

Inspection of Bridgewater Park Primary School

Plantation Close, Castlefields, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2LW

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

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

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is made to feel welcome at Bridgewater Park Primary School. Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They told inspectors that staff are caring and always willing to help them with any worries they may have. Pupils learn that everyone should be treated with respect, regardless of their differences. If bullying does happen, staff deal with it effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders expect pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. However, pupils, including children in the early years, do not achieve as well as they should. This is because over time pupils have not benefited from an ambitious curriculum that builds their knowledge. Leaders have recently made improvements to the curriculum. However, many of the changes that leaders have made are recent. Pupils have not benefited from these improvements fully.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils and staff are confident that leaders' new behaviour policies have had a marked impact on pupils' conduct. Pupils look forward to the weekly celebration assemblies. They are keen to earn star certificates and be part of the 'Always Club' by upholding the school's core values. The school is a calm and purposeful place to learn and play as a result.

Pupils enjoy the after-school activities that they can attend, such as art, gymnastics and football. They enjoy their visits to cathedrals and to the local canal.

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

Bridgewater Park is a school on a journey. Until recently, the curriculum that pupils followed lacked ambition. The new leadership team has worked closely with the trust and governors to devise a more appropriate and aspirational curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. Leaders have constructed the curriculum taking into consideration the mixed-age classes in the school. However, much of this work is in its infancy. This means that many pupils in the school have gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

In the early years, the curriculum is at an early stage of development and lacks clarity. As a result, the activities that staff design for children sometimes lack purpose. Leaders have not given staff enough guidance on how to develop and extend children's knowledge and vocabulary across the curriculum. This means that children in the early years do not always acquire the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful in their learning.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are able to focus on their learning as any disruption to lessons is rare. Teachers have the resources that they need to design a variety of activities to support pupils' learning. However, teachers have not received sufficient training to develop their expertise in teaching many of the more ambitious curriculums. This hinders teachers from designing learning that helps pupils to build

their knowledge over time.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on teaching pupils to read. Pupils develop a love of reading through exposure to high-quality texts. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about their favourite authors and visits to the local library.

Leaders have structured the reading curriculum carefully. Staff have been trained to teach the programme using consistent routines and strategies. Children in Nursery enjoy listening to stories and joining in with songs and rhymes. This prepares them well to learn the sounds that letters represent. Pupils read books which match the sounds that they have learned. Most pupils build up their phonics knowledge securely.

Staff use leaders' assessment systems in reading well. They identify and correct pupils' errors and misconceptions quickly. Staff provide additional and effective support for pupils who fall behind. Staff routinely check how well pupils are learning in other curriculum areas. However, these checks do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge sufficiently well. This means that some pupils move through the curriculum with ongoing gaps and misconceptions in their learning.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified at the earliest possible opportunity. However, leaders have not made sure that teachers understand how to support pupils with SEND to access each aspect of the curriculum. As a result, staff do not always adapt their approaches to curriculum delivery to meet the needs of these pupils.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from opportunities to enhance their wider development. Pupils learn the importance of keeping fit and eating healthy foods. The activities that leaders provide broaden pupils' awareness of opportunities in their own locality and in the wider world.

Leaders have introduced a range of strategies to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. However, too many pupils do not attend school often enough. This impacts on how well they learn.

The trust, local governing body and leaders share a determination to continue the school's journey of improvement. The trust and governors provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge to leaders. Morale is high. Staff feel well supported. Leaders understand how to move the school forward and the key issues to address.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff are alert and respond quickly when they notice that pupils might be at risk. They report concerns about pupils to leaders responsible for safeguarding in a timely manner. Leaders work

closely with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that pupils get the support that they need.

Pupils learn about important aspects of safety. The curriculum helps pupils to learn about the different risks that they may face and how to manage them. For example, pupils learn about healthy relationships, how to stay safe on roads and in water and how to keep themselves safe when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is at the early stages of being implemented in most subjects. Teachers have not received sufficient training to enable them to deliver these curriculums well, including how to adapt their delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This hinders how well pupils, including those with SEND, learn new information. Leaders must make sure that they provide teachers with the training that they require to enable them to deliver the new curriculums consistently well and to adapt their pedagogical approaches to meet the needs of all pupils so that pupils achieve as well as they should.
- The checks that teachers make on pupils' learning, including for pupils with SEND, do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge sufficiently well. This means that some pupils move through the curriculum with ongoing gaps and misconceptions in their learning. Leaders must ensure that teachers are equipped to use assessment strategies well to ensure that pupils' learning is secure before introducing new concepts.
- The early years curriculum is not structured coherently. This means that staff are unclear about what children need to learn and when. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum in the early years sets out the important knowledge and vocabulary that children need to know and remember in readiness for their future learning. In addition, leaders must ensure that staff in the early years are supported to deliver the curriculum consistently effectively.
- Too many pupils do not attend school often enough. This limits how well these pupils learn. Leaders should build on their emerging strategies to secure good attendance, so that pupils attend school regularly.

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.

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	140612
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10240679
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Stevenson
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Greer
Website	www.bridgewaterpark.halton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Bridgewater Park Primary School is part of The Heath Family multi-academy trust.
- An interim head of school and an interim executive headteacher were appointed in January 2023.
- The interim executive headteacher is also responsible for two other primary schools in the trust.
- There have been a number of new staff appointments from September 2022.
- The governing body operates a breakfast club at the school.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic

with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the interim executive headteacher, the interim head of school and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, the chief executive of the trust and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. They also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Moira Atkins

Ofsted Inspector

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