

Inspection of Barton Hill Academy

Queen Ann Road, Barton Hill, Bristol BS5 9TX

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Barton Hill Academy is welcoming and inviting. Staff pride themselves on making sure that pupils feel safe in school. Pupils are safe and they trust staff to do what is right for them. As soon as pupils come to school, they have an opportunity to let staff know how they are feeling. Staff arrange support for pupils who may need it. This helps pupils to settle into the day. Pupils value this and told inspectors that it helps them.

Pupils are curious and inquisitive. They have a thirst for knowledge. Pupils' attitudes have improved since the previous inspection, but pupils learn better in some subjects than others. Older pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils behave well. They demonstrate respect and courtesy and they are keen to learn about different faiths and cultures. On the playground, pupils play well with one another. The school's 'mini police' are on hand to support. There are plenty of activities to keep pupils entertained. Adults supervise pupils well. Pupils told inspectors that bullying does occur, but staff are quick to deal with it.

Until recently, pupils' absence rates were high. Pupils attend school more often. Leaders have taken a firmer stance to tackle absence, which is having a positive impact.

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

Leaders have improved the school since the previous inspection. Their work to improve pupils' behaviour, attitudes and personal development has been particularly effective. Leaders' work to reach out to families has helped place the school at the heart of the community.

Pupils show understanding and respect for other cultures and beliefs. One pupil, whose view reflected that of many, told inspectors, 'We don't all believe or celebrate the same (as others), but we still learn about it.' Pupils know the school's values and feel cared for. They appreciate the school's pastoral support, particularly their nurture. Here, staff provide bespoke support for pupils in a calm, relaxing environment.

Leaders have prioritised phonics and early reading. Pupils get off to a flying start, and most are on track with the school's phonic programme. Teachers keep a close eye on pupils' progress. They provide extra support for pupils at risk of falling behind. However, the quality of this support is inconsistent. Leaders' actions to improve the quality of reading books has had an immediate impact. Books match sounds pupils know. They read books with increasing fluency. Leaders have worked hard to promote reading to parents. During the inspection, the school hosted its regular, well-attended 'reading café' session. Parents and carers came to listen to their child read, under the guidance of staff. Parents like the new books and appreciate the support the staff provide.

Leaders have secured improvements in writing. Staff know what to teach and when. There have been changes to subject leadership and curriculum plans during this academic year. Leaders' plans are taking root, but the early signs are encouraging. However, some older pupils have gaps in their knowledge which do not always close.

Mathematics has improved in recent years, resulting in improved pupils' progress. Leaders are supporting teachers to implement curriculum plans. Pupils develop their number knowledge, but do not learn to reason and solve problems as well. Teachers are adapting curriculum plans to meet pupils' needs, but this could be more precise.

Pupils' knowledge in science and the foundation subjects is weaker than in other subjects. Curriculum plans lack ambition. In some year groups, pupils have little experience of learning about these subjects. This limits pupils from knowing more and remembering more. Teachers do not know how what they are teaching links with past or future learning. They also struggle to sequence lessons, building on what pupils already know. Leaders are reviewing curriculum plans to make this clearer.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is new to her role. Currently, there are overcomplicated systems and plans which can cause confusion for staff when setting and reviewing targets. The SENCo has a clear plan to overcome this, but this work has yet to take place.

Staff have transformed the Nursery since the previous inspection. They have created an excellent environment for children to thrive. Children engage well with activities and are eager to share their experiences with adults. The teacher told me, 'The Nursery now feels right.' Staff have worked hard to ensure that children get off to the best possible start.

Recent staff changes in the Reception Year have caused some disruption. Children learn letters and the sounds they make from day one. However, teachers are still familiarising themselves with the early years curriculum. They are not making the most of the classroom to support children's understanding. As a result, children's development across the curriculum is less strong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise maintaining pupils' welfare above all else. Staff know pupils well, which helps them spot concerns about pupils' welfare. Staff record these concerns without delay. Leaders check these records and act to keep pupils safe.

Leaders have close links with the community. This helps them keep up to date with any changes in the local area that may pose a risk to pupils. Leaders have close links with the local police, who work with pupils to help them identify risks and keep safe.

The school's recruitment procedures are robust. Leaders check that staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Standards in mathematics and writing are improving. However, improvements are still taking root. In mathematics, pupils' reasoning and problem-solving knowledge are not well developed, and some teachers are not meeting pupils' needs closely enough. In writing, pupils with gaps in their knowledge struggle to catch up. Leaders must continue to embed their changes and make sure that teachers are adapting curriculum plans to meet the varied needs of pupils in their class, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The current system for supporting the needs of pupils with SEND is overcomplicated. This makes it difficult for teachers to set precise targets for pupils. The SENCo is overhauling the school's approach and is working with external support to achieve this. She needs to make sure that teachers set precise targets and provide effective support for pupils.
- Leaders do not ensure that teachers are following curriculum plans for science and the foundation subjects. Teachers struggle to sequence learning to build on pupils' previous learning. Curriculum plans are not ambitious enough, and pupils do not have routine opportunities to develop their knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that pupils know more and remember more across the school's curriculum by making sure that curriculum plans are ambitious and that teachers follow them.
- The early years provision is not ensuring that children have a consistently strong journey through to key stage 1. Expectations have risen in the Nursery, but there is more to do in the Reception classes. Leaders must support teachers to greater understand the early years curriculum and make sure that activities in the continuous provision support children's learning and independence. Staff must also give greater thought to the environment so that it supports children's learning effectively.

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	141191
Local authority	Bristol City
Inspection number	10088336
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gail Bragg
Principal	Emma Tovey
Website	www.bartonhillbristol.org
Date of previous inspection	13–14 September 2017

Information about this school

- Barton Hill Academy is part of Venturers Trust.
- Ofsted previously inspected the school in September 2017 and judged it to be inadequate, with serious weaknesses. Since then, Ofsted has carried out three monitoring visits of the school. Each time, leaders were taking effective action.
- Barton Hill Academy is a two-form-entry primary school. There is a Nursery on site.
- The school operates a breakfast club as well as several after-school clubs.
- Venturers Trust has delegated responsibility for education standards to the local governing body, overseen by the trust's executive lead. The local governing body also monitors the school's safeguarding effectiveness, with the support of trust representatives.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- We carried out deep dives in reading, writing, mathematics, geography and history during the inspection. We met with senior leaders and curriculum leaders, considered pupils' workbooks, conducted lesson visits and spoke with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector also spent some time looking at science with the vice principal responsible for the curriculum.
- As lead inspector, I met with the SENCo; together we discussed the support the school provides for pupils with SEND.
- I met with three representatives from the local governing body. I also met with the chief executive officer (CEO) and two trustees, including the chair.
- I met with the designated leader for safeguarding and one of her deputies. We considered how well staff maintain pupils' safety and discussed leaders' actions to minimise risk to pupils in the local community. I also checked the school's single central record.
- I met with the principal and vice principal to consider behaviour incidents and to discuss how they tackle poor behaviour.
- A team inspector met with the school's pupil parliament. She also met with leaders responsible for personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious education (RE) and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- We went to the school's breakfast club. We also visited four after-school clubs.
- A team inspector analysed the school's attendance information.
- I considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View. In addition, I considered responses to the staff survey. We also spoke with staff and pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Fox

Ofsted Inspector

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