

Inspection of Bedford Road Primary School

Hillgrounds Road, Kempston, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK42 8QH

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at Bedford Road Primary School. Leaders ensure pupils are well looked after. If pupils are worried or are not getting on with their friends, staff make things better. Bullying rarely happens. When it does, staff take it seriously and sort out the issue.

Older pupils act as 'ambassadors' for their school. They enjoy this role, looking after younger pupils or representing the school in the community. There are a range of activities on the playground that everyone enjoys. For example, pupils and children take turns and share the basketball equipment. Clubs and trips, which were paused by the pandemic, are starting to slowly return.

Pupils behave well. They are kind and courteous to staff, visitors and each other. In class, they focus on their learning. Lessons are not disrupted very often as the majority of pupils follow the rules. Adults use a range of effective strategies to help keep pupils' behaviour on track.

In Reception Year, children access a well-designed curriculum. It helps the children gain the necessary knowledge so they are ready for Year 1 and beyond. However, the rest of the school's curriculum has areas which require further improvement to support all pupils to achieve as well as they could.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked effectively to improve the school. With the support of governors, leadership across the school has been strengthened. New middle leaders are bringing about swift change. For example, an improved early years curriculum is becoming more established. It is making a difference to the youngest children, who are getting off to a good start. However, across the rest of the school, the curriculum is not as well developed. While the pandemic has played a part in slowing the pace of improvement, there is more work for leaders to do to ensure consistency and a high-quality curriculum across all subjects.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know. The learning starts early, in Reception Year, and forms a solid foundation to build new knowledge as pupils progress through the school. For example, adults support pupils in Reception Year with early number, so they have the right knowledge for their learning in Year 1.

Where the curriculum is less well developed, subject plans have not arranged knowledge in a helpful way. In these subjects, pupils find learning tricky. Additionally, pupils sometimes spend more time learning some subjects at the cost of others. When this happens, pupils do not always have the time to build up a deep understanding of a topic or piece of knowledge. They do not easily remember what they have been taught, such as in geography. While leaders have been making

improvements, there is still work to do to ensure the curriculum is well organised and systematically taught.

Leaders ensure that all staff access appropriate subject training which is linked to the improving curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge is growing. Teachers' in-class checks help them spot gaps in pupils' understanding. However, some assessment is not linked closely to the key knowledge in each subject. This is because not all knowledge is clearly identified. Consequently, assessment is not always clear in helping teachers and leaders know who is behind and needs to catch up.

Learning to read starts early in Reception Year. Well-trained adults use the school's chosen scheme to teach children phonics effectively. However, there is an issue when pupils fall behind with their reading. Pupils do not catch up quickly enough when they fall behind. While the reading curriculum is well established in the younger year groups, it has only recently been improved for older pupils. Pupils' progress through the reading curriculum is still not as good as it could be.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have high-quality support. Teaching assistants are well trained. They work closely with teachers to ensure effective adaptations are made to support pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their peers.

The school's 'values' education supports pupils to be respectful, tolerant members of the school community. A coherently planned personal, social, health and economic education curriculum teaches pupils about a range of topics in an age-appropriate way. For example, pupils have knowledge about how others may be different from themselves and what 'democracy' is.

The school's clear behaviour routines are known and used consistently by all staff. Children in early years effectively manage their emotions and feelings. Pupils of all ages behave well across the school.

All staff want the school to improve. Staff fully support leaders' and governors' drive to make the school better for everyone.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure all staff are well trained to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff know the different risks to pupils, including local issues such as county lines illegal drugs transportation. They teach pupils effectively about how to keep safe in the community and online.

Safeguarding records are detailed. They show appropriate and timely responses to concerns about pupils. Safeguarding records are closely linked with information about behaviour and attendance so important information is not missed.

A range of in-school and external support is available to make sure pupils and their families get the help they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, knowledge is not clearly identified, well sequenced and arranged in a helpful way which supports pupils' learning. This means that pupils do not easily remember what they have learned and make the progress that they should. Leaders must ensure that all subjects have well-sequenced knowledge and that staff are trained well to implement the curriculum plans effectively.
- In some subjects, assessment is not always clearly aligned with the knowledge learned by the pupils. This means it does not help identify misconceptions, support leaders to make adjustments to the curriculum or help pupils catch up quickly. Leaders need to review all assessment and ensure that it is closely linked to the knowledge learned and useful in supporting pupils to make progress through the curriculum.

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	109461
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10227309
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	347
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ann Hooks
Headteacher	Lindsay Gould
Website	www.bedfordroad.school
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2018, under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school converted from a lower school into a primary school in 2018.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: geography, history, mathematics, science and reading. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Additionally, inspectors reviewed a range of work in other subjects, including art and design technology.

- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. He looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records.
- All inspectors spoke to a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders over both days of inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority. He held a meeting with the chair of governors and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the 32 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 32 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 24 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and four responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shan Oswald	Ofsted Inspector
Kim Hall	Her Majesty's Inspector

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