

Inspection of a good school: Bridge Junior School

Mere Close, Off Mere Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 3HH

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 November 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?

Bridge Junior School is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are courteous, respectful and eager to learn. They do not hesitate to help each other out when they get stuck. One pupil summed up the views of others in describing the teachers as 'helpful and kind'.

Teachers are keen to provide extra learning opportunities outside of the school day. They want to give pupils a 'buzz for learning', to widen their experiences and try new things. Pupils visit new places. They try different sports. They learn to skip, dance and take part in a range of cultural celebrations. During the inspection, pupils wore their finest clothes to attend the special Diwali lunch. They said that they had a 'thoroughly lovely time'.

Pupils described their school as a 'safe space to be'. Bullying does happen, but pupils, and their parents and carers, are confident that any bullying issues are resolved quickly and effectively.

Pupils do not learn as well as they could. Too many pupils do not receive the expert help they need to read well. Some pupils are unable to access the curriculum. They do not develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they should.

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

The reading curriculum is poorly planned. Too many pupils fail to develop appropriate reading skills. They do not become confident and fluent readers. They continue to struggle with reading as they progress through the school and into Years 5 and 6. Some pupils are unable to access the curriculum because of this.

Very recently, leaders have put in place a structured early reading programme. This support takes place out of class for small numbers of pupils at the early stage of reading, including those who are newly arrived to this country. It is making a positive difference.

Pupils greatly value it. But this intervention is not built on when pupils are back in class. Pupils do not receive the expert help needed from their class teachers. Too few teachers and teaching assistants have received the training needed to teach pupils how to read.

Leaders are in the early stages of developing the curriculum. Their intent is to ensure that all pupils strive for excellence. This vision is not fully realised. Curriculum planning is further forward in some subjects than in others. Some subjects do not have well-developed plans in place. The curriculum does not allow sufficient opportunity for pupils to deepen or apply their knowledge.

The majority of pupils behave extremely well in school. They attend regularly. They said that they enjoy being with their friends at playtime and lunchtime. They are companionable when they eat lunch together. They take their roles as 'learning partners' seriously, and show their partners respect. When the curriculum is poorly implemented, pupils become fidgety and lose interest in their learning. Some pupils misbehave to mask the fact that they are unable to read.

Leaders have accurately identified the strengths and the weaknesses of the school. They have taken valuable first steps towards improving the weaker areas. For example, they now work with local partners and the local authority. They have accessed expert training and advice. They have taken steps to strengthen leadership and governance.

There has been a great deal of change in a short amount of time. Some teachers said that these changes have had a negative impact on their workload.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that reading and the curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils said that their teachers are really positive and helpful if they have a problem.

Leaders have a good understanding of the safeguarding concerns that exist locally, such as knife crime, human slavery and gang activity. They work with partner schools and outside agencies to educate pupils about these risks.

Leaders take appropriate actions to identify pupils and families who need extra support. Some staff are still adapting to the new system for recording their concerns. They do not all record their concerns or follow-up actions in sufficient detail.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading curriculum is not well planned and sequenced. Too many pupils are unable to read fluently. They continue to struggle as they progress through school. Leaders must urgently ensure that a well-structured reading curriculum is in place. Teachers

and teaching assistants must receive high-quality reading training in order to deliver this curriculum effectively.

- Curriculum planning is in the early stages. The curriculum plans do not ensure that pupils acquire the depth of knowledge needed in some of the subjects that they study. Leaders must urgently ensure that a well-planned and sequenced curriculum is in place for all subjects, and that it is effectively implemented.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2010.

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	119999
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10199917
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joseph Wyglendacz
Headteacher	Jatinder Mahil
Website	www.bridge.leicester.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	7 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2020.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders to discuss their evaluation of the quality of education. She met with the chair of governors and a member of the governing body. She spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at the curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. She heard pupils read.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep children safe. She reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single

central record of staff. She looked at information about the actions taken to protect the most vulnerable pupils.

- The views of 27 members of staff were considered. The 19 responses to Ofsted Parent View were taken into account.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021