

Inspection of Bridgemary School

Wych Lane, Bridgemary, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 0JN

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Tom Garfield. This school is part of the Kemnal Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Karen Roberts, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gaenor Bagley.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a very inclusive and calm culture at this school, which is underpinned by mutual respect and trust. Pupils, parents and staff share the school's high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They recognise the improvements over recent years. Pupils behave very well in lessons and during social times. They enjoy positive relationships with each other and with staff. They know that staff will listen to them if they have concerns. Consequently, pupils are happy here and feel safe.

The school is ambitious for all pupils and is committed to helping them to achieve highly, including in examinations. Pupils study the full breadth of national curriculum subjects. There is an appropriate range of option choices available in key stage 4. The numbers of pupils taking the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is starting to increase. The school is working with the trust to develop its curriculum thinking further. There is evidence of improvement in some areas. However, curriculum organisation and teaching do not routinely support all pupils to remember and be able to apply knowledge securely over time. As a result, many pupils do not achieve as well as they could in their GCSEs, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

The school is focused on improving pupils' overall achievement from Year 7, as well as their examination results. Subject teams have identified what pupils must learn at key points. However, curriculum thinking is less clear about the smaller steps needed to introduce and connect this knowledge securely for pupils with different starting points. This means that many pupils do not embed the knowledge they need to achieve sequentially ambitious learning goals.

Most teachers introduce new content clearly and then check pupils' understanding. However, teachers often move on before addressing the gaps or misconceptions revealed. This can affect some pupils' confidence and motivation. Some teachers provide opportunities to discuss themes in more depth, and pupils respond very well to this. The expectations and quality of pupils' written work are also inconsistent.

The school identifies pupils with additional needs very well. Teachers receive clear information about how they can help these pupils. Many teachers use this to support physical access and independence effectively. Staff are continuing to develop their knowledge of how to adapt their teaching. However, too many pupils do not yet know how to securely embed what they learn as they go along. While some pupils, including those with SEND and high prior attainers, are working to appropriate standards, too many pupils are not yet achieving as highly as they could.

The school has established a culture of reading, and pupils talk positively about books. Pupils read regularly in tutor time and in lessons. However, pupils who are not yet fluent readers do not always secure the necessary skills. The school

recognises this. It is starting to roll out a more structured programme that is designed to precisely identify knowledge gaps and help to target support.

Personal development is a strength of the school. The well-designed programme ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy and how to navigate different relationships, including online. Pupils explore their place in modern Britain. They recall discussing important topics with interest and empathy. They participate in a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities and take on leadership roles in school. There is a comprehensive careers programme, including regular sessions with employers and local education and training providers. Pupils value personal development and careers, and they are well prepared to take their place in society and the world of work.

Leaders and those responsible for governance share a mission: to provide the best education possible for their pupils. The trust understands the steps necessary to improve the curriculum. The school works closely with the community, and parents are very supportive. Oversight of safeguarding is rigorous. Leaders are very mindful of staff well-being and workload. Staff feel valued and are extremely proud to work at the school.

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 in most subjects does not yet set out precisely the essential knowledge that pupils should learn based on their individual starting points. As a result, most pupils, including those with SEND, do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum is designed to help all pupils make and embed strong and connected knowledge and understanding.
- The curriculum is not implemented effectively enough across the school. In many lessons, teachers move on too quickly. Consequently, any gaps or misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and understanding are not addressed, and many pupils are unable to apply what they have learned accurately and independently. The school should ensure that staff develop their knowledge of adaptive approaches so that all pupils embed knowledge securely and can apply it fluently.
- Currently, staff lack the subject expertise necessary to help the weakest readers to learn to read fluently. This means that some pupils are not able to access the full curriculum. The school should ensure that staff know how to address this and have the resources to do so successfully.

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	138437
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10288025
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	823
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gaenor Bagley
CEO of trust	Karen Roberts
Headteacher	Tom Garfield
Website	www.bridgemary-tkat.org
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Bridgemary School is part of the Kemnal Academy Trust.
- The school uses two registered and four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with trust and school leaders, members of staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector also met with representatives of the trust board and of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work from all key stages. Inspectors also looked at lessons in a range of other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour, bullying and attendance logs, as well as its self-evaluation and records linked to personal development, careers education and extra-curricular activities.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views. They considered parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mary Davies, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Woodman	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Blackmore	Ofsted Inspector
Shazia Akram	His Majesty's Inspector

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