

Inspection of Bird's Bush Primary School

Bird's Bush Road, Belgrave, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 2NE

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, friendly and welcoming. Most work sensibly in lessons and play energetically with their friends at playtimes. Pupils feel safe in school because they know that staff care about them, and that they can trust them. They know the importance of staying where staff can see them at playtimes. They hand in their mobile phones at the office to prevent distraction and potential online bullying.

Leaders' ambitions are not fully realised. Sometimes, teachers' expectations are too low and there is variability in how well some curriculum subjects are delivered. This means that pupils, especially younger ones, do not gain the key skills and knowledge needed to achieve appropriately for their age. This includes the teaching of phonics and early reading.

Staff manage behaviour well. They are patient and have good relationships with pupils. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying. They say it is rare in school but that staff sort things out 'straight away' if anything happens.

Pupils understand the school values. They can recite what the acronym 'Champion' means in relation to their learning. Most pupils attend school regularly but some miss too many days of school and fall behind in their education.

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

Leaders have established a well-structured and broad curriculum. They have thought about what things they want pupils to know, including subject vocabulary, and the order they want pupils to learn things in. Some subjects are delivered more successfully than others. When the curriculum is implemented well, pupils remember what they learn. For example, pupils are very enthusiastic about science and enjoy the experiments they carry out. However, pupils struggle to remember content and concepts in other subjects.

Teachers' expectations are too low sometimes. Some pupils do not present their work neatly or finish the task set. This goes unchallenged in some year groups. In the early years, some important skills are not prioritised well enough, such as having the correct pencil grip or forming numbers and letters correctly.

Leaders have worked hard to create a reading culture. Pupils enjoy story time after lunch and the rewards they receive for reading regularly. While many Year 6 pupils said they do not enjoy reading, they were proud to receive their own copy of Marcus Rashford's book about diversity after studying Black History Month. Phonics delivery is variable. This affects pupils' achievement in phonics and subsequent reading ability. Teachers do not provide pupils who struggle with reading with the effective support they need. As a result, too few pupils have the reading skills needed for key stage 2.

Children settle quickly in school. Adults are attentive to children's needs and make sure they are happy. There is a strong focus on developing children's language and their physical, social and emotional skills. Adults interact with individual children throughout the day. However, the balance between whole-class teacher input and children doing individual activities is uneven. This means children struggle to be ready for formal learning in Year 1.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is managed well. Clear systems are in place to identify pupils and provide support matched to their needs. Teachers adapt learning activities in the classroom to ensure that pupils are fully included. Those with challenging behaviour or complex needs receive effective support both in school and at the alternative settings they attend part-time. Specialist help accessed by leaders helps pupils to achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally positive. Most listen and pay attention. Staff manage those with behaviour difficulties well. However, a small number of pupils report that their learning is disrupted occasionally. However, this is not widespread across the school. Leaders track attendance carefully. But there remain some pupils who are persistently absent. Leaders are determined to improve attendance.

Pupils enjoy the clubs, visits and visitors the school arranges. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values. They know that discrimination in all forms is wrong. Pupils have a growing understanding of other world faiths, but this is at an early stage.

Leaders make adjustments to reduce staff workload. Staff appreciate this and value the approachability and support they receive from senior leaders. The 'Well-being Wall' is particularly popular with staff and aids staff morale and comradery.

Governors are honest and realistic in their view of the school. They are knowledgeable and experienced. They ask probing questions to challenge teachers and staff. The trust provides effective support for leaders. Subject leaders work with other trust schools in successful curriculum networks to share ideas and practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is a whole-school priority. Leaders make sure that staff receive regular training so that staff know how to recognise and report any concerns. Leaders follow up all concerns raised. They act swiftly to address serious issues. They work well with families and other agencies to protect pupils at risk of harm. Leaders carry out stringent checks on staff before employing them.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when working online. They feel safe in school because they know they can talk to a trusted adult if they are worried about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum subjects are not delivered as successfully as others. As a result, pupils struggle to retain or recall what they have learned. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders check the impact of how well the intended curriculum is implemented in their subject areas.
- The phonics curriculum is not delivered consistently well for pupils at the early stages of reading. Also, pupils who require additional help with their reading do not always receive it. As a result, pupils fall behind in their reading. Leaders should ensure that staff are able to deliver phonics effectively, and they should ensure that the lowest attainers receive the help that they need.
- Leaders have not evaluated the balance of child-initiated and teacher-led activities within the early years curriculum. This means children do not learn some of the crucial skills they need to be successful learners. Leaders should ensure that the balance between independent and teacher-led learning enables children to gain the skills needed to be ready for Year 1.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils, including children in the early years, can do are too low. Consequently, pupils do not take pride in their work or make the progress they should. Leaders should raise expectations across the school and check that these expectations are realised in pupils' work and attitudes to learning.
- Too many pupils continue to be persistently absent. They miss vital learning and opportunities in school to achieve as well as they should. Leaders should work closely with parents to encourage regular attendance.

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	144989
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10241493
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Brocklehurst
Headteacher	Sharon Barnes
Website	www.birdsbush.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Perry Hall Multi-Academy Trust in July 2018.
- The number of pupils on roll has fallen over time. The school previously operated in vertical mixed-age classes. Pupils are now taught in single age-groups from Reception to Year 6.
- The school uses two alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. Meetings were also held with two members of the

governing body, including the chair of governors, and the chief executive officer of the trust.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. Inspection activities in these subjects included: lesson visits, discussions with staff and pupils, meetings with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, and work scrutiny. The lead inspector also observed pupils reading to a member of staff.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school. This included leaders' own self-evaluation and school development plan. Minutes of governor meetings and school reviews carried out by governors and the trust were also evaluated.
- The inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements. The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders and looked at documentation provided by the school, including the single central record. Discussions with staff and pupils were held about the school's approach to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and welfare. Behaviour and attendance records were also checked.
- Responses from staff questionnaires were considered together with the views of parents on Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dawn White

Ofsted Inspector

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