

# Inspection of a good school: Bridstow CofE Primary School

Bridstow, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 6PZ

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Inspection date:

13 October 2021

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Inspectors agreed with parents that their children are happy and safe in school. Pupils get on well together. One said they are 'excited' coming to school every day. They especially enjoy mathematics lessons. Nearly all pupils attend regularly. Younger children are physically active, enjoying the benefits of a rural school.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils to become good readers. This begins in early years. They strive to make sure those who find learning difficult are fully included in the life of the school. Every pupil has an electronic tablet. They can upload their work at home or school and receive feedback from their teachers. Pupils are extremely proud of their work on these devices.

Pupils have enjoyed the full range of subjects throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they are not sure how well they are doing in their learning of subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Most pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. However, a small number in each class do not. For example, they talk or shout out when the teacher is speaking. Pupils said that, at times, this disrupts their learning. Leaders respond well to any incidents of bullying that arise.

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

The school offers a wide range of subjects to all pupils. This includes external specialist teaching in music and physical education to all age groups. Leaders ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are fully covered, including in early years.

Teachers are adept at planning a two-year cycle of work in classes with two different year groups combined. They ensure that work set is age-appropriate. In art, French and science, leaders have mapped out in detail what pupils need to learn in each year group. In mathematics and history, however, the curriculum is not so well planned or sequenced. Teachers are not always aware of pupils' starting points when they join a new class. This means that work is not always well matched to their needs.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to read with confidence. Most are at or above the expected standard for their age. Books are well matched to the letters and sounds that pupils know.

In mathematics, older pupils are confident in using long division and breaking up large numbers. Pupils enjoy their learning, aided by the platform they use on their electronic tablets.

Measures to check how well pupils are doing in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are still underdeveloped. This was an area for development in the 2016 inspection. The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the school's work on this further.

The school provides effective support for pupils who need to catch up or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They receive additional help in their reading or mathematics, either within the classroom or in one-to-one sessions during other lessons. Sessions out of the classroom are kept very short to minimise impact on learning in other subjects.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to learn. In early years, children are confident and resilient. They are developing their independence in learning. Leaders promote children's physical development particularly well.

Most pupils stay engaged with their work throughout the lesson. A small number become either disengaged or are over-enthusiastic, shouting out when the teacher is speaking. They sometimes chatter when another pupil is explaining their work to the whole class. Aspects of low-level disruption sometimes impede learning.

Most pupils attend school very regularly. Where they do not, leaders are assiduous in following it up. Governors hold leaders to account for each case of persistent absence.

Leaders have extended plans for pupils' broader development. Their relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) programme is already in place. Pupils are gaining an understanding of different types of families and relationships.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the provision for their children. The school engages well with external services for its most vulnerable pupils.

Senior leaders and governors are mindful of staff's workload. They have reduced the burden of excessive marking and assessment. Teachers make greater use of technology, for example holding meetings with parents online.

Subject leaders reported to inspectors that they do not have enough time allocated to check the impact of the curriculum provision. As a result, they do not have a good enough oversight of how well their subject is being taught across the school.

Governors know most aspects of the school well and hold leaders to account. However, they do not have a clear enough view of the impact of the curriculum in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that curriculum planning and assessment in a wider range of subjects may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection. In addition, behaviour in lessons may also serve as a focus.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders identify quickly those pupils who need early help or who are at risk of abuse. They ensure that they make referrals promptly to enable pupils to get the help they need. Leaders and governors are well trained to make sure they manage appointments and responses to allegations well. Pupils learn about different risks, including online abuse, through the school's RSHE programme. Leaders have developed a culture where it is safe for pupils to speak to adults if they are worried about anything. Staff are well prepared to respond to concerns.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school does not have whole-school curriculum plans in place for every subject. As a result, teachers are not always aware of how the curriculum should build on previous learning towards intended outcomes. Leaders should ensure plans are in place and made known to all teachers, parents and governors.
- Subject leaders do not have sufficient oversight of their curriculum subject beyond their own classroom. Therefore, they do not know how well teachers are implementing teaching plans. Senior leaders should ensure each subject leader fulfils their role so that leaders and governors can evaluate their impact.
- There are a few instances of low-level disruption in each class. Consequently, some pupils are distracted from their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers' behaviour management is effective in reducing such instances.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116869
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200039
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	84
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Mason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dan Brearey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bridstow-school.co.uk/">www.bridstow-school.co.uk/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school, along with Brampton Abbotts CE Primary School, became one of two schools in The Oak Meadow hard federation on 5 May 2020.
- At the same time, the governing body was appointed to oversee both schools in the federation, led by a new chair of the governing body.
- The headteacher was already the leader of both schools in the federation.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school was judged good in its most recent section 48 inspection in 2017. The next scheduled inspection is due in 2025. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the coordinator for SEND and early years, and other members of staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils. They met three members of the governing body, including the chair. An inspector spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the Ofsted Parent View free-text service and 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey or the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered information on behaviour, attendance, personal development, safeguarding and child protection.
- Inspectors focused deeply on early reading, mathematics and history. They visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tracey O'Keeffe-Pullan

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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