

Inspection of Bicton CofE Primary School and Nursery

Bicton Lane, Bicton, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 8EH

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm, welcoming school where pupils are happy and safe. The school is at the heart of the village and, as one parent said, 'children of all year groups mix as a family'. Pupils are kind, well-behaved and look after one another. They are proud to look after the environment and help in the community.

Bullying is rare, but if it happens staff respond quickly to stop it. Leaders put pupils' well-being front and foremost. They look after each pupil as an individual. They provide support that is personal to each family and build strong relationships with parents and carers.

Teachers deliver the curriculum well through well-planned and interesting lessons, especially in mathematics and science. In some other subjects, teachers have not identified the most important information that pupils need to learn. This means that the pupils are not learning as much as they should in those subjects.

Teachers do not use a consistent approach for teaching pupils to read. They do not have the knowledge or materials to teach phonics well. This means that younger pupils cannot build strongly on the good start they make in the early years.

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

Leaders have created a warm, caring environment where everyone is valued. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities for personal development. For example, they work together in the woodland area and garden, learn to play musical instruments and help in the community. However, the quality of education is not consistent. Some pupils cannot read as well as they should because the school does not have a systematic approach to the teaching of early reading. After a good start with phonics in early years, the approach in key stage 1 and beyond is inconsistent. Some pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills they need quickly enough to become confident, fluent readers.

Overall, teachers provide a broad education for pupils. They create interesting lessons that pupils enjoy. Teachers' plans are effective in some subjects. In mathematics, for example, staff have received training so that they know precisely what to teach and how and when to teach it. This means that teaching builds carefully on what pupils already know. Leaders have implemented effective plans in other subjects, such as geography and science. These subjects cover the right content and allow pupils to learn about local issues, such as the impact of development on the local area. Planning in other subjects is not so well established. Leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. This hampers their progress through the curriculum. Furthermore, some subject leaders are new to their role. As yet, they do not have the expertise to develop their subjects further or provide training for other staff.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has improved since the last inspection. Pupils have clear plans that show the small steps they need to take so that they can succeed. A specialist teacher provides additional support to pupils and advice to staff so that they know how to ensure that pupils achieve their targets. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) monitors this work carefully and helps teachers to make sure that pupils with SEND study the same subjects and lessons as other pupils.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of this school. In the early years, children become confident learners in a safe environment with lots of interesting resources. A wonderful woodland area, for example, is used well to develop their curiosity and independence. Across the school, there is a calm, respectful atmosphere and, if there are any problems, teachers sort things out quickly. Bullying is rare. Pupils are thoughtful and talk about learning from one another. In this way, they learn about other faiths and cultures, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Staff provide pupils who are disadvantaged with the resources and support they need so that they are ready to learn.

Children get off to a great start in the early years and settle into school happily. Staff work as a team to develop the provision based on careful observations of what children know and can do. They learn to read because staff teach them well. Good

communication with parents keeps them informed and involved in their children's learning.

Parents praise the work of the school, and particularly the headteacher, especially in the way staff managed the partial closure caused by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Together with staff, the headteacher visited families, provided them with resources and was a listening ear during tough times. Staff say that leaders care about their well-being and listen to their concerns. Governors know the school well and have the skills to support the headteacher to make further improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe, including online, and how to get help. Strong relationships mean that they get support to talk about things that worry them. Special lessons help to prepare them for adult life.

Leaders have effective policies and procedures to identify pupils who need help. They are persistent in ensuring that pupils get the support they need. Staff are well trained and kept up to date with regular safeguarding bulletins. Staff are vigilant, including for any incidents of sexual harassment and violence that might happen in school and beyond.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approach to teaching early reading after early years is not systematic. This means that pupils do not learn the sounds they need in order to read well by the end of key stage 1. Leaders need to implement a consistent approach to teaching early reading.
- The curriculum is not planned and implemented well in some subjects. This means that pupils are not learning the important knowledge that they need for future learning. Leaders need to make sure that the key knowledge that pupils need to learn is identified in plans that show teachers what to teach, when and how.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles. Currently, they do not have the subject knowledge or expertise to implement and monitor curriculum plans, and to provide training for their colleagues. Leaders need to make sure that these new subject leaders get the training and support they need to carry out their roles and responsibilities 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	123461
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10201035
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Juliette Freeman
Headteacher	Natalie Johnson
Website	www.bictonschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is an on-site nursery run by the school, which caters for pupils aged two to four years old.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, governors and the SENCo.

- They met a representative of the Diocese of Lichfield and the local authority's adviser. They looked at the results of pupil and staff surveys. They spoke with parents and looked at feedback from parents via Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors examined the school's work to keep pupils safe. This included the check on staff's suitability to work with children, safeguarding procedures and records, and staff training.
- Inspectors looked at the school's website and other online information about the school.

Inspection team

Johanne Clifton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jayne Thorpe

Ofsted Inspector

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