders and governors must ensure that there is a shared vision for the school and an agreed strategy for securing rapid improvement.
- In the early years, the Nursery provides a better start to the children's education than the Reception classes. This means that children in the Reception classes do not continue to achieve well, having made a positive start the previous year. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistently good curriculum, planned and delivered throughout the early years.
- Learning is sometimes limited by low-level disruption. This hampers pupils' progress. Teachers should ensure that pupils' attitudes to work improve so that this disruption is eradicated, and learning can flow smoothly.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

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 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

Unique reference number	112736
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10110162
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	495
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Iain Bater
Principal	David Hall
Website	www.bps.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened in January 2018 following the merger of an infant and a junior school. It has an enhanced resource provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We met with senior leaders, subject leaders and three governors. We met with an officer from the local authority.
- On day 1, we considered the quality of education by doing deep dives in reading, mathematics, art and design, and physical education. To do this, we conducted

interviews with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. We considered a wider range of subjects on day 2.

- We reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records, questioning staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- We considered the views of staff, parents and pupils shared through Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Anthony O'Malley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Poole	Ofsted Inspector

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