

Inspection of Badgerbrook Primary School

Badger Drive, Whetstone, Leicester, Leicestershire LE8 6ZW

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

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

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 over 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

New leaders have reinvigorated Badgerbrook Primary School. They have provided much-needed ambition, direction and stability after a significant period of turbulence. They are working on the right things, in the right order, as quickly as they can.

The school now has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand the school rules and they know what to do if they have any worries. There is high-quality pastoral support available to pupils who need it. These changes mean that pupils feel safe and secure. However, staff do not yet apply the new behaviour policy consistently. This means that lessons are sometimes affected by low-level disruption.

Pupils talk confidently about Badgerbrook's three 'character muscles'. They know what it means to be determined, honest and courageous. They do not always apply these positive qualities to their own learning, however.

Leaders know that there is much more to do to ensure that pupils receive a good education, but staff, parents and carers and pupils appreciate the changes that have been made already. One parent summed it up well when they said that this is the 'best year' their child has had at the school.

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

Leaders are in the process of overhauling what pupils learn and how the subject curriculums are taught. In some subjects, this work is well under way. In others, the new curriculum has only just been launched. The new curriculum plans are all ambitious and well sequenced. They set out precisely what pupils will learn in a logical order, with key content emphasised and revisited. In English, for example, the new 'learning journey' approach is already leading to improvements in the quality of pupils' written work. However, it is not possible to see the impact of the new curriculum in many of the foundation subjects yet.

Staff do not implement the curriculum consistently well. They do not always check how well pupils are getting on in lessons, which means that learning is not reliably adapted to meet their needs. Staff sometimes fail to correct pupils' misconceptions. They do not use the school's 'I do, we do, you do' approach well enough to model learning. This can leave pupils unsure about what they need to do and how they need to do it.

The teaching of phonics is a particular strength at Badgerbrook. Staff have the expertise they need to teach pupils how to read. Staff know the school's chosen phonics scheme well. Pupils are given books to read that are matched to the letter sounds they recognise. Older pupils are beginning to benefit from a structured approach to the teaching of reading comprehension.

While children in Reception get off to a good start in reading, it is not always clear what they are expected to learn in other areas of the early years curriculum. The 'free-flow' activities that are set up in the classroom and outside can lack purpose. Children sometimes miss out on the high-quality interactions with adults that they need in order to develop their communication and language skills.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is improving rapidly. New systems for supporting pupils with SEND are in place. Although expectations for what these pupils can achieve have been raised, staff do not reliably adapt their teaching well enough to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Expectations for attendance have been raised in recent months. The school responds quickly when any pupil's attendance is below where it needs to be.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when online and what to do if they feel unsafe. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. They like using the sports equipment on the playground to be active at breaktimes. They look forward to representing the school in sports competitions. However, pupils' knowledge of British values, equality and world faiths is not as secure as it needs to be.

Staff are positive about working at Badgerbrook. Despite some additional workload, staff feel well supported by the school. They are all on board with the changes that are being made. Staff appreciate the regular training they are receiving.

New leaders have raised expectations at Badgerbrook. However, the school does not yet benefit from strong and effective leadership in all aspects of its work.

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 early years is not suitably ambitious or well sequenced. This means that children do not build their knowledge and skills incrementally in all areas of learning. The school must precisely identify the important knowledge that it wants children to learn in all parts of the curriculum and ensure that children routinely benefit from purposeful, 'free-flow' learning, both indoors and outdoors.
- Children do not develop their communication and language skills in a systematic way. This means that the early years provision is not preparing children for the next stage of their education as well as it could. The school must make sure that there is a sharp focus on developing early communication and vocabulary throughout the early years provision.

- There have been many changes to the curriculum at Badgerbrook. Some of these improvements are very recent. Staff do not yet teach the new curriculum consistently well. As a result, pupils cannot achieve as well as they might. The school must embed the changes that have been made in every subject, ensuring that staff have the subject knowledge and skills they need to implement the curriculum effectively.
- New leaders have raised expectations at Badgerbrook. Many new systems, including those for supporting pupils with SEND and for behaviour, have been introduced recently. These new approaches are yet to have the full impact that is intended. The school must ensure that all policies and procedures are embedded effectively and understood by all.

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	119978
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10288310
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Val Moore
Headteacher	Joanne Andrews (Interim Headteacher)
Website	https://badgerbrook.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 September 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant leadership changes in the last year.
- The new interim headteacher started at the school in August 2023.
- The school is being supported by Discovery Schools Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 had 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 carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work for geography, art and design, and religious education. Inspectors also visited lessons for some of these subjects.
- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, the interim deputy headteacher, subject leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour and attendance, and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and documentation relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading aloud to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority, as well as executive leaders from Discovery Schools Academy Trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Shaheen Hussain	His Majesty's Inspector
Martin Adamson	Ofsted Inspector

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