

Inspection of Blackmoor Park Infants' School

45-65 Leyfield Road, West Derby, Liverpool, Merseyside L12 9EY

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy attending this welcoming school. They arrive every day with smiling faces, ready to play and learn with their friends. Pupils know that staff are always ready to help them if they are upset or worried.

Most pupils show enthusiasm to learn new things. However, the school does not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils do not benefit from a suitably ambitious curriculum that helps them to learn all that they should.

Pupils understand that the school expects them to behave well. However, at times, they do not receive enough guidance from staff about how they should behave when moving around the school and when socialising at playtimes. This leads some pupils to behave in an over-exuberant manner. For example, some pupils run in the corridors, and they rush between different activities in the classroom. That said, pupils are respectful towards each other and the adults in school.

The school supports children to become independent learners from when they start school in the early years. Pupils are keen to take on increasing levels of responsibility as they move into key stage 1. This includes being responsible for looking after their own belongings and equipment.

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

The current curriculum is at an early stage of development in several subjects. There have been many changes to the curriculum design over the last few years, including in the early years. This has led to a lack of coherence in pupils' learning. Some curriculums are successful in enabling pupils to achieve well. Others are not.

In some subjects, the curriculum is not well designed or ordered. It is not clear what pupils should learn or when subject content should be taught. This means that pupils, and children in the early years, cannot build new learning securely on what they already know. In addition, staff do not have the knowledge and expertise to design appropriate activities for pupils. This hinders how well some pupils follow the intended curriculum. This is not true in some other subjects, especially those curriculums that are well established. Staff have been well trained to deliver subject content. Over time, pupils gain a secure body of knowledge in these subjects.

In some subjects, teachers use assessment strategies well to check on pupils' learning and to address any misconceptions. However, in those subjects where the curriculum is less well designed, teachers do not use assessment information effectively to shape future learning for pupils.

In many subjects, the procedures to check on the effectiveness of curriculum delivery and pupils' learning are underdeveloped. This makes it difficult for the school to know what is working well and which areas need further improvement. It means that the school is not able to support staff to improve their practice.

Staff are well equipped to identify the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. Staff make a range of appropriate adaptations to their delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can access the same curriculum as their peers. However, owing to shortcomings in curriculums, pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should.

Staff are well trained to teach the early reading curriculum. Children in the Nursery Year delight in singing songs and rhymes with staff. Children begin to learn how to match letters and sounds when they start in the Reception Year. They practise the sounds that they have learned and blend these sounds confidently to read books that match their phonics knowledge. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are fluent, accurate readers. The school develops a love of reading among pupils through, for example, providing carefully chosen, high-quality texts in classroom 'reading snugs'.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. However, some staff do not reinforce the school's behaviour routines and rules consistently. In some lessons, pupils disengage from their learning. This means that valuable learning time is lost.

The school has taken steps to improve pupils' rates of attendance and punctuality. For example, staff meet with parents and carers to better understand the reasons behind repeated absences and how the school can support these pupils and their families. This is helping pupils to attend school more regularly.

The school teaches pupils about how to forge and maintain healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to hone and develop their sporting and musical talents. The school organises trips and visits to further pupils' learning and their cultural development. As pupils get older, they are given responsibilities within school, such as selling poppies for Remembrance Day. The school develops pupils' sense of being part of the community by raising money for local charities.

While the school is going through a period of change, leaders have remained mindful of staff's well-being. The school makes regular checks on the workload of staff, particularly when implementing changes to the curriculum, and ensures that staff feel well supported.

Governors have been instrumental in strengthening the capacity of the school. However, their knowledge of the school and the quality of education for pupils is not strong enough to hold leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum design is at an early stage of development in several subjects. As a result, children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 do not have secure enough knowledge on which to build future learning. In these subjects, the school should clarify its curriculum thinking and identify what pupils should learn and when this content should be taught.
- Teachers' use of assessment strategies is not effective in several subjects. This means that some pupils develop misconceptions that go unchecked. The school should ensure that, alongside its work to improve the curriculum, it pays equal attention to how teachers will check pupils' learning.
- The systems to check the delivery of the curriculum and its impact on pupils' learning are underdeveloped in many subjects. This means that the school is unaware of what is going well and what needs to improve in these subjects. The school should ensure that there are suitable procedures in place that help to identify where staff need further support to deliver the curriculum consistently well.
- Governors do not carry out aspects of their roles and responsibilities as well as they should. This means that, over time, governors' oversight of the school's work has not had enough impact on the quality of education that pupils receive. The school should ensure that governors acquire the skills and expertise required to offer constructive and effective support and challenge.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	104592
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10294192
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Mulcahey
Headteacher	Joanne Hitchmough
Website	www.bpinfant.com
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The governing body provides places for children from birth to three years in Blackmoor Park Day Nursery. This provision is registered separately with Ofsted and was not part of this inspection.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.

- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. She also met with a representative from the multi-academy trust that the school was in the process of joining at the time of the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and wider school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents and carers submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also spoke with parents at the school gate.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design, computing and physical education. They spoke with the staff who lead these subjects, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. They also spoke with pupils about their learning and viewed examples of their work.
- The inspectors spoke with subject leaders and pupils about their learning in a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils in Years 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils to consider.

Inspection team

Liz Davidson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandra Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector
Samantha Birchall	Ofsted Inspector

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