

Inspection of Bushbury Lane Academy

Ripon Road, Bushbury Lane, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV10 9TR

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

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

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are kept safe at Bushbury Lane Academy. If they have a problem or are worried about anything, adults always help them. On the playground and in lessons, pupils usually get on well with one another. Bullying can happen, but it is sorted out when it does.

Before school, there is a breakfast club that is open to everyone. After school, there are different clubs for pupils to attend.

Pupils enjoy school. They say the rules are fair and adults are kind. Most pupils listen to their teachers but a few do not pay attention and distract others.

Improved leadership is bringing change for the better. Attendance has risen and behaviour is better than it used to be. Staff receive clear guidance about their work and feel supported. Lessons start on time and teachers have changed the way they plan and teach different subjects. All of this is helping to lift expectations and academic standards. In some subjects, such as art and French, pupils have produced some impressive work. In other subjects, pupils are not doing as well as they should. This is because they have not been taught all they need to know.

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

There have been many changes at this school. New governors and leaders have joined the team and injected ambition. Input from Reach2 Academy Trust has also helped, and everyone knows the school needs to improve. Standards are rising, but there is more to do. Currently, pupils do not do well enough in reading, writing and mathematics. This hinders their work and achievements in these and other subjects.

One notable improvement is the consistent approach to daily phonics teaching. Adults have had refresher training and pupils have good-quality books to read. Anyone who struggles to keep up gets extra help, and this continues up through the school.

Adults read to pupils every day and introduce them to new books. Pupils have met some authors and been inspired by this. In fact, staff have started to put more excitement into the curriculum. This term, for example, pupils have been inside a planetarium and visited a castle. This helps to create enthusiasm for learning.

New planning in mathematics makes sure that pupils are taught the right things. Even so, while planning is consistent, practice varies from one class to another. Pupils do well in some lessons, but less so in others.

In other subjects, fresh planning and leadership are making their mark. Lessons follow on logically from earlier lessons. Teachers prompt pupils to make links with what they already know and are attentive to correct subject-specific language. These improvements are boosting progress, but things are still not right. For

example, sometimes, pupils use words without knowing what they mean. At other times, pupils lack the prior knowledge needed to complete new tasks successfully. Clearly, the school is moving from one planning system to another but, along the way, staff assume pupils know things that they do not. This means that pupils get confused or focus on getting through an activity rather than learning something new.

In music and physical education, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to participate in different activities. On a positive note, pupils produce work of a good standard in French and art. There is also a Spanish club and pupils recently displayed their artwork to parents and carers. In these two subjects, strong subject knowledge of some staff is evident.

Everyone understands the school's rules. Behaviour in class is usually fine. Most pupils are obedient and want to please. A few lark about and distract others but staff usually stop this. On the playground, there can be some rough play or unkind words. On these occasions, adults step in and remind pupils how to behave.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given extra support. This is usually provided in class, so pupils do not miss out on anything. However, some of the tasks given to pupils keep them busy but do not move their learning on. In addition, the identification of learning needs in the early years could be better. In this part of the school, expectations have not been high enough. Children have been cared for but have not had the full range of learning experiences they need. This year, there have been some improvements. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, adults steer learning with increased imagination and attention to children's needs. However, there is scope to improve the learning environment and put more focus and joy into learning.

Staff welcome the changes at the school. They say that leaders set ambitious standards, but are mindful of staff workload. Inspection evidence supports these views.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This aspect of the school's work is thorough. Staff have a good knowledge of the risks pupils might face. When necessary, they take the right action to follow up concerns.

The school carries out the proper checks on staff, visitors and volunteers. Around the building there are lots of notices that remind adults and pupils what to do if they are worried about something.

Training and regular briefings for governors and staff keep everyone up to date with safeguarding procedures. Records and registers are maintained correctly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Academic standards in reading, writing and mathematics are not good enough. The school team is working to improve the curriculum offer but, currently, gaps in pupils' knowledge hold them back and stop them from making the most of lessons. In order to raise standards, leaders must keep a close watch on how well recent changes are working in all classes.
- Until recently, expectations in the early years have been too low. Curriculum plans and teaching have not taken enough account of children's needs and interests. The learning environment is not ideal. This is now changing, but leaders need to maintain the current sense of urgency to improve this part of the school.
- In subjects such as history and geography, pupils are taught a lot of subject-specific vocabulary but do not always understand or remember what the words mean. In addition, teachers make assumptions about what pupils already know. This means that lessons can be confusing for pupils and they do not make the progress intended. Teachers should improve the way they assess what pupils know and do not know.
- Many subject leaders are new to their posts. These new leaders are doing the right things and know that standards need to rise. The trust and senior leaders should continue to provide support and training so that these new leaders strengthen their leadership skills.
- Pupils with SEND are not identified quickly enough, particularly in the early years. Once support is put in place, attention to these pupils' progress is mixed. In phonics, support is swift, brisk and effective. In other instances, it keeps pupils occupied but does not move their learning on well enough. Leaders should improve systems for identifying needs and checking on progress.
- A few pupils distract others in lessons or are unkind to others on the playground. This needs to stop.

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

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| Unique reference number | 142823 |
| Local authority | Wolverhampton |
| Inspection number | 10122433 |
| 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 | 221 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Jeremy King |
| Headteacher | Laura Hopley (executive headteacher) |
| Website | www.bushburylaneacademy.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected as an academy |

Information about this school

- The school runs before-school child care on site.
- In March 2017, the school became an academy with Reach2 Academy Trust. The current executive headteacher and head of school took up their posts in the 2019/20 academic year.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, we focused in depth on reading, mathematics, history and geography. In these subjects, we visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, examined teachers' plans and talked with pupils and staff about the way the subjects are taught. We also looked at other subjects in less detail.
- We examined external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, governance, the curriculum and school improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.

- We asked pupils, staff, leaders and governors about safeguarding arrangements. We examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. We also found out about safety procedures and routines at the school.
- We watched pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, governors, the director and deputy director of education for Reach2 Academy Trust, teachers and pupils. We also talked informally with pupils, staff and parents to gather general information about school life.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 15 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and nine free-text responses. We considered these and looked at the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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